



SYNC OR SWIM

**201 Organizing Tips You Need to
Survive the Currents of Change**

Judith Kolberg and Allison Carter

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INTRODUCTION

Jerry checks his Outlook calendar, looks at his iPhone task list, and empties his pockets of napkin notes. He wonders why it is more complicated than ever to know what to do first. He feels like he's swimming upstream and if he pauses for just a moment he'll be swept away.

Madison gasps, "A hundred and fifty dollars! I was just trying to reach my Mom," but the traffic court clerk is unsympathetic as Madison pays her texting-while-driving ticket. Her life is so busy that the only time that she has to keep up with friends and family is by texting or making calls from the car. She'd love to find more time for her personal relationships.

Richard thought he was ahead of the game by automating his bill paying online. Imagine his shock when he found out his utility company was still deducting payments *for an address where he no longer lives*. Richard is using the latest technology and still can't keep up with it all.

Jerry, Madison and Richard are out of sync. Their lives are so overwhelmed with information, tasks, chores and to-do's that they can't keep up. Technology was supposed to bring more productivity, greater efficiency and less stress. Instead, incoming messages urgently arrive from any one of a dozen transporters that ring, beep, chirp and vibrate, adding complexity, not simplicity to their lives. Life used to be simpler. We used to just have to put out the trash. Now, we have to dispose of electronic trash, recycle, and shred information in addition to tossing out the good old-fashioned trash. Paying bills may be automated but managing money is complicated. There are junk fees to scrutinize, credit scores to guard, and portfolios to balance. Security used to mean locking the front door. Now, our very identities can be stolen.

Coping with all the modern chores of our lives has become increasingly difficult. How do we do it all without feeling overwhelmed and ineffective? This

book will help. It puts the best next-generation organizing tips all in one place. And, it provides resources for tackling tasks, creating routines, and charging forward with chores.

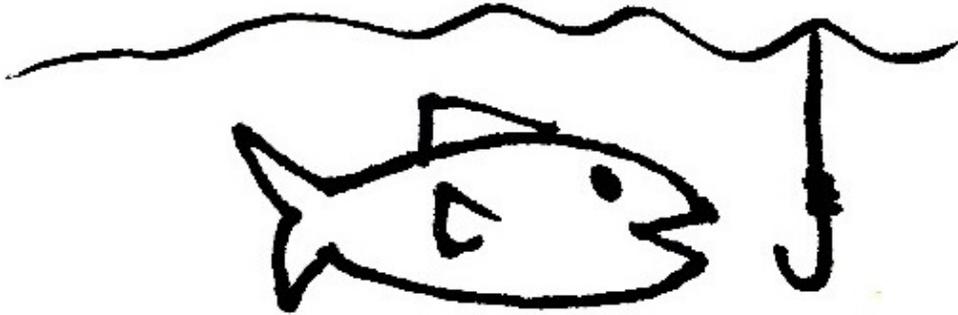
We are professional organizers. We've written many of the tips ourselves based on our decades of experience with clients drowning in information, stuff and never-ending to-do lists. In addition, we've personally selected tips from our colleagues who are also on the front lines of disorganization and stress. The result is *Sync or Swim: 201 Organizing Tips to You Need to Survive the Currents of Change*. *Sync or Swim* tips are 'new school.' They address problems with a 'technology-lite' spin. We cover managing the inflow of information, storing information and syncing devices, using social media, organizing finances, maintaining the home and managing family, strategizing safety and security, organizing gizmos and gadgets, and keeping up with health and wellness. We appreciate that tips for organizing our modern lives are always evolving. We've done our best to choose the most helpful and durable tips, but we hope to build on this book to make it continually useful. Releasing it as an ebook gives us the flexibility to improve, expand, and modify the content in the future. Be sure to check out www.syncorswim.info regularly for more tips and techniques.

We hope you find these tips useful as you work to better manage, organize and ENJOY your life!

– Judith Kolberg and Allison Carter

1. SYNC OR SWIM

Storing and Syncing Information



Finding information can be like fishing in an ocean in a boat with holes. You've got to have some way of knowing where the fish are without drowning in the sea itself. Computers, smart phones, flash drives, software, and cloud computing are powerful tools for storing and retrieving information. But, the devices need personal tweaking to make them talk to each other and serve our informational purposes. Here you will find tips from the nation's smartest organizers who understand the machine-to-human connection. Follow their advice, and you'll be captain of your information ship in no time. This section includes syncing your devices, organizing downloads, managing passwords, storing research and searches, and using software to organize hard copy items such as boxes, books and collections.



Tip #1 – Set a daily alarm to ensure that you never forget to sync the data from all of your devices.

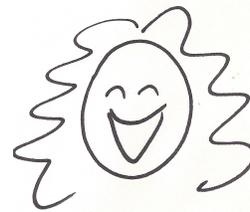
From the tiniest smart phone to the largest desktop computer, and all of the mp3 players, tablets and other electronic gadgets in between, it's essential to sync the information frequently to ensure that addresses, phone numbers, task lists, and calendar events are up-to-date.

Create a ritual for shutting down your electronic life at the end of the day. Use an alarm on your cell phone, computer, or bedroom alarm clock, or consider a reminder/wake-up call telephone service like Waker Upper, Wake Up Land, or Snoozester to keep you from forgetting to sync.

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- ★ Resource: <http://wakerupper.com>
- ★ Resource: <http://www.wakeupland.com>
- ★ Resource: <http://snoozester.com>

While you're syncing, remember to recharge too!



Tip #2 – Sync your calendars together. If you have a Blackberry or other device, be sure to sync your calendar to your spouse's so you know who is picking up junior from the tutor's and who is going to see dad at the Seniors' home or, better yet, when your next "date" night is!

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