

Simplify your castle

Marie Snider

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As much as I try to have a neat, orderly desk, somehow the papers pile up — magazines to read, folders to file, bills to pay, emails to answer, letters to write.

And when the piles begin, it's very easy to put one more magazine or folder on the stack. I always mean to put the piles away, but the higher the stack gets the more formidable it becomes.

Sometimes I imagine how easy my life would be without those stacks to deal with!

That's why I was intrigued by the command "Shovel Out from under Those Piles" in the book **"The Joy of Simple Living"** by Jeff Davidson.

Says Davidson, "In every life, some piles will accumulate. A basic step to making your life simpler is to confront the piles in your life head on... If you haven't noticed already, such piles can accumulate in a hurry. The higher the stack the more complexity the pile represents... piles represent unfinished business."

Davidson, who is a stress management expert, offers a plan to help you get on top of those piles. And at the same time, reduce your stress.

Dismantle piles and collect everything on your desktop. Then sort this huge pile into four stacks — important, urgent, interesting and recycle — always remembering the difference between urgency and importance.

Of course, some things require immediate action. Do them first, but remember they are rarely the most important tasks.

After the urgent is done, rank the important tasks, putting the most important on top. Then, immediately, begin work on that task.

Thus, says Davidson, you can begin Simplifying Your Castle.

The whole title of the book is "The Joy of Simple Living: Over 1,500 Simple Ways to Make Your Life Easy and Content — At Home and At Work."

Obviously, Davidson doesn't expect any one person to resonate with all 1,500 tips. The book is not meant to be read cover-to-cover, but to be sorted through for ideas that appeal to you.

"What is simple and easy for one person may be onerous and involved for you," he says.

Davidson notes that even one of his heroes, Albert Einstein, was unable to devise a totally unified theory of the universe. But he tried. Likewise, Davidson says there is no single complete system for accomplishing simplicity. Still, it is possible to try.

Davidson instructs his readers to "Simplify Your Castle" any way you can.

Whether your castle is a small one-story house, a big beautiful Victorian house or an apartment in a retirement village, it doesn't matter. It's still your castle.

One dictionary definition of a castle is a "place to which somebody, especially the owner, turns for privacy or refuge." So now, at the beginning of the year, why not think about simplifying your private refuge.

Get rid of the stacks and file papers every day. Eliminate the clutter in your kitchen. Throw out magazines as soon as you read them. Pass some treasures along to your children and give away the ones they don't value. Cull your closet. Sort through the boxes you haven't looked at in 30 years.

You get the idea. Do whatever it takes to make your "private refuge" relaxing and comfortable. What better time than the 2008 to simplify your castle?

Write Marie Snider at thisside60@aol.com or visit her website at www.visit-snider.com

Emporia Weather

| CURRENTLY | MON | TUE | WED | THU | FRI |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 21° |  |  |  |  |  |
| Mist | 36° 19° | 43° 21° | 32° 20° | 31° 16° | 32° 17° |



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