

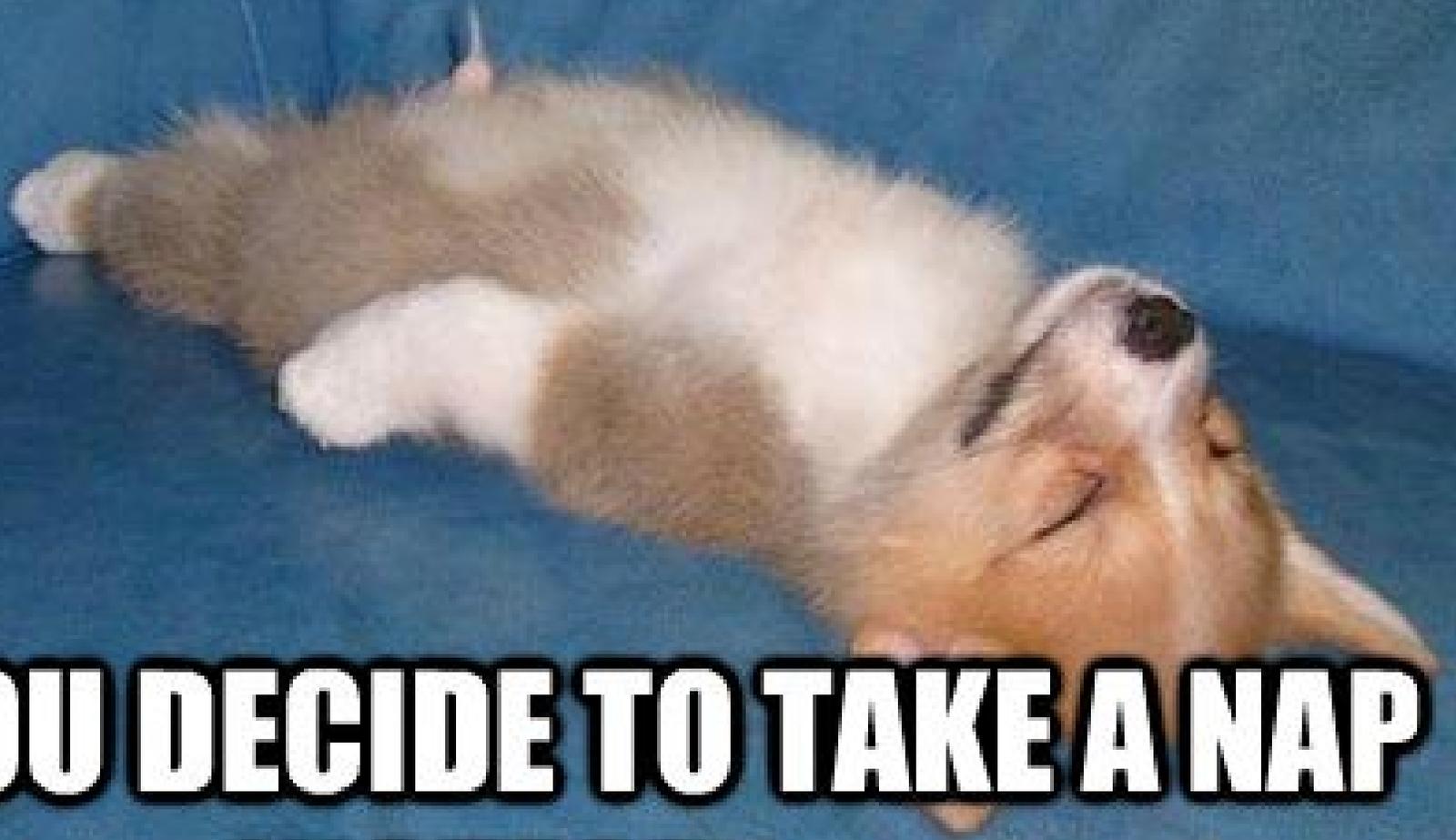
*D.C. Bar Lawyer Assistance Program  
Presents*

*Clearing Clutter:  
Tuning in to Time, Space and Mind*

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**THAT MOMENT WHEN YOU HAVE TOO  
MUCH STUFF TO DO**



**THAT YOU DECIDE TO TAKE A NAP**

# Why are you here today?

- What are your barriers to organization?
  - Not enough time
  - Too much work
  - Competing demands
  - Low energy
  - Too overwhelmed
  - Lack of resources



# Objectives

- Begin to identify your own values and priorities
- Identify your personal organizational hurdles and pitfalls
- Identify what benefits decluttering can bring to your practice and personal life
- Learn new tools and techniques to help with better managing your time, space, and mind

*\*\*\*Disclaimer: Not all tools and techniques will work for each of you. The goal is to start practicing awareness of what works for you.*

YOU WILL  
FIND THAT  
IT IS  
NECESSARY  
TO LET THINGS  
GO; SIMPLY  
FOR THE REASON  
THAT THEY  
ARE  
HEAVY.

“

get rid of clutter  
and you may just  
find it was  
blocking the door  
you've been looking  
for...

- katrina mayer

# Glossary

- Clutter

- *Verb:* To run in disorder. To fill or cover with scattered or disordered things that impede movement or reduce effectiveness.
- *Noun:* A state of noisy, confused activity

- Time management –

- The ability to plan and control how you spend the hours in your day to effectively accomplish your goals.

- Space (Physical and Virtual/Digital)

- The amount of an area, room, surface, etc., that is empty or available for use

- Mind

- The element of a person that enables them to be aware of the world and their experiences, to think and to feel.
- A person's attention.

*\*Merriam Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary>*

# Why Bother?

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- NIH study
  - Increases productivity
  - Decreases irritability
  - Decreases distraction



Declutter  
Your  
Life

# Identifying Priorities & Values

**Values:** “something (such as a principle or quality) intrinsically valuable or desirable”\*

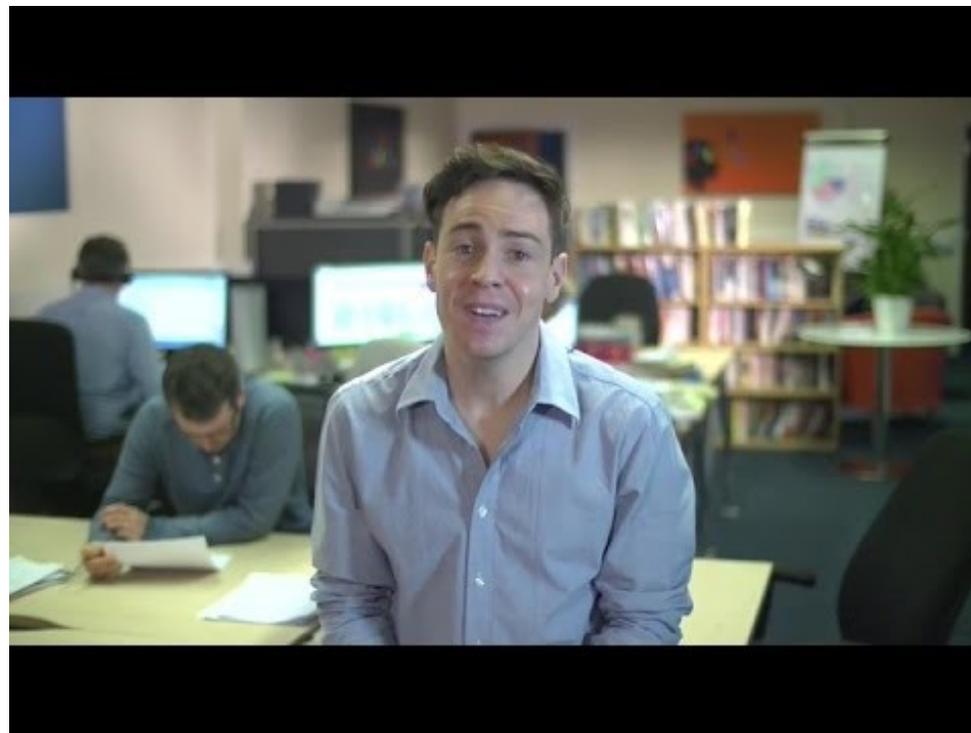
**Priority:** a thing that is regarded as more important than another

\*Merriam Webster, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/value>



# I reduce clutter by making decisions

# Values



# Values

Authenticity  
Achievement  
Adventure  
Authority  
Autonomy  
Balance  
Beauty  
Boldness  
Compassion  
Challenge  
Citizenship  
Community  
Competency  
Contribution  
Creativity  
Curiosity  
Determination  
Fairness  
Faith

Fame  
Friendships  
Fun  
Growth  
Happiness  
Honesty  
Humor  
Influence  
Inner Harmony  
Justice  
Kindness  
Knowledge  
Leadership  
Learning  
Love  
Loyalty  
Meaningful Work  
Openness  
Optimism

Peace  
Pleasure  
Poise  
Popularity  
Recognition  
Religion  
Reputation  
Respect  
Responsibility  
Security  
Self-Respect  
Service  
Spirituality  
Stability  
Success  
Status  
Trustworthiness  
Wealth  
Wisdom

# Values in Action

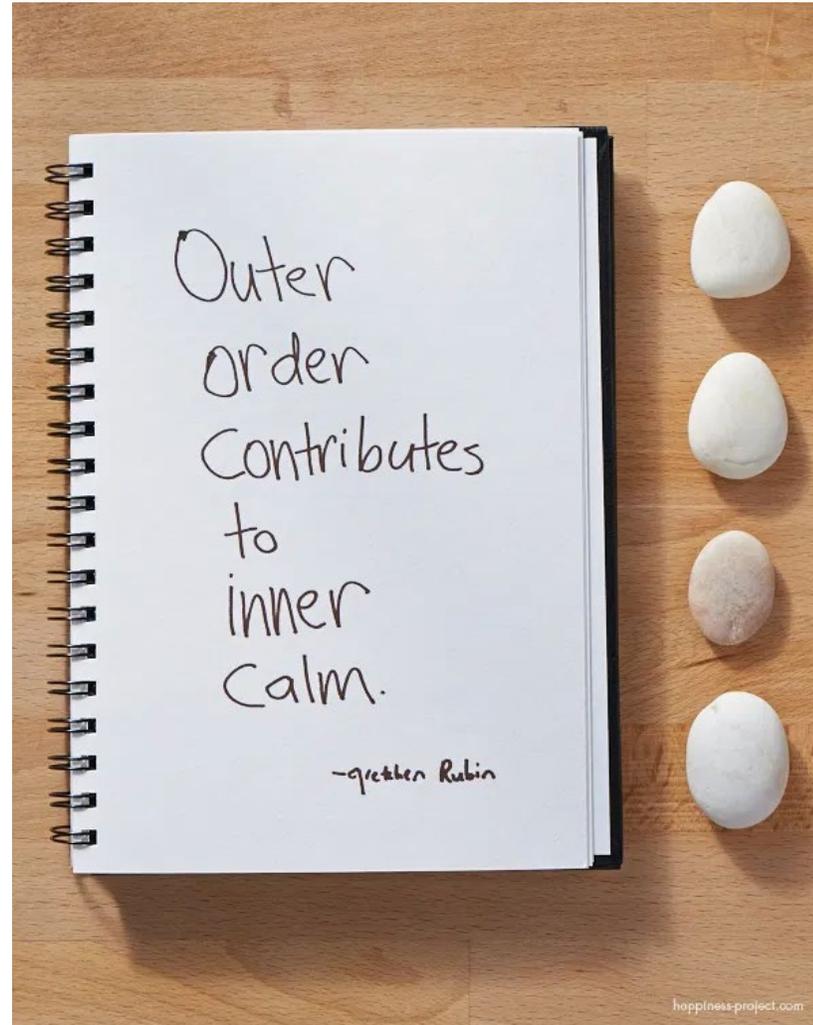
- How to implement changes in
  - your office setting,
  - your schedule,
  - your mental space.

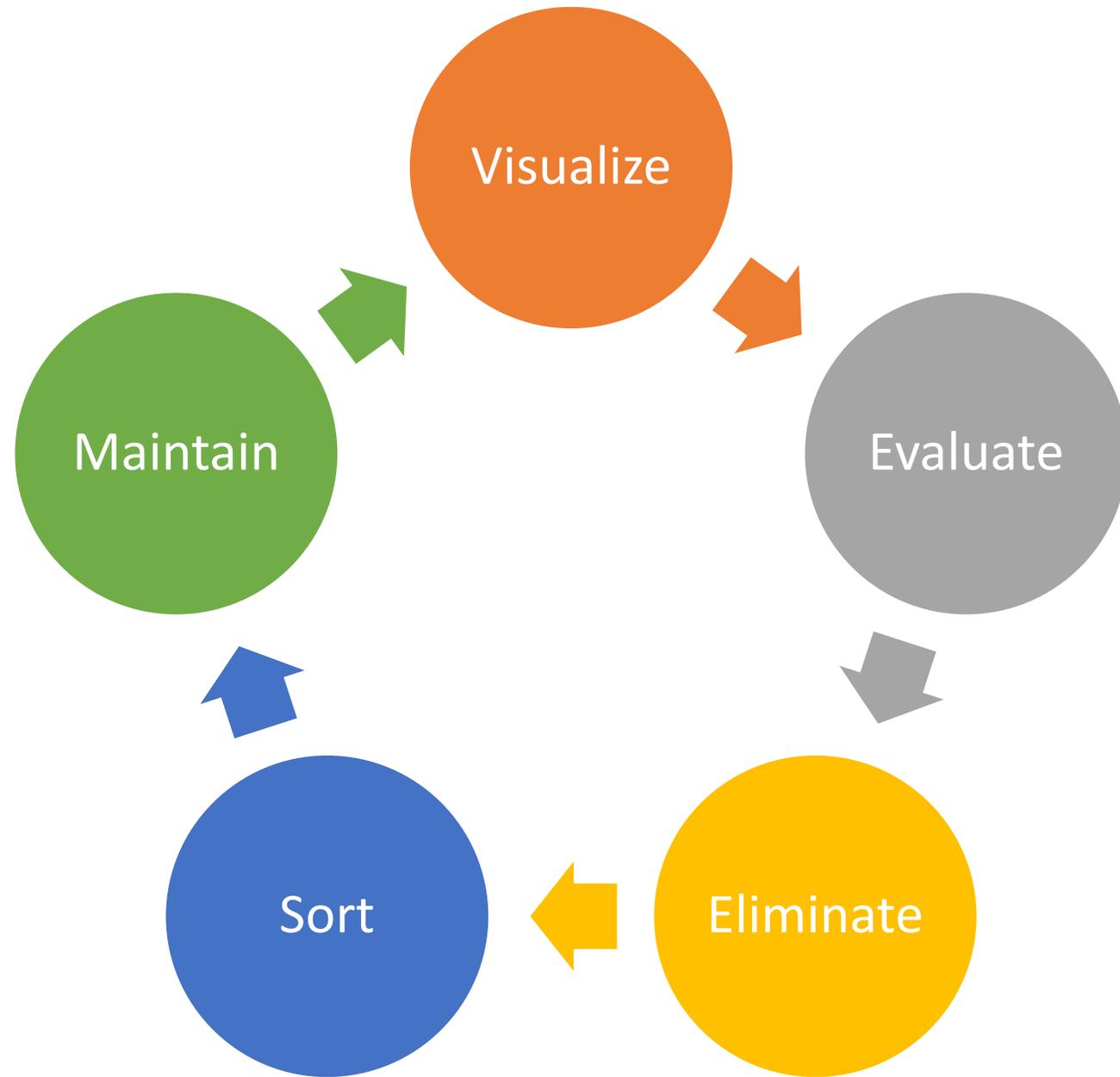


Is this you?



You need a tidy space to work and think.





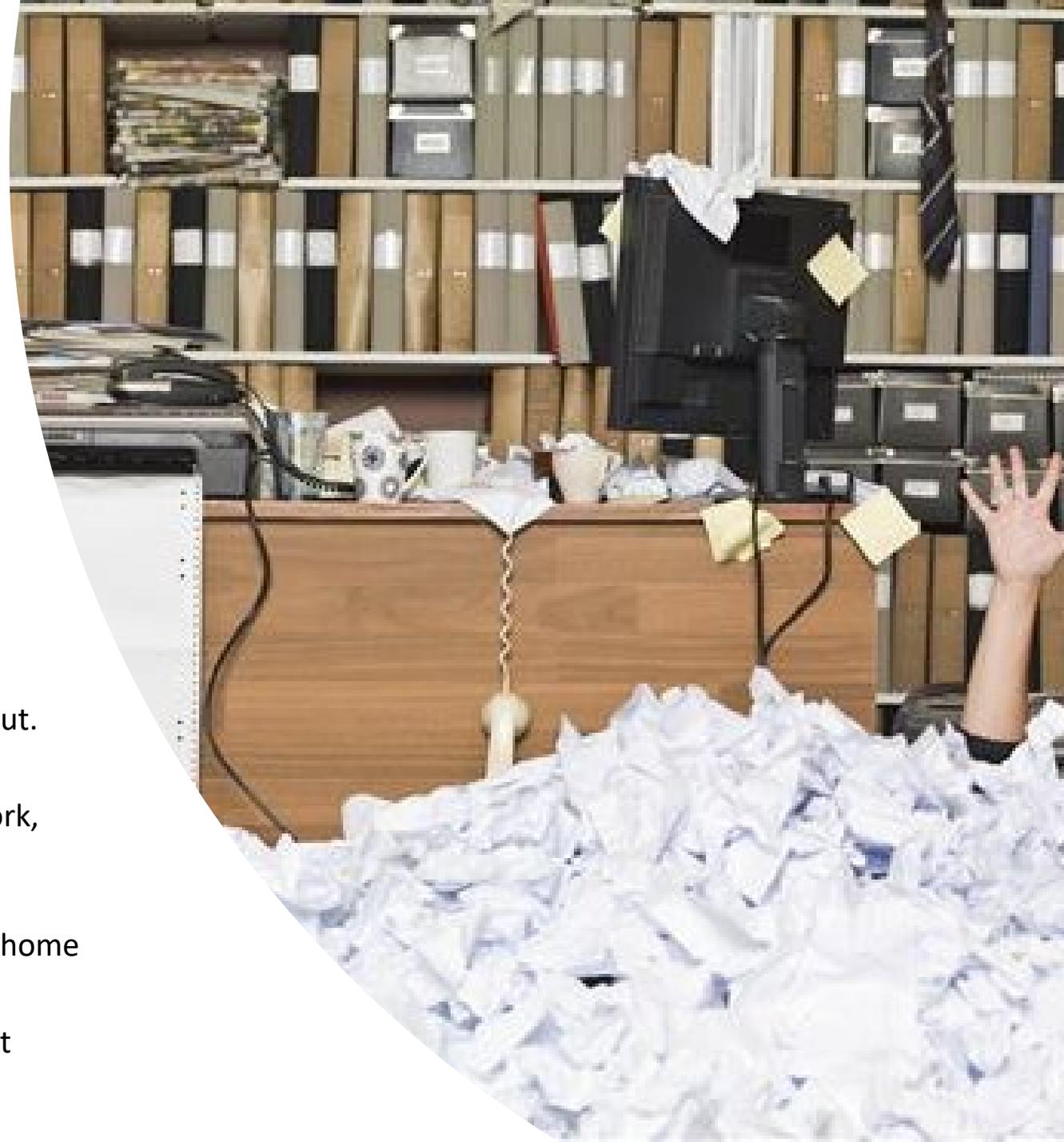
# Objections

- “I’ll need to use it later.”
- “I need the backups.”
- “It’s a waste to throw it away.”
- “I don’t have time.”

# Decluttering Office Space

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- Start with an assessment of what you want and need.
  - Visualize how you want to use the space.
- Divide your workspace into zones
  - Workspace for computer. Library for research. Storage for supplies. Filing area for archives.
- Set limits on the amount of “stuff” you will tolerate
  - Allow one bookshelf, if its full it is one book in, one book out.
- Keep only what you need at arm’s length.
  - Only essentials are allowed on desktop. Supplies, paperwork, etc. should be kept in the zone you established for them.
- Sort your junk drawer
  - Use draw dividers and compartments to give everything a home
- Have a basket/drawer for short-term storage
  - You will probably have overflow. Give it a home and clear it routinely.



# Office Clutter: Tips and Techniques

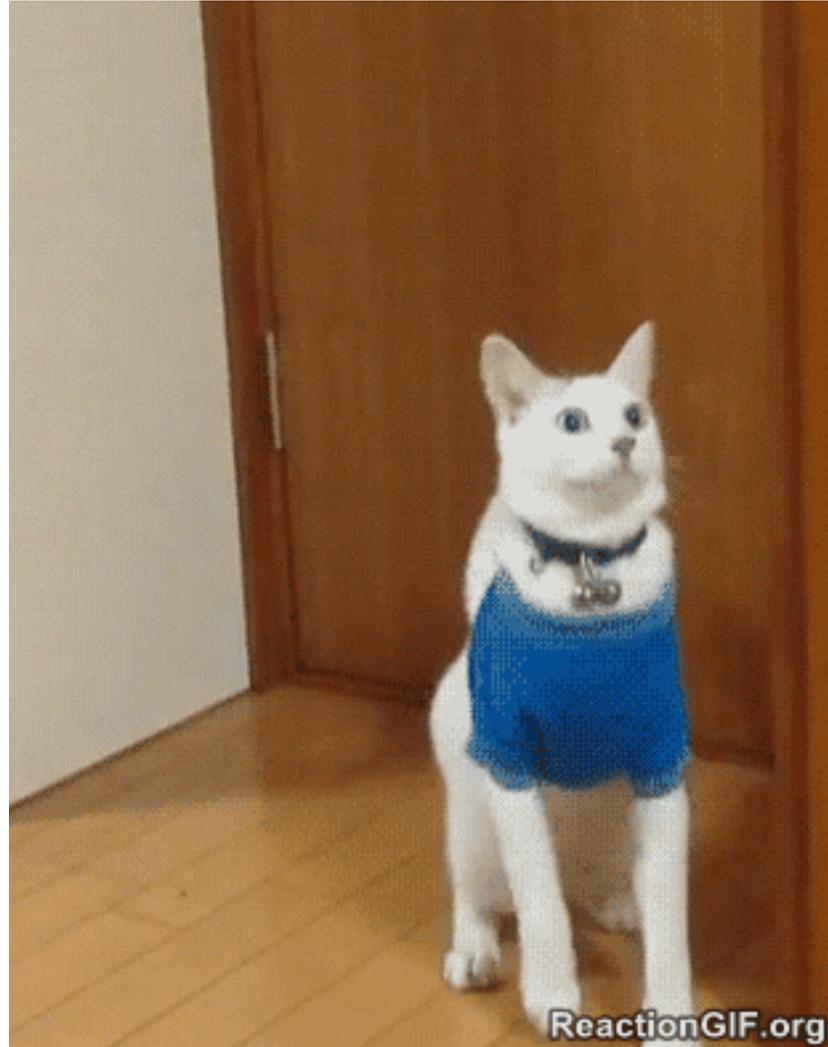


- Get rid of paper.
  - Toss as much as possible.
  - Scan everything you can, including business cards and meeting notes.
  - Ensure you are receiving electronic notifications/bills where you can.
  - File what is left.
- Create (and use) a daily paper system.
  - Active. Action. Archive.
  - To do. To File. To read.
- Make sure your personal items have a home.
  - Have a drawer, a basket, hooks on the wall for storage.
- Spend 5 uninterrupted minutes at the end of every day, maintaining your systems.
- Disinfect regularly.
  - Wipe everything down once a week. It will force you to clean up potential clutter. Put it on your calendar!



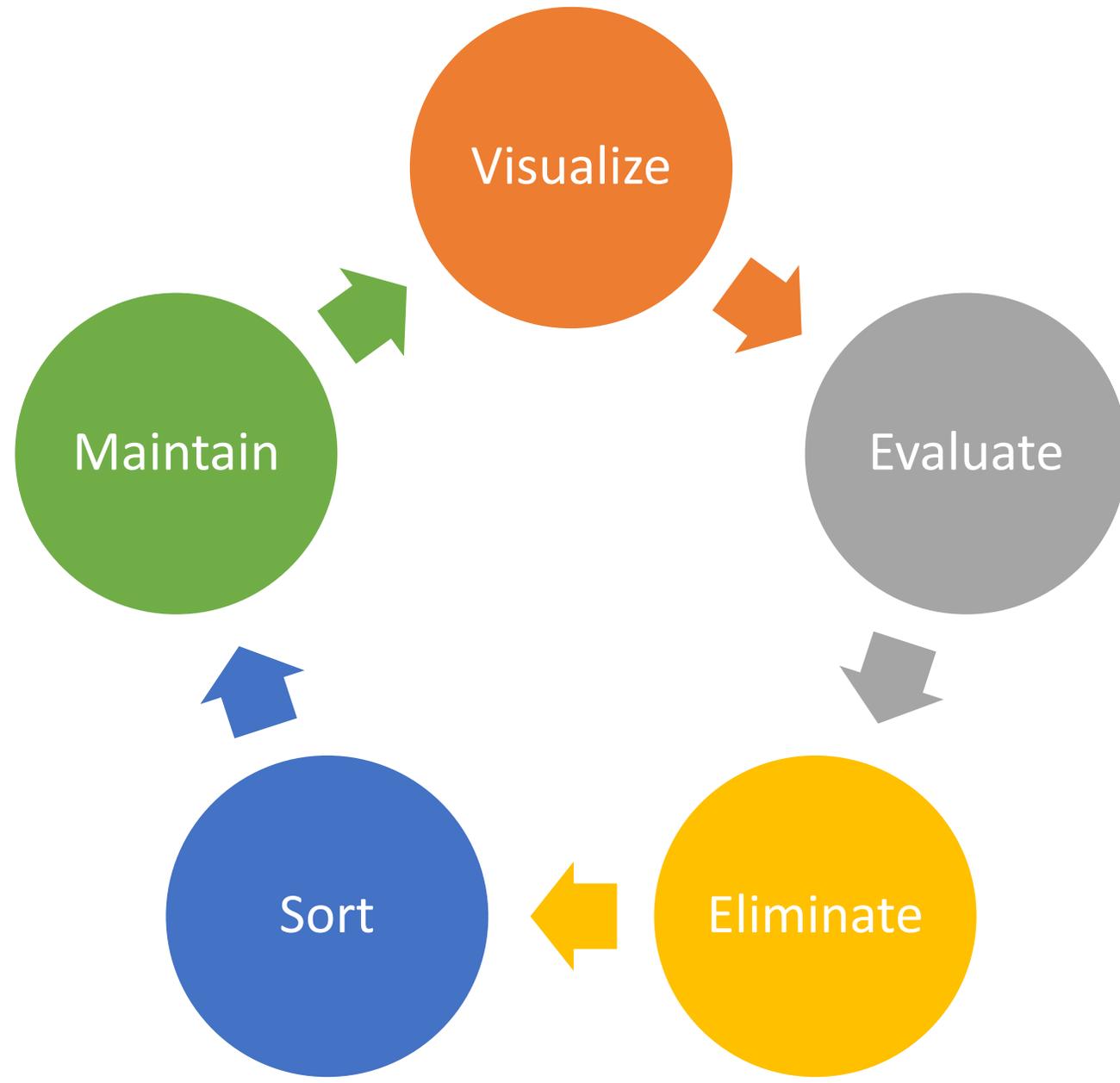
Digital Decluttering

Is this you?



What are we solving for?

**ATTENTION**



# Objections

- “I’ll miss out.”
- “People won’t be able to reach me.”
- “It’s going to take forever.”
- “I’ll be bored.”

# Digital Clutter: Tips and Techniques

## Tame your information overload

- Remove distractions.
  - Turn off email notifications on your phone and computer.
  - Remove social media alerts.
- Organize your documents.
  - Delete multiple iterations
  - Archive if afraid to purge
  - Folders are your friend
- Streamline desktop icons and phone apps.
  - What are the five essentials you need?
  - Place icons/apps in folders
- Purge apps and photos.
  - If you haven't used the app in three months, get rid of it.
  - Think about what moment you are trying to capture and only keep those that do.
- Simplify social media regularly
  - Know what you want to get out of your social media use.
  - Unfollow/alter feeds to suit your current interests.
- Set boundaries with email and phone calls.
  - Have a set period to check during the day. Trust emergencies will find you.
  - If it is going to take less than 5 minutes, respond immediately.
  - Filter. Create a "rule" to move emails automatically to folders
  - Unsubscribe ruthlessly.

# Addressing Time Clutter



- Be intentional. Own your time unapologetically.
- Be realistic about time per demand
- Know your priorities and values
- Rank and organize demands accordingly
- Identify and enforce boundaries
  - Work. Family/Friends. Personal. Social media.

“You can do anything, but you can’t do everything”

-David Allen

# Time Clutter: Tasks

## Upgrade your Task List

- Decide on your top 5 priorities. Not just at work but in life.
- Write down any and all tasks and organize under the priorities.
- Identify tasks that require focus as “Think work” and quick tasks as “Action items”
- Schedule time on calendar for both types of work
  - i.e. Ensure chunks of quiet, uninterrupted time for “think work”
- Organize your list both weekly and daily.
  - Every Friday set aside time to prepare for week ahead.
  - Move items from weekly to daily at the end of each day. (Remember to be realistic and intentional).

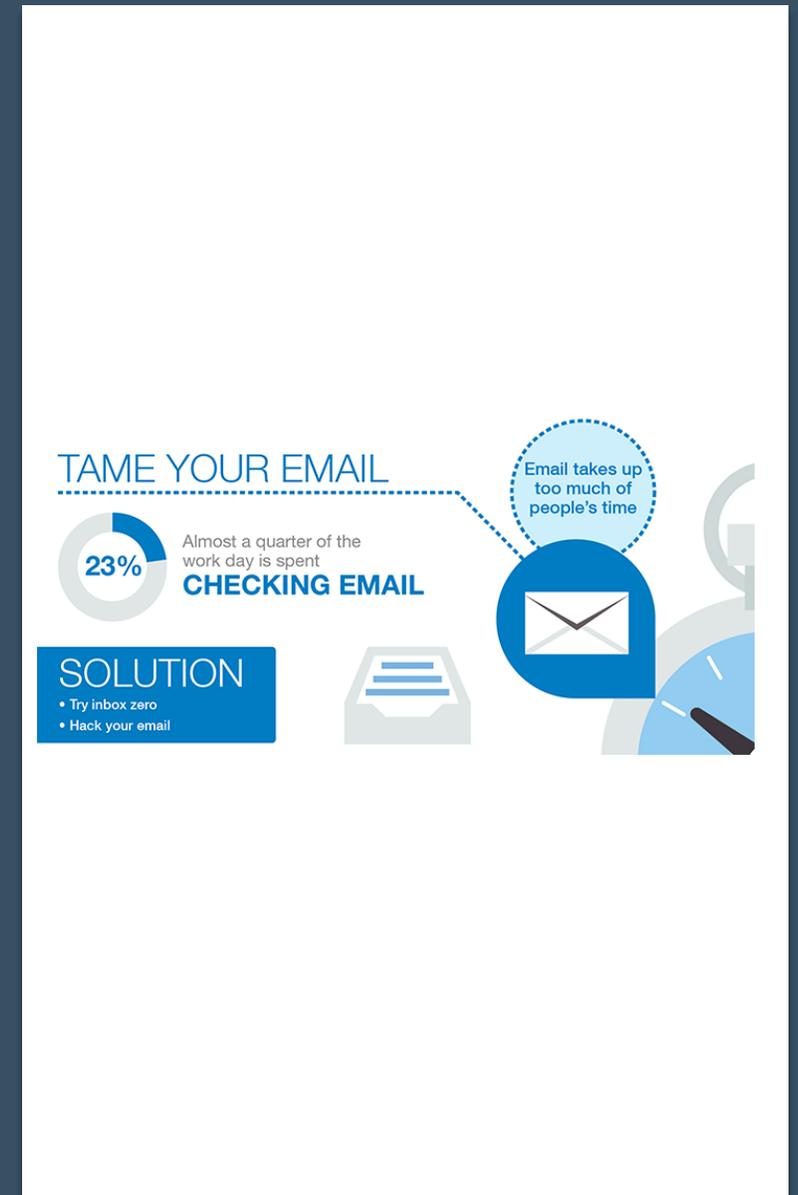
## Now to shorten the to-do list.

- Highlight all the items you dread doing.
- Delete or delegate as many of these items as possible.
  - Acknowledge the emotions you feel and what you have to let go of (a fantasy version of you)
- Transform anything highlighted left on the list into something you actually want to do.
  - Try pairing a not-fun task with something you want to do more of.
  - Tie the tasks with what their importance or significant is in relation to your priorities.

**Research shows making a plan to deal with unfinished tasks makes a huge difference in our ability to focus.**

# Time Clutter: Emails

- Fact: Time clutter and email are intertwined.
- Screen all calls and emails.
  - Reminder: Turn of all alerts
  - Schedule two or three specific times to respond.
- Have separate email accounts
  - Work only
  - Personal – family and friends, invitations, school events, etc
  - Bulk – subscriptions, newsletters, social media notifications,
- Relentlessly unsubscribe
  - If you haven't read it or enjoyed it in the past three months it goes
- Reduce email/call exchanges regarding scheduling meetings
  - Try software such as Acuity scheduling
- Work towards inbox zero daily



# Time Management Techniques

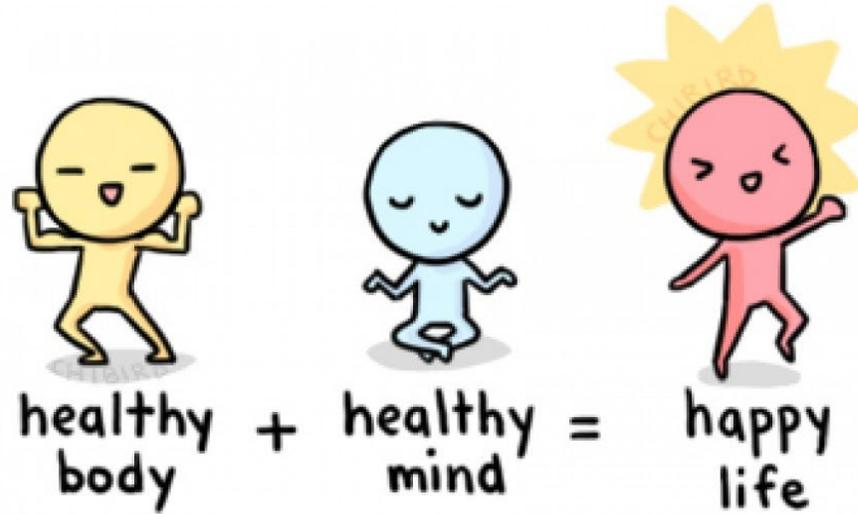
“All time  
management  
begins with  
planning.”

~ Tom Greening

[www.sabrinasorganizing.co](http://www.sabrinasorganizing.co)

- ABC analysis
  - ranks tasks from urgent to unimportant
- POSEC method
  - Prioritize by Organizing, Streamlining, Economizing and Contributing
- WADE
  - Write it down. Add it up. Decide. Execute.
- Pomodoro Technique
  - 25 minutes of work. 5 minutes of break time
- GTD (Getting Things Done)
  - Finish small tasks immediately and divide big tasks into smaller tasks to start completing now.

# Techniques for Decluttering the Mind & Body



# Decluttering the Body

- Stretching/Yoga/Exercise
- Nutrition
- Sleep hygiene



# Decluttering the Mind

## Mindfulness Skills:

Deep breathing

Body Scanning

Meditation



Mind Full, or Mindful?

# Decluttering Thoughts

- Cognitive Practices

Self-compassion

Reframe negative thoughts

Identify a mantra



“SELF-COMPASSION  
IS SIMPLY GIVING  
THE SAME KINDNESS  
TO OURSELVES  
THAT WE WOULD GIVE  
TO OTHERS.”

*Christopher Barnes*



## Set Goals

- Break down your goals into specific tasks and plans of action.
- Create a checklist.
- Periodically review and revise your goals, as needed.
- Keep goals visible.
- Identify an accountability partner.

# Rules to Remember

- It is a continual process. You will have setbacks and/or return to old patterns. That's ok!
- Sacrifices will need to happen.
- It takes ongoing *awareness* and *practice to make progress*.
- This will feel uncomfortable. Become comfortable feeling the discomfort. This is new.



A long, straight asphalt road stretches into the distance under a cloudy sky. The road has a dashed yellow center line and solid white edge lines. The words "MOVING FORWARD" are painted in large, white, serif capital letters across the road. The background shows green fields and a small building in the distance.

What do you think?

- 
- What is the first action step you will take?

# D.C. Bar LAP Services

- Assessment, evaluation, referral, short term counseling and support/follow up, monitoring.
- Access to a LAP volunteer who is trained and understands what a person is experiencing.
- Consultation with firms or other concerned parties about possible interventions.
- These services are free and confidential to D.C. Bar members, Judges and Law Students in the District of Columbia.

**Call 202-347-3131**

# Sources

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