Are You a Paper Junkie?

 Are you disorganized (just don't make the time to get organized), chronically disorganized (where all self-help methods have failed in getting organized yourself), a packrat (collector of miscellaneous items), or even a hoarder (similar to a packrat, but keeps everything)? Or are you a person who is a "caretaker" type person who needs to come to the rescue of everyone, so you keep things "just in case"? Though I believe the Internet has made us a "Paper Junkie" instead of a "paperless society," we have all become overwhelmed with the information at hand, and feel we must print everything "just in case we need it."

You say, "If I don't print it, I'll forget what it was about and where can I find it again?" Very simple. Create a simple log in a 3-ring binder titled, "Where Did I Put That?" (or make it a fun title so you can remember where you can retrieve your information). Make 4 columns: Date, Description, Location (where you put it or who has it), and Comments (brief statements to help you remember the main points of the item of why you're keeping the information). On the other hand, you need to retain papers on items you still own such as birth and death certificates, paperwork related to real estate, etc. (check with your accountant).

Or you can say, "I know where everything is," even though your piles are 6 inches high. My question to you, providing you can find what you need, is <u>how long</u> is it going to take you to find it? Five minutes, an hour? or maybe not at all, and you have another project to finish (the average person spends 1-2 hours per day just looking for items). That's about 2 months a year!

But worse of all, what if someone knocked over those piles by accident, how would you feel? How long would it take to sort through things to find what you need? So I have created a simple system what I call my "Stop, Drop and Roll" method of how to have a neat mess so you can find things in 30 seconds or less,™ can be very effective in transforming a person's life into a stress-less environment.

I spoke with a person from an architectural firm, and they finally let this person go after 24 years, because there were stacks of paper

about 1 foot high spanning a 12 foot long table. It took 8 partners spending 6 hours just "sorting" the information. When I asked what it cost the firm because papers weren't filed or acted on, it was learned that it cost the firm about $150,000 or more, plus it damaged their reputation of lost business because they didn't follow-up!

So if you think you're a *"paper junkie"* and don't have the time or willpower to sort through the mountains of paper, just think how much it's really costing you in time, money, peace of mind, and space. Remember, we all want to work less and earn more, but that goal can't be accomplish if we're surrounded by unknowns.

If you have trouble in getting organized because you're so overwhelmed, or you're afraid to open that door where a white paper tiger will jump out and eat you alive, professionals are there to guide and support you through your journey. Remember, *"If you can't find it in 30 seconds, it's in the wrong place."*