

# THE SMOOTH MOVE

By Judi Jerome, LICSW, LADC



Labor Day Weekend, I moved my business office, where I see my clients, to a different town. I have been preparing mentally and emotionally for this move for over a year. As to the physical preparations, hmm well... When I moved into the therapy office many, many years ago, I combined the written materials and files from three offices into one. When I began coaching, I re-divided the AD/HD materials and files into two offices. When I finally began sorting through the forest of files it made my head spin.

A few months ago, I got serious about sorting, combining, and recycling papers and files, as well as cleaning out desk drawers and my walk-in closet. At times, this experience has been both overwhelming and exhilarating. I began by

mapping out a time schedule of when I would work on cleaning and sorting and wrote it into my appointment book. I promised myself that I would throw out and recycle at least one 'thing' and one piece of paper every day. I decided to begin with the stackable plastic 'inbox' trays. There is absolutely no way that one office should have enough stackable trays to build a monument to King Kong. *Whose idea was it anyway to put a walk-in closet in an office!* As I was filing the papers I chose to keep, I kept finding multiple file folders with the same name in different file cabinets, from before the first move. I decided to take it one step at a time and chose to stick with the "active" file cabinet and made sure everything was filed and put away. I ignored the multiple files until that phase of the project could be focused on exclusively. To be able to ignore, stay on one track, and not jump around all over the place took a lot of focus which I accomplished by taking a lot of purposeful deep breaths and short mindfulness meditation and visualization breaks.

Next, I looked at the subject areas of the files and started with the ones that I use most often. Then came the part where I spent the next month spread out on the floor to cleanse, combine, and sort the papers, articles, and handouts in the file folders. Throwing 50 copies of a handout into the recycle bin hurt worse than my last car accident. But keeping 100 copies on hand was just not practical. Hey, this was getting a bit easier as I moved into the next file drawer. Then, I found a huge stack of handouts that I had not given out to a client in about 15 years. Yeah but... NO, I kept one copy and put the rest in the blue bin. I then took them out of the blue bin, sat down, winced and went back to rationalizing. As awareness of that detrimental behavior set in I decided there must be another solution. I offered the rest to someone that I knew would use them and she actually said yes! When I reached the "R's" I was grinning from ear to ear. I had cleaned out the 'resources' hanging file folders and combined them into one a year ago. Yeah me!

This continued until I was down to the last section of folders. Burn-out began rearing its ugly, but predictable, head. I looked at the empty file cabinet that I was proudly disposing of and said, "ah, I've done enough, I've had it!" I felt like I could not bear to go on another minute. Oh dear, I recognized those words and feelings. They seal a fate of unmet goals. (or, they seal a fate of goals unmet -- or never

met). They are one of the reasons that people have multiple unfinished projects stuffed all over the place. I took a deep breath, meditated, and decided to give myself an extra day off to relax and recharge after first blocking out an extra time slot for when I returned.

Then the packing started. I spent one day packing up breakables and odds and ends and planned on the next day, one day before the move, to pack up the rest of my 'stuff'. I had brought home anything that really didn't belong in an office and threw out some of the stuff that I had trouble parting with the first time around. I settled in to a day of packing. Then I got the flu. Standing right there in the middle of the room with less than half of my office packed I suddenly sat down, started dripping faster, burning up, and spinning. I called a friend. All the files had to come out of the cabinets and be put into "banker's boxes" and the desk drawers had to be packed separately. As I sat there watching, drinking hot tea, and taking the cold and fever medicine she had brought over, my friend and colleague, Louise, marked each box with the location, file cabinet, and section (front, middle, back), that she had taken the files out of. Seems she's a natural born organizer, as well as a great friend. With the eventual help of Joyce, another friend and colleague, everything got packed and labeled. They even packed up my car!

I am happy to say that the next day, despite the fact that I got dizzy every time I stood up, two pick-up trucks, two neighbors and another friend/colleague (thank you Marty, John, and David) and three mini-wagons later, (what ever happened to the "station wagon"?) everything was loaded, moved, unloaded, unpacked, AND, thanks to Louise and David, filed and put away. And, we did it all in one trip! I sat there weakly trying to point to where I *thought* things should go as everyone bustled around setting up my new office. I sprung for the pizza!

I walked into my new office the first day and *almost* everything was where it belonged (hey, nobody is perfect, some things were stuffed into the wrong drawers and I am still looking for a few things that seem to be well hidden). It was a truly gratifying feeling to be able to walk in and get right to work with my first client. It was also an amazing relief to not to have to spend the next month, or year, unpacking boxes. **Conclusion: Organization, mindfulness, and friends makes for a smooth move.**

#### **A TIP**

Before I even threw out the first broken pencil or scrunched paper, I made a list of absolutely everything that had to be done from start to finish. There are wonderful "moving" lists to be found on websites such as [www.add.about.com](http://www.add.about.com), ADDitude Magazine and in organizing books such as *ADD-Friendly Ways to Organize Your Life*, by Judith Kolberg & Kathleen Nadeau, Ph.D (available on [www.addvance.com](http://www.addvance.com)) and *Organizing from the Inside Out*, by Julie Morgenstern. Then, I put together my resources, i.e. TIME, boxes, markers, tape, trucks, and friends. When I had my cleansing and sorting, packing and moving schedule integrated into my daily appointment book, I was ready to begin.

#### **ANOTHER TIP**

##### **Handling your business mailing list**

I have an extensive business mailing list, so as soon as I began thinking about moving I started checking each piece of mail that arrived to see if it was on that list. There are many flyers, brochures, magazines, catalogs, and odds and ends that were

not. I began early, making a separate list of all the addresses. I also started collecting the free postcard kits from the local post offices. As soon as I knew the address of my new office, I wrote up the postcards for the magazines and such. I also ordered a new return address self-inker stamp. My business mailing list was printed up on labels and the postcard that I then designed was printed up and is now ready and waiting for stamps, labels, return-address and the demise of my flu. Oh, one more thing, make sure that you put your "location change of address card" into the post office at least 2-3 weeks before the move if you want your mail to start arriving right away.

***and a confession...***

It has been one full week and the pictures are all still sitting against the walls, as I keep moving them around to try and figure out where I want to hang them. Hey, at least I'm not putting extra holes in the wall by jumping into it! I also, apparently, blew a fuse that shut down the electricity in everyone's office in my hallway due to not having bought an extra surge suppressor as planned to relieve the 'pile up' behind my desk. It's on my list, I promise!



*Judi has been in private practice since 1990 working with a variety of issues, and specializing in teens and adults with AD/HD and co-morbid disorders, life cycle transitions, and substance abuse. Judi enjoys coaching teens and adults with AD/HD in all genres of life. She believes that each individual has potential within to achieve success beyond the current limits that problems such as time management, disorganization, morning madness and late night hyper-focusing*

*may be imposing on their lives. Judi coaches people toward accomplishing their dreams as well as their goals. Her motto - Empowerment, growth and maintenance for positive life changes.*

**MINDFULNESS MATTERS COACHING®**

Richmond, VT 05477

(802) 651-7503

[coachjudi@judijerome.com](mailto:coachjudi@judijerome.com)

[www.judijerome.com](http://www.judijerome.com)