

PREPARE FOR YOUR REFRAME

You're about to embark on a new journey. We'll be your guides and co-conspirators as you discover new ways to be organized and productive, and to tap into the plentiful reserves of creativity that we know you have.

PLEASE READ THIS INTRODUCTION CAREFULLY, AND CONSIDER PRINTING IT AS A REFERENCE FOR THE DURATION OF THE PROGRAM.

HOW IT WORKS

Beginning on Monday, we'll send you an email every day (Monday-Friday) for six weeks. Each email will contain a series of small tasks. You can look at these tasks as building blocks. Each day we'll clear something out of the way, or add a new technique.

For the first three weeks of the program, we will be focused on office systems, email, and to-dos. During weeks four through six, we will focus on the bigger picture: ideas, projects, and taking care of you. If you follow REFRAME thoroughly, by the end of the program, you will have:

- Made systems to organize your papers, desk, email and calendar
- Created time and space to develop ideas into fully developed, actionable projects
- Emptied all of your to-dos out of your head, and into a functioning-system that will “remember” for you
- Started a daily contemplative practice to help you clear your mind
- Created systems for continuously working to simplify your life, and to stay connected to what matters most.

SOUNDS PRETTY GOOD, DOESN'T IT?

WHAT'S THE CATCH?

There is a catch. You're going to have to work pretty hard, especially for the first three weeks. If things have been feeling out of control (your inbox has 3000 emails, or your office is covered in papers) it's realistic to expect that it will take a little while to get caught up. Depending on the current state of your “organizational affairs,” there might be a lot of work at the beginning. Don't be discouraged! We'll try to break everything down into small chunks, so that it won't feel overwhelming.

One thing we know about us creative types is we often get really excited about starting something new, but then we give up or get discouraged easily. Don't do it! The process may feel tough at times, but working through REFRAME is not nearly as tough as the feelings of disappointment or frustration we feel when we miss out on doing many of the big things we want to do in our lives because we are dealing with the day to day stuff.

We ask you to channel all that stored frustration into motivation: take a "never give up" attitude here. Our wish is for you to be writing novels, playing guitar, acting, doing groundbreaking research, building furniture, baking, or changing the world-whatever it is that you want to do, we want you to do it.

We also want you to feel free to do the big things you are meant to do, but in order to get to the big, we have to find a way to simplify, pare down, and create systems for managing daily small stuff. And to push through, even when it's difficult! Remember, we're here to guide you!

We're available to you via email. See contact info at the bottom of this doc.

BEFORE YOU START, YOU NEED TO:

1. *Buy supplies*

HERE'S WHAT YOU'LL NEED:

- Sticky notes-one small pack
- One rubber band
- One pack of paperclips and one larger clip for holding a stack of note cards
- 150-200 3x 5 note cards in white, red, and a variety of at least four colors
- A box to hold note cards, and at least 15 dividers for the box (this is going to be your to-do box, and you're going to be looking at it a lot, so you might want to get a cute one)
- A three-file tray for your desk
- A basket or box for your desk (this will be an "outbox," so you can choose the size)
- A shredder
- A recycle bin or basket (we're really hoping your town recycles)
- Painter's tape (or any other kind of tape or stickers that you can use to attach a note card to a wall without leaving a mark)

- Labels for your files and your trays (you'll need to print these prior to beginning, see below)
- A label maker (recommended) or handwritten labels to use on trays and accordion files
- Supplies for creating a filing system
- What you need for filing depends on what you have.
- Do you have a filing cabinet?
- If the answer is no, you'll need three accordion files, and labels for each.
- If the answer is yes, but you don't have a filing system, you'll need file folders, and labels for the files, and one accordion file.
- If you already have a filing system, you'll just need one accordion file and labels for it.

2. Set up your electronic calendar.

Ok, we are old school in many ways: we're creating a to DO system out of note cards, because creative people tend to remember better when they write things down. However, we're going to insist on one hightech thing: an electronic calendar. Why doesn't the whole "writing is better" rule apply here? We need a calendar that can remember for you and that will allow you to create repeating blocks of time. We also need a calendar that can remember birthdays years in advance, and create repeating events. Paper calendars don't have these types of features, unfortunately. If you haven't been using an electronic calendar, and you have one on your computer, please get somewhat familiar with how to enter events, how to make events repeat and how to add email alarms and alerts. Most calendars are very simple to use. You can use any calendar you want, but our requirement is that it must have:

- The ability to create recurring tasks
- The ability to create email alarms for events

WE RECOMMEND:

- Ical (Mac)
- (PC)
- Google Calendar is a good alternative, too.

In an ideal world, you'd have an iPod, phone, or blackberry that kept a version of your calendar for you to access on the go. If you don't have any of these gadgets, or just want to be old-school, you can just print your calendar weekly, and carry it with you.



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3. *Download a timer (or get an oven timer).*

OK, so creative people also tend to lose track of time. It would be great if you could get an oven timer, or, even better, a timer for your computer desktop. Just Google “timer” and “widget” and “download” and you’ll find a ton. If you have an Apple, Heather recommends: <http://www.apple.com/downloads/dashboard/status/meditationtimerwidget.html> This widget notifies you of the end of the time with gently ringing chimes.

NOW, GO ON TO QUICK REFERENCE AND FAQ!

QUESTIONS?

Email us. Jodi Carter [info@breathingspaceconsulting.ca] is a professional organizer, here to answer your questions about the nuts and bolts of organization. Heather Jassy [heather@emptyspacecoaching.com] is a counselor and personal coach who can help if you’re overwhelmed, stuck, or don’t know how to get started. We promise to write you back within 24 hours.

You can also discuss REFRAME and get creative ideas on our Facebook page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/reframe/116419003430?ref=nf>

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