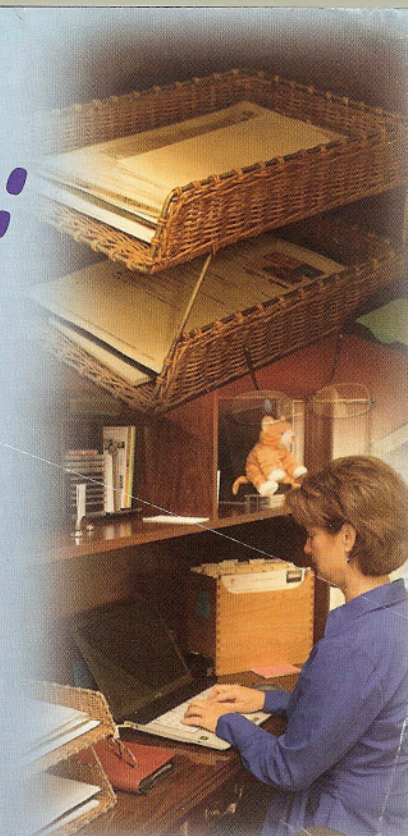




# Organizing:

## It's In Her Genes

by Kim Gibson  
photography by  
The Michael Catlow Group



Some call it fate; some call it luck; but whatever you call it, it's a sweet story. Kathleen Cowley grew up one street over from a boy, David, who she would eventually marry. Their parents spent weekends playing cards, had cookouts on Memorial and Labor Days, and was best friends with David's sister. She fondly remembered hers and David's "teasing chemistry" as they got older. Finally, when he returned from an army tour in Vietnam, David asked Kathleen to marry him and their life together began.

Through it all, Kathleen looked to her mother who she says was her "life mentor and biggest support." Sadly, her mom passed away in '01. Kathleen still misses her; but she always remembers her hard work and dedication. "She was a very organized person and managed to juggle being a wife, mother, volunteer, working, and keeping our home orderly and tidy without it appearing to be overwhelming (not that life was always perfect!)," Kathleen said.

Besides having her mother as a great example, Kathleen says she was "born with organizing genes." She was very active organizing fund raising events for her kids' schools. Once her youngest graduated high school, Kathleen's friends and family encouraged her to start her own organizing business, and so KC Streamline Concepts was begun.

Kathy knew she needed some training, so she looked around for some ideas. "Once I started to create my business, I found Barbara Hemphill, the world renowned 'Organizing Queen'," Kathy said. Hemphill wrote books on organizing both home and office. Kathy contacted her and eventually became a Productivity Training Organizing Consultant.

**"To help them streamline their paper flow gives me great satisfaction."**

Connecting with people on a professional level is important to Kathleen and her business. Besides being a member of the National Association of Professional Organizers, she was recently certified by the organization to present their NAPO in the Elementary Schools Program to teach students basic organizing principles. She also takes pride in her association with eWomenNetwork.com. "This networking group of women has been instrumental in helping me get my business up and running!" she said.

Kathleen doesn't just enjoy organizing for

organizing's sake; she really enjoys helping people. "Going into a client's office and showing them the tools to use to help them streamline their paper flow gives me great satisfaction. I know when my clients organize their time, space, and information, they are more productive, but most of all, less stressed."

When a client first calls, she listens to their organizing dilemma then has them complete a Productive Environment Scorecard so that she can get a good understanding of what their vision is. She then performs an on-site assessment to determine what service the client will need. Once she's implemented her strategies, she follows up with her clients to see how the processes and tools are working for them.

### FILE IT - INFORMATION YOU WANT TO KEEP

**Contact Management System** - Enter contacts and clients regularly

**Reference Files** - Client information, Current files, Warranties, Reference Materials, Receipts, etc

### ARCHIVE FILES - FILES THAT MUST BE KEPT

**Alpha-Omega Organizer™** - Desktop file with tickler system and current Action files

### ACT - WHAT YOU CAN DO NOW

**In/Out File Trays** - Sort your papers into a 3-tray desktop organizer

**Calendar** - Use what works best for you, record appointments and reminders immediately

**Action Files** - By date, type of action, project, or name

### TOSS IT - YOU DON'T NEED TO KEEP IT

**Wastebasket, Shredder, Recycle Bin**

*From KC Streamline Concepts & with permission of Hemphill Productivity Institute*

