Clarion Review

House & Home

Outrageously Organized: Ten Professional Organizers Share Their Trade Secrets

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Four Stars (out of Five)

Ten professional clutter-busters and simplicity specialists offer their best organizational tips in a fun and helpful collection called *Outrageously Organized*. In each of the numerous short chapters, with cute titles like “Turn Piles into Files” and “Bidding a Collection Good-bye,” the authors provide advice and moral support for those who want to eliminate some of the stress caused by clutter and chaos. The tone is lighthearted and encouraging, and those faced with too much stuff, too much to do, and no time to do it will enjoy reading the suggestions and maybe even give a couple of them a try.

Each chapter starts with a hypothetical question, such as, “My apartment is so small. Do you have ideas on how to stretch my budget and get more storage? Signed, Cramped.” The authors take turns tackling the questions, offering their professional suggestions for solving the dilemmas many people seem to encounter while trying to keep their homes and families organized. From storage strategies to ideas on repurposing items found around the house, the advice ranges from the very basic to the motivational. “Clutter costs money, time, and peace of mind,” reminds one of the authors, providing a true incentive to “create and maintain a simpler,

less complicated life."

Occasionally, the individual experts offer conflicting opinions. For instance, one says, "Recycle cardboard boxes for storage containers," and a few pages later, another declares, "Rid your storage area of cardboard boxes." Like most of the ideas provided, these are suggestions, and readers are encouraged to pick and choose which work best for them. For instance, some family cooks may cringe at the Upside-Down Pizza recipe one expert provides. The recipe involves the use of canned, refrigerated crescent rolls, and purists may shudder at the idea. Others, however, may find that this "easy pizza" is the perfect solution for a hearty dinner for four after a long day at work.

The writing styles of the ten contributors vary. Some chapters are better written than others, but the meaning and intent are always clear. Also, there are a few dropped words, typographical errors, and other minor editing issues.

Overall, the beauty of *Outrageously Organized* is that nearly every reader is bound to find at least one or two ideas that will help make life a bit easier. None of the tips will be helpful, of course, without the motivation to try them. Through their lighthearted and very personal style, the authors do their best to inspire readers, and they share their ideas in ways that show understanding and compassion. The book does a fine job convincing readers to begin the process of decluttering, simplifying, and getting organized.

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