

Staying Organized Through A Health Crisis

You hear the words “you have cancer” and the bottom falls out of your stomach. Your age or economic status doesn’t keep you safe. You worry how you are going to get through it. A tough road ahead can be made easier by knowing and accepting the journey for what it is right from the beginning. Also, by maintaining balance in your normal day-to-day routine through some organized systems.

Whether you are the patient or caretaker, clearing the *physical, paper, technical and mind clutter* will enable you to concentrate on the task at hand...dealing with your health.

MIND CLUTTER

Mind clutter can be damaging. Have you ever found yourself not able to sleep because the tapes in your head keeping playing? Turn the tapes off, put them to rest. Lack of sleep inhibits healing.

- So let go of past regrets that lead to depression, anger and frustration.
- Let go of all the ‘what ifs’ scenarios.
- Put questions and to-dos that come to mind into a notepad. Once they are written down, you can forget about them until you need to take action. If you are unable to write, use a message machine or recorder.
- Think positive thoughts.

TECHNICAL CLUTTER

Technical clutter refers to message machines, e-mails, computers, cell phones, I-pods, etc. We live in an era of ‘connectivity.’ While on the one hand it’s easier to stay in touch with family, friends and work, on the other hand, it’s impossible to get away from family, friends and work. Unplug!

- Let your answering machine or voice mail take messages work for you. Think of them as your ‘robotic’ secretary.
- Keep a notepad by the phone to make notes of calls received. Return calls when you are physically able.
- Caretakers or family members can intercept the calls and only let through the ones you have energy for.
- E-mails require energy too. However they can be dealt with at any time during the day or night.

- Delete all Spam and e-mails that are of no interest to you.
- If you normally journal, using your computer can be a positive tool. Write when you are able – it will help to reduce your stress and keep you present with all that you are dealing with.