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Julie Morgenstern puts your home, and your life, in order.

Julie Morgenstern is an organization and time management

Kim called her basement a disaster area, but Julie saw the foundations of a workable system.

and newsletters. Right now, she places everything in a large box on top of a china cabinet in the dining room. Papers quickly pile up, and even though she always knows that the school newsletter is in there *somewhere*, finding it turns into a tedious task of paper-sifting.

To get a sense of how Kim's mind works, I had her sort through the box while I watched; I wanted to see what types of papers were coming in. She would apologetically tell me she wasn't sure why she'd saved a certain doodle, but what Kim needed to realize is that, in the moment, it's sometimes impossible to know what to save and what to toss—you need to wait until the time is right to sort everything out. Instead of focusing on what papers should be thrown away, I wanted Kim to redirect

life—school, soccer, and after school—so she can file each paper as it comes in. Every month she can go through each file and toss whatever's outdated.

As for schoolwork and after-school projects, Kim needs the context of the entire year before she can decide what's important to her to save. I want her to get a deep, open box in which Julia can place all her art projects and schoolwork—with the idea that it's fine if those papers pile up for a while. At the end of the school year, Kim and Julia can go through the box together, picking out their favorite pieces. It'll be a fun tradition to review everything as they choose the "keepers" to store in the basement.

Clearing the

for Julia's dance classes, and other accessories from her activities are added to the mix.

The way I see it, the space is 80 percent workable with some simple tweaks needed to restore order. When Julia was younger, she didn't leave her shoes in the entryway. Now that she's older, the added four or five pairs tip the balance for Kim, taking the area from manageable to messy. Two large boxes for shoes—one for Julia, one for Kim (Stephen stores his shoes in the bedroom)—will open up the area, and a smaller basket or box placed on the bench can store the magazines and catalogs Kim wants to look at when she has a spare moment. The closet just needs seasonal maintenance. A couple of times a year, Kim can perform a simple SHED—giving away clothes that don't fit or haven't been worn so that what's left is accessible when she needs it.

KIM'S REACTION: "It was helpful for me to have Julie break down my problem areas—especially since she showed me easy fixes to one."