

Directing the disorderly

Several years ago, PBS featured a program about “affluenza” — a condition of being so consumed with making money to accumulate things that one does not have time to enjoy the accumulated things. Rosanne Larkins was intrigued, and a few years later when she learned about the National Association of Professional Organizers, she was inspired.

In October 2003, Larkins formed Defining Time & Space to provide organizational solutions to time and space management. If the litany of television shows focused on organizing and planning is any indication, people are ready to hear the message of systemization.

“Our time seems to be so precious and our space limited. And when people remove some of that clutter — whether it be physically or mentally — it’s just very rewarding for both parties,” Larkins said.

If anyone can do it, she can. Larkins has juggled a successful career with Rockwell and Boeing, a working husband, four children, and a host of community activities for years. “I tell people I’m a Jekyll and Hyde because I’m a Girl Scout leader, so along with my effort to reduce clutter, I also can’t stand not to make things useful.”

Larkins has organized residences and home offices and is looking forward to working with small businesses. She also conducts seminars for people anxious to revamp their quality of life and work, like a group of new-year resolutionists and an assembly of preschool teachers.

“You create a new process today on how you’re going to deal with the future. If you try to accomplish all of the backlog before you get going, you never will get there. So you put a system in place today,” she asserts.



ROSANNE LARKINS

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Defining Time & Space

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Efficiency-mindedness is a hallmark of her IE experience, but it goes beyond that: “I learned early on because I worked for a company with a womb-to-tomb product line that once you understand that product, you become very valuable. When you’re doing any kind of organizing, if you’re a good listener and you really understand what people want and what they’re trying to accomplish, you can help change that process in their life the same way.”

Larkins’ priority in all this is to give people more time to spend with their families. “If you look at the statistics on how happy the American family is now versus in the 1950s, you would think we’re so much happier on a grander scale, and we’re not. It’s not the material things that make us happy. It’s how we spend our time and who we spend it with. And by us removing these things and concentrating on the right things, it really makes a difference.”

— *Monica Elliott*