



[Links to your Online Resources](#)

- www.spongeandsparkle.com
- spongeandsparkle.com/blog



- <https://twitter.com/sparklesponge>
- facebook.com/SpongeandSparkle
- <https://www.pinterest.com/samdog/>

Clean House. Happy Mind!

September already?! Goodbye Spring and Summer – You were...interesting.

With most of us spending much more time at home, and thereby becoming more aware of our possessions and environment, you may be feeling the urge to simplify and declutter.

On that subject, Gretchen Rubin has an interesting new book out! In her prior book on the study of happiness, she realized that for most of us, **outer order contributes to inner calm.** (Hence: "Clean house, Happy mind")

Easy, quick, regular habits make it possible to manage possessions before they accumulate into clutter. Her new book *Outer Order, Inner Calm: Declutter and Organize to Make More Room for Happiness* offers tips and strategies for tackling clutter. One simple concept she discusses that resonates the most with people is this: **it's far easier to keep up than to catch up, and with the right habits, clutter never accumulates.**

Then the question becomes: *How do we create the habits that help us maintain outer order?*

These **21 strategic habits** can help maintain order:

The Strategy of Convenience:

Make it as easy as possible to maintain order.

- Use hooks instead of hangers.
- Have abundant waste baskets -- wherever they're needed, such as closets and hallways.
- Clear out everything you don't need, don't use, or don't love, so there's more room for what remains.

When it's hard to put things away, we create clutter.

The Strategy of Clarity:

Know exactly what you expect.

- Have an *exact* place for items (keys, sunglasses, stapler, passport, AA batteries, etc.). Weirdly, it's easier to put things away in an exact place than in an approximate place.
- Know who's responsible for what task. Avoid the irksome problem of **shared work!**

The Strategy of Scheduling:

Set aside time to create order. Follow the **one-minute rule** -- do any task that can be finished in less than one minute, without delay.

- Observe **Power Hour** -- make a list of all the tasks you'd like to accomplish, and once a week, for just one hour, steadily work on these chores.
- Mark transitions with a **ten-minute closer** -- every time you transition from one stage to another, take ten minutes to clean up your space.

The Strategy of the Clean Slate:

Take advantage of new beginnings to foster outer order.

- Clear before you move! Moving is one of the best times to clear clutter
- If you're not moving, make a **mock move** -- ask yourself, "If I were moving, would I bother to wrap this in bubble wrap and stick it in a box? Or would I chuck it or give it away?"
- Use any beginning to create orderly habits -- if you're starting a new job, it's a great time to shape habits related to filing, tossing, archiving, etc.

The Strategy of Pairing:

Pair an activity you *like* or *must* do to create outer order.

- Only allow yourself to listen to a favorite podcast while you're creating outer order (unloading the dishwasher, doing laundry, returning files to their places)
- When tackling a big job, play fun music, have good food, ask a friend to help you -- by pairing the task with enjoyable aspects, it becomes easier.
- Decide that you can watch your favorite TV show only if do speed-clutter-clearing during the commercials. You can get a lot done during a single commercial break.

The Strategy of Loophole-Spotting:

Watch out for the ten categories of loopholes that can lead to clutter.

- "I can have an orderly house, or I can relax and have fun" -- **false choice loophole.**
- "I worked so hard today, I deserve a break" -- **moral licensing loophole.**
- "Life's too short to spend my days clearing clutter! (Even though it bugs me when I don't)" -- **fake self-actualization loophole.**
- "What difference does it make if I put away one dog toy?" -- **one-coin loophole.**

What we do every day matters more than what we do once in a while, so creating regular habits that shape our daily lives makes it far easier to keep disorder at bay.

Benefits of Good Posture

(Real Simple magazine August 2020)

- 1** You will remain resilient under pressure. In a 2018 study on posture from the University of Auckland, they found that good posture helps people feel more alert and confident as well as lowering the physiological response to stress.
- 2** You will rev up your brain power! When you need to concentrate, imagine a hook at the top of your head that is pulling you up. As you do this, bring your jaw back and drop your shoulders. It was found that it was 26% more difficult for adults to do a simple math calculation when they sat in a slouched position versus an upright one.
- 3** You will breathe better! Proper posture lets you take in deeper breaths which increases the amount of energizing oxygen in your body.
- 4** Your optimism will increase! Sitting or standing tall is an instant mood booster. Slouching is a conditioned cue, triggering memories of times when you may have felt weak or defeated.
 - The brain has to work harder to evoke empowering and positive thoughts compared to when one is in an upright position.

Thank You!

...FOR YOUR SUPPORT

OF OUR SMALL BUSINESS DURING THIS DIFFICULT TIME.

WE APPRECIATE ALL OF YOU!!

WITH THE ARRIVAL OF SEPTEMBER, I FEEL OUR COMPANY HAS TURNED A CORNER AND WE ARE ON FIRMER GROUND WITH SOME WONDERFUL SPARKLERS ON BOARD!

DUST AND DIRT BEGONE! WE ARE READY FOR BATTLE!



We so appreciate all of you who are faithful responders to the one click survey that we send you after every cleaning!

ALL feedback, good or bad, is critically needed to be able to know how we are doing, and what we need to work on for you!!

It is easy breezy – just clicking on an appropriate face.

During the hot weather please be mindful of the temperature in your home when we come to sparkle. Our masks make it feel even hotter than the actual temperature. Thank you! 😊

Thank You, Thank You, Thank You, for Supporting this Small Business !!!!!



3374 Hardee Avenue
Chamblee, GA 30341

404-633-9652

Fax: 770-451-3886

www.spongeandsparkle.com