

## Disorganization

Disorganization can be caused by many factors. Determining the cause(s) of one's disorganization and finding solutions to overcoming it can be aided with the assistance of a professional organizer, particularly one trained in dealing with chronic disorganization.

*The following chart offers limited examples within each category and should not be considered all inclusive.*

<b>Neurologically-Based Conditions</b>	<b>Environmental Factors</b>	<b>Lack of Skills</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD)</li> <li>• Traumatic brain injury (TBI)</li> <li>• Fibromyalgia</li> <li>• Parkinson's Disease</li> <li>• Multiple sclerosis (MS)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor lighting</li> <li>• Lack of storage space</li> <li>• Multiple domains</li> <li>• Awkward traffic flow</li> <li>• Unpleasant space</li> <li>• House renovation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Never taught in school</li> <li>• Poor modeling by parents or guardians</li> <li>• Churning</li> </ul>
<b>Choices</b>	<b>Communication Problems</b>	<b>Systemic Factors</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over scheduling</li> <li>• Too much stuff</li> <li>• No sense of mission</li> <li>• Not setting long-term goals</li> <li>• Not setting goals</li> <li>• Misplaced priorities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Poor negotiation skills</li> <li>• Conflicting communication styles among family members or colleagues at work</li> <li>• Weak management, leadership, and delegation strategies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No system</li> <li>• Ineffective system, such as one that is overly complex or too difficult to implement</li> </ul>
<b>Addictive Tendencies</b>	<b>Mental Health Issues</b>	<b>Transitions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compulsive acquisition</li> <li>• Infomania</li> <li>• Urgency addiction</li> <li>• Compulsive saving</li> <li>• Drug &amp;/or alcohol addiction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Depression</li> <li>• Anxiety disorder</li> <li>• Avoidance disorder</li> <li>• Social anxiety disorder</li> <li>• Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD)</li> <li>• Compulsive Hoarding Disorder</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• One or more moves</li> <li>• Relocation Stress Syndrome</li> <li>• Birth or adoption of a child</li> <li>• Parents or adult children move in</li> <li>• Divorce or separation</li> </ul>
<b>Aging Issues</b>	<b>Beliefs and Attitudes</b>	<b>Physical Challenges</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Physical difficulties</li> <li>• Medications</li> <li>• Cognitive problems</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• False beliefs such as: I am a procrastinator; I always have been, and always will be.</li> <li>• Fear of making a mistake or being judged poorly by others</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Impaired mobility</li> <li>• Fatigue</li> <li>• Poor vision</li> <li>• Dysphasia</li> <li>• Sleep disorder</li> </ul>
<b>Learning Styles or Modalities</b>	<b>Perfectionism</b>	<b>Life Crises</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• System not well suited to the individual's learning style or modality</li> <li>• Visual thinker who believes out of sight, out of mind</li> <li>• Tactile sympathy</li> <li>• Holistic thinker, who has difficulty breaking thinking down</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Leaving things undone due to a fear of making a mistake</li> <li>• Acquiring more than is necessary to make things perfect</li> <li>• Spending too much time doing something in an effort to make it "perfect"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Health emergency</li> <li>• Death of a loved one</li> <li>• Automobile accident</li> <li>• Job loss</li> <li>• Family crisis</li> <li>• Trauma</li> </ul>
<b>Attachments to Possessions</b>	<b>Learning Differences</b>	<b>Ineffective Beliefs about Possessions</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Over-attachment to objects due to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentimental reasons</li> <li>• Instrumental reasons</li> <li>• Intrinsic reasons</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dyslexia</li> <li>• Dyscalculia</li> <li>• Dysgraphia</li> <li>• Auditory processing disorder</li> <li>• Nonverbal learning disability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Unrealistically valuing objects</li> <li>• Associating possessions with one's identity</li> <li>• Sense of obligation to take care of something</li> </ul>
<b>Information-Processing Deficits</b>		<b>Emotional and/or Behavioral Patterns</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Decision-making difficulty</li> <li>• Distractibility</li> <li>• Memory deficits</li> <li>• Categorization difficulties</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Procrastination &amp; avoidance</li> <li>• Acquiring or saving objects as a result of emotional reactions</li> </ul>

NSGCD Fact Sheet – 004 - Written by Phyllis Flood Knerr, CPO-CD®

Phyllis Flood Knerr, CPO-CD® professional organizer and NSGCD member resides in Bloomfield, NJ.

© 2010, NSGCD. This fact sheet may be reproduced for educational purposes only; copyright must be noted. Fact sheets and other informational material may be obtained from the NSGCD website at [www.nsgcd.org](http://www.nsgcd.org).