



Article

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# Professional Organizing *and ADHD*

## **Professional Organizing and ADHD**

The first time I met Julie was three years ago when I did an initial visit to her condominium. As I walked into the entry way, what struck me wasn't the clutter, but a large, dead plant hanging on an exercise bicycle. She knew it was dead and needed to be thrown away, but she had stopped seeing it, even though every time she walked in the front door it was there.

It is common for people with ADHD to stop seeing individual items that make up a house full of clutter. Eventually all of the clutter morphs into one big pile of chaos and individual items are no longer distinguishable from the whole.

As a professional organizer, I specialize in creating solutions for clients with ADHD. Understanding the challenges they face in their living or working environment is

key to offering support. Providing a visual/verbal overview, while offering consistent one-on-one support allows for problem solving and an opportunity to teach skills that benefit a client struggling with ADHD.

Allowing me inside their homes is difficult, and often a client is filled with shame and embarrassment for allowing the clutter to reach this point. However, the clutter holds meaning, and as I begin to help them de-clutter it often draws out the internal issues and confusion that have left them feeling overwhelmed and unable to move forward in their lives.

For some people, organizational skills are not automatic but can be learned "manually" allowing a client to move toward independence. The majority of my clients struggle with time management, prioritizing, creating structure, and following through on a task, goal or project.

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Before



After

Using a range of coaching services allows a client to succeed based on their individual needs and challenges. It is also important to help them with problem solving, time management, and follow-up services if they fall behind the plan they've established.

Although the steps to becoming and staying organized are structured, the support approach must be tailored to the individual because each client interacts uniquely in their space and, depending on the situation, requires a personalized plan.

### **Why Organizational Services Work for ADHD**

For many people, vulnerabilities, fears, frustration, and loneliness are disguised as

dirty dishes, laundry, books, papers, dead plants, and garbage in their homes. These layers also represent missed opportunities and unhappy relationships, and are constant visual reminders of not fitting into a world that seldom looks beyond the surface. How does someone work their way out of this entangled mess?

### **Coaching**

Meeting weekly or bi-weekly for 1 to 2 hours, we prioritize and identify where to focus. Once we identify the goals, we problem solve and discuss techniques and steps needed to achieve those goals. This also allows us to identify different approaches until we find a technique that works. *No shame or blame, just solutions!*

It is difficult to slow down a racing mind and fidgeting body. Verbal dialog allows a client to purge his or her thoughts so they (we) can hone in on what really matters. Once centered and grounded, a client is better able to define what they need so we can create a plan of action.

This is what Julie and I accomplished. By combining coaching and organizational services, we were able to de-clutter her condo in short, 4-hour sessions allowing her to step back and reevaluate what we did, and how she could now maintain her space from a more understanding and self-compassionate perspective.

For more information, please contact Jamie at [Jrtabish@gmail.com](mailto:Jrtabish@gmail.com).