

## Spring Cleaning Community Comment:

Spring is here. In Humboldt, April Showers bring May Showers but we start to gravitate outside anyway and notice how much stuff has piled up over the Fall and Winter. It is time for Spring Cleaning.

I know I need to do Spring Cleaning but it is hard to get started, because I am not sure where to begin. So, I pick some items to throw away and start putting them in a pile. Then I start making sub piles, of things I might want to throw away.

Before long, I often have a bigger mess than when I started.

But I know for a fact how good it feels to clean up a room or a shed or the garage. So, I dig back in.

A friend and colleague actually enjoys helping people get organized for Spring Cleaning. Barbara Browning is the creative force behind Order Within™. Barbara works for the California Center for Rural Policy and she is a very active member of the Arcata Sunrise Rotary Club. But she also serves as a consultant to help people get organized.

I first met Barbara about 8 years ago when she was coordinating Get Organized courses. I took the class because I was falling behind on processing paper and e-mails at work. I was expecting some kind of stern lecture about cleaning up my office and being more disciplined. But what I got was so different. Barbara is a very good listener and she tries to understand your individual style. She asked questions, understood my job first and then made recommendations, practical, useful recommendations.

Her Order Within™ services can help you at home or at work. She helps people sort, purge and organize. She helps with time management and paper management. She even knows about Feng Shui to help organize and harmonize your environment.

Barbara and her crew of organizing apprentices can actually provide in-house coaching and hands on support to folks that need some extra help.

Barbara is a big advocate of protected time at work. If something is important, schedule time to do it. Don't just assume it will happen between appointments or meetings. At first, it feels weird to schedule an appointment with yourself. But it works. Other people see it on your calendar and don't try to interrupt. How many times at work does someone ask "Do you have a minute?" It never takes just a minute and those interruptions add up.

Barbara is very <sup>generous</sup> giving and she recently donated her organizational skills and time to the Humboldt County Breast Health Project.

Order Within is also sponsoring a free session for residents of Blue Lake on Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, from 9:30 to 12:30. This session is free to Blue Lake residents thanks to a grant from Blue Lake Rising. You do need to pre-register at 925-2875.

Yesterday was Barbara's birthday, so today she is a year older and a year wiser. Happy Birthday Barbara.

This is Mike Goldsby for Community Comment.