

Creating Space When There Isn't Any

Space *is* the final frontier. When you've gone as far as you can go. When you've used up all your livable space. When there's nowhere to turn but to where you already are.

Should you find yourself in an unlivable, over-crowded environment with no resources to move to a bigger, more expensive but healthier surrounding, start from where you are. Just look around. If you need room badly enough, you'll find it. It may surprise you where it is. And it may amaze you how easily it can be vacated.

My example isn't about a house, but the same principles can be applied. My space was a storage area. But I opened up more space by questioning what I was storing there and why.

I needed a file: some space to house and readily access my office documents. But I couldn't find any. All my filing cabinets were full. The accordion file I bought at the office supply store was too small and constrictive. I couldn't spend money on more cabinets or another accordion. So what could I do?

I started looking around. What could I use from my immediate surroundings to house these paper files? Sure, I could have scanned them onto my hard drive or a CD, but my personal preference was hard copy paper files that I could transport and handle.

Then I saw a milk crate sitting in a storage closet. It would be perfect. But what was in it? Wouldn't that stuff have to be moved and jammed into somewhere else? Maybe. Maybe not. I started to evaluate the contents of the milk crate. What was in there? Why did I put it there? Was it still relevant? Did I still need it? Could I get it somewhere else?

What I discovered was: I really didn't need *any* of it! The contents had become dated, obsolete and/or irrelevant. I had used it to collect directories and locator information that I thought I would need for future reference. But the information turned out to be for projects I would no longer be involved with, people who were no longer in the positions listed and phone books with dated information that I could access easier online through Google or web sites. I also found that once I tossed one piece, a lot of other related or connected pieces could also be tossed.

I learned that I could create space where I had already stored items by re-examining my reasons for keeping them. As years passed by, emotions and sentiments waned, technology improved informational access and I had changed what I believed in, became involved in and worked on.

So when you're running out of room and have to create more open space, consider starting with the space you are in. In re-analyzing your reasons for keeping/storing items you may find some that no longer apply. That could just free up some space and bring clarity, peace and joy.

Your comments, questions and – most importantly -- your tips are always welcome. Contact me anytime at jeff@simpleclear.biz.