

INTRODUCTION

"There just isn't enough time in the day."

"Savings account! What's that? And, these debts just keep piling up."

"Where are those important papers when I need them?"

"It's almost dinner time, and I haven't begun to think about what to cook."

"It seems like I never finish cleaning the house. Maybe it would be different if my family did their fair share."

If these statements sound all too familiar, consider yourself in the majority.

In today's society, our schedules are overloaded, our finances are tight, and trying to juggle all of our household responsibilities can be challenging to say the least. Managing the many details of day-to-day living not only consumes our time, energy and money, but often leaves us feeling frustrated because by the time we finish the things we *have* to do, there's little left over for what we *want* to do. We can feel as though we are spinning our wheels on the mundane and never making our way to what is meaningful. And, even though we might realize that having more order in our lives would help, the idea of getting organized feels overwhelming because somehow the "art of simplifying our lives" has become so complicated.

Although it may seem that we are stuck in these patterns with no manageable solutions, the good news is that a simpler life is possible and easier than ever before! *Orderly Living*™ can help you live a lifestyle that is simpler and more satisfying. The time and effort you spend to implement *Orderly Living*™ will be multiplied to you many times over.

If you are ready for a lifestyle that is simpler and more satisfying and you are willing to invest a minimal amount of time and effort to make it happen, *Orderly Living*™ is for you.

WHAT IS *Orderly Living*™?

Orderly Living is a complete, balanced, and personalized plan to simplify your life.

HOW IS *Orderly Living*™ UNIQUE?

***Orderly Living*™ focuses on the essentials.**

You don't need to organize everything – you just need to organize the *right* things! If you are going to devote your time and energy to get organized and to maintain that order you will want to focus on the areas that will make the biggest difference in your life. *Orderly Living*™ addresses these five key areas:

- Time,
- Money,
- Papers & Information,
- Meals, and
- Housework.

***Orderly Living*™ provides all of the organization you need, but not more than you need.**

Too little structure results in disarray and chaos. It wastes your time, energy and money. On the other hand, being too organized can be as counter-productive as being disorganized. This plan was

designed with balance in mind – enough structure to make your life easier, but not so much that you become a slave to the system.

***Orderly Living*™ adjusts to fit your personal style.**

One size does not fit all. Even after eliminating the extremes of no structure and too much structure, another factor comes into play – personal styles. Some people will want the simplest systems possible. Others who are more detail-oriented will want systems that reflect their more-structured personal styles. And, some people may prefer simplicity in one area but more detail and structure in another. *Orderly Living*™ begins with instructions for implementing each of the five “Basic Systems” (i.e., the systems in their simplest form) and then offers “Optional System Enhancements” at the end of each system for those who prefer more structure.

***Orderly Living*™ is easy to implement.**

It is not how much knowledge you have but how much knowledge you apply that will make a difference in your life. *Orderly Living*™ is formatted to make it easy to implement what you learn. Items needed (if any) for each section are noted at the beginning of the section. This allows you to gather what you will need before you begin. Additionally, as you follow the instructions to establish the systems, you will note that each step requiring an action is preceded by a check-box. Not only does this help in setting up your systems, but you will also know exactly where you left off if you are not able to implement the complete system at one time.

***Orderly Living*™ is designed with easy maintenance in mind.**

There are many different systems for getting organized. All will take an investment of time to set up, but the best systems will be *low maintenance*. The *Orderly Living*™ Systems were created with low maintenance in mind. Maintenance steps are listed at the end of each system.

HOW WILL *Orderly Living*™ ENHANCE YOUR LIFE?

With *Orderly Living*™, you will...

- save time and energy,
- save money,
- reduce stress and household hassles,
- accomplish more because of increased efficiency,
- have a smoother functioning home,
- improve the appearance of your home,
- and most importantly...enjoy a simpler life!

HOW TO USE THIS MANUAL (a must read!)

Your *Orderly Living*™ Manual Includes:

- THE FIVE BASIC SYSTEMS

The Basic Systems are the systems in their simplest form. Step-by-step instructions are given on how to implement and maintain each of the five Basic Systems:

System One – The Time of Your Life (Organizing Your Time)

System Two – Budget Simplicity (Organizing Your Money)

System Three – Paper & Information Management (Organizing Your Papers, Electronic Documents and Information)

System Four – Dinner is Served (Organizing Your Grocery Shopping and Meal Planning)

System Five – Home Clean Home (Organizing Your Housework)

- MAINTENANCE

The necessary steps in order to maintain the systems (after they have been set up) are located at the end of each system.

- SYSTEM ENHANCEMENTS

Optional steps to enhance each of the systems is located at the end of each system. These are for those who are more detail-oriented and prefer maximum structure.

- APPENDIX

The Appendix section includes additional information, tips, and examples.

- FORMS

Forms to be used in conjunction with the Basic Systems are located in the binder's front pocket. Optional forms for the System Enhancements are in the binder's back pocket. Please note that the copyright allows the forms to be reproduced or printed for your personal use.

Also included in the front pocket is an access code for a one-time download of the forms from the Orderly Living™ website, along with instructions. The downloadable forms can either be printed so you can manually fill them in, or you can fill them in on the computer. If you opt to fill them in on the computer, it is advisable that you save a copy of it to your hard drive before you begin editing in case you ever need to revert back to the original.

- LABELS

A complete set of file folder labels are provided in the binder's front pocket.

Setting Up Your Systems

Each system is self-contained. Therefore, you can set them up in the order you choose. It is recommended that you first complete all of your Basic Systems and then any System Enhancements you may have selected.

Implement one system at a time, one step at a time. (Check off each step once completed.) And, for families, remember that the more you can involve other family members in the process of setting up the systems, the more likely their continued participation in maintaining them.

Maintaining Your Systems

Setting up your systems allows you to begin reaping the benefits of Orderly Living™. Maintaining your systems allows you to continue enjoying the benefits. Add the maintenance steps (that are located at the end of each system) to your calendar until they become routine. If you choose to implement any of the System Enhancements, the enhancements that require maintenance steps have maintenance instructions listed with the enhancement. Also include these on your calendar.

MAKING IT HAPPEN

Orderly Living™ is possible. The manual you now hold can make it happen for you. Here are a few pointers for making *Orderly Living™* a reality in your life:

Commit to making the investment.

It is important to remember that the time you spend setting up your systems is an *investment*. Some people say, “I don’t have time to get organized.” But, in the same way that “it takes money to make money,” it takes time to make time. A small investment of time to set up these systems can save you a substantial amount of time in the future. And, saving time is not the only benefit of *Orderly Living™*. As noted earlier, there are many ways in which these systems will enhance your life. You don’t even have to wait until you set up *all* of your systems to begin enjoying these benefits. The benefits begin after implementing your first system, and increase with each additional system.

Begin now!

Even if it is a small step, take it. There are a total of 22 sections in the five *Orderly Living™* Basic Systems. Some can be completed in an hour or two. Others will take longer. If you implement two sections a week you will be enjoying all the benefits of *Orderly Living™* in just three months! Set up one section a week and you will have completed your plan in less than six months.

Remember the big picture.

As you set up your systems, focus on the task at hand, but always keep the big picture as your backdrop.

Consider the story of three bricklayers who were each asked the same question, “What are you doing?” The first bricklayer answered, “I’m laying bricks.” The second bricklayer said, “I’m building a church.” But the third bricklayer responded, “I’m building a place of worship – where people will come to worship my Lord.” Bricklayer #3 clearly saw his work as a means to an end – an end he envisioned and embraced.

Getting organized is not an end in itself, but rather a means to an end. Remember *why* you want order in your life. This will help you remain energized and motivated in the transition from where you are to where you want to be.

Now...all that is left is for you to get started so you can begin enjoying the many benefits of *Orderly Living™*!