

Factors Associated with 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.

BRAIN-BASED CONDITIONS	BELIEFS ABOUT SELF / POSSESSIONS	SITUATIONAL FACTORS
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The following chart offers limited examples within each category and should not be considered all-inclusive.

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