

Chapter 10:

Collections: Preserve Your Treasures—and Your Sanity, Too

I want you to be happy. Really. Do all of the things that nourish your soul—grow an herb garden, visit the Great Wall of China, and take up flamenco dancing. Collect rare, beautiful, or curious objects, too, if they “speak” to you in some spiritual way. But understand how treacherous an idea collecting is within the covers of a book about organizing shortcuts. Most of us can barely manage the possessions we need in order to survive. And you want to acquire *more* possessions and cram them into your living space—items that aren’t even *necessary*?

So I hope you will forgive me, dear collectors, when I say that the certified, hard-core, *How to Cheat at Organizing* approach to collecting is . . . just not to do it. Collecting done right, in an orderly way, requires so much more than just buying stuff—it entails display, research, preservation, and even some paperwork. So save yourself the bother. Frequently visit museums and galleries, where they manage collections so much better than you could ever hope to. And keep your home and your calendar blessedly free of the resulting clutter.

Gee, now you're mad at me. You have already filled the spare bedroom with 729 lunch boxes, or antique poison bottles, or Charlie Tuna mementos, or hat pins, or soft drink cans, or Three Stooges items—and the only advice I have for you is “Get rid of them”? You know me better than that. Of course I'm going to help you. Here's a chapter full of ways to simplify and manage the collecting process so it interferes minimally with the rest of your life and your living space. You nut case...