UNSTUFF U®
with Andrew Mellen



40

THINGS YOU CAN DO IN 5 MINUTES

or less to get organized



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BEDROOM

1 MAKE YOUR BED

2 FOLD & PUT AWAY LAUNDRY

3 HANG UP RANDOM CLOTHES

Gather up any clothes on the floor, draped over a chair or a stool, and put ‘em back on a hanger.

4 CLEAN UP YOUR NIGHTSTAND

Remove items that don't belong. Corral small, loose items in a pretty tray or drawer divider. Limit bedside reading material to 1 or 2 current books. Send everything else back to the bookshelf—or, better yet, donate them.

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ENTRYWAY

5 HANG UP A KEY RACK FOR EVERYONE'S KEYS

The quickest way to find anyone's keys is to create a home for all of them. Ideally near but not visible from outside the front door.

6 HANG A HOOK (OR THREE) IN A CLOSET

Chances are there are things hanging from doorknobs, hangers, and clothes rods that would fit and be happier hanging from a hook.

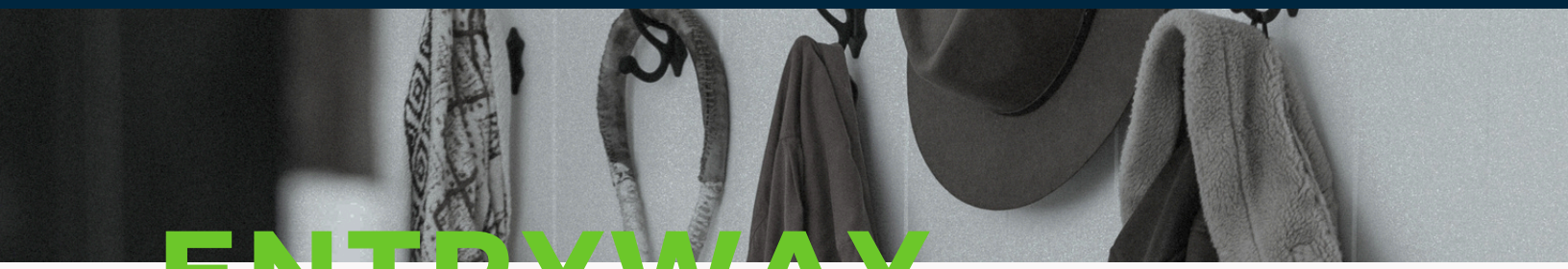
7 STRAIGHTEN UP SHOES & COATS

If you've got a shoe rack, tidy it up. If you don't, arrange shoes by pairs, and arrange coats according to the current season—either heaviest to lightest or vice versa.

8 ORGANIZE THE ENTRYWAY

Establish a home for your keys, shoes, bags, pet supplies (dog leash & poop bags), and sunglasses.

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ENTRYWAY

9 GATHER UP 3 (OR MORE) THINGS YOU'VE BEEN MEANING TO DONATE

Put them by the front door or directly into the trunk of your car.

10 CLEAN OUT YOUR BRIEFCASE, WORK BAG, PURSE, OR WALLET

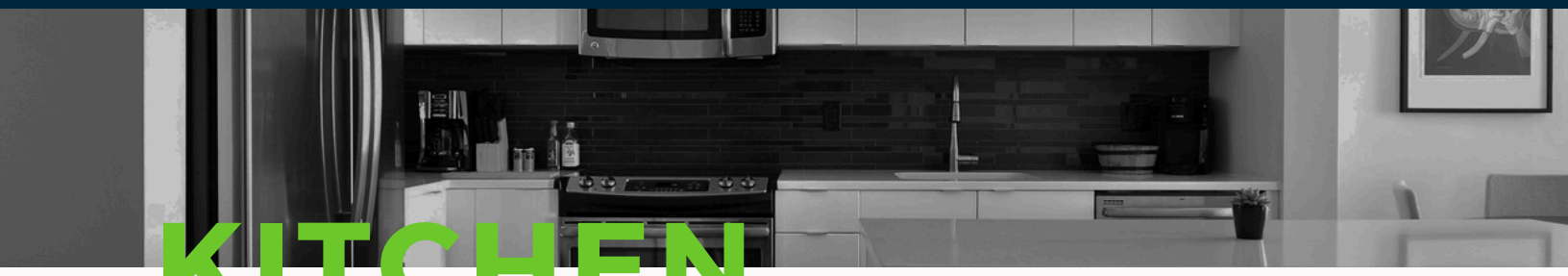
- Dump all of the contents out.
- Toss any trash.
- Take any business cards and put them near your computer—you'll enter them later.
- Test pens to make sure they work and throw away any that do not.
- Consolidate loose gum, mints, and candy.
- Remove loose change and toss in the change jar.
- Remove extras or duplicates, including lipstick, ChapStick, etc.
- Toss any expired coupons and discount cards.
- Return only the things you need with you on a daily basis.
- Keep like with like items in smaller zippered bags.

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KITCHEN

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KITCHEN

11 UNLOAD (OR LOAD) THE DISHWASHER

12 TACKLE THE JUNK DRAWER

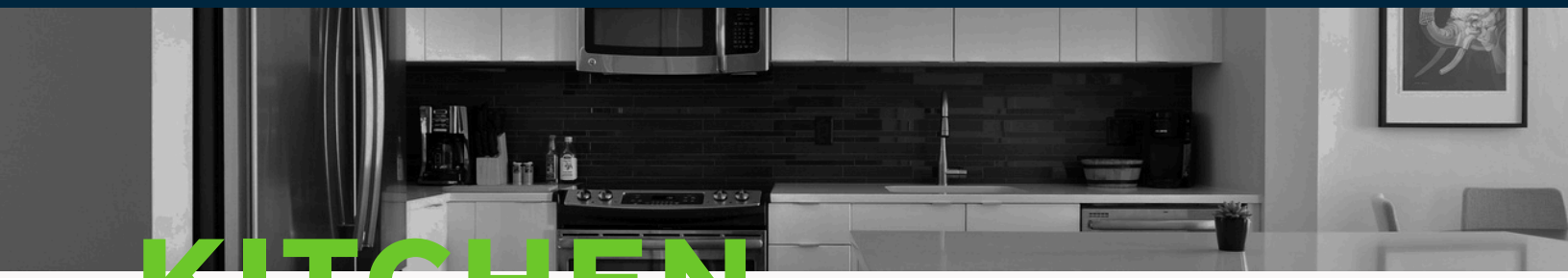
Start by dumping all the contents out.

- Toss any trash, old delivery menus, dried pens, dead batteries, etc.
- Relocate items that don't belong in the kitchen.
- Group similar items like batteries, rubber bands, paper clips, binder and chip clips in containers.
- Reload the remaining items:
  - A flashlight.
  - Matches/lighter.
  - Fresh twist ties & zip ties.
  - Scissors.
  - A couple of pens/pencils and a notepad.
  - Current delivery/takeaway menus.

13 ORGANIZE UNDER THE KITCHEN SINK

Like the junk drawer, relocate everything that doesn't belong under the sink or even in the kitchen. If you're short on space, take advantage of the backs of your cabinet doors for hanging things like dishtowels.

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KITCHEN

14 CLEAN OUT ONE SHELF OR DRAWER IN THE REFRIGERATOR

Pull everything out then wipe it down. Then toss any expired products or things hanging out that you don't use or like.

15 ORGANIZE ONE SHELF IN THE PANTRY

Clear off one shelf or empty one basket in the pantry. Toss out or donate (unopened and not expired) food you and your family won't eat. Decant cereals and other dry goods from their packages into airtight food storage containers. Group like items together, wipe off the shelf, and quickly put food away.

16 ORGANIZE FOOD STORAGE CONTAINERS

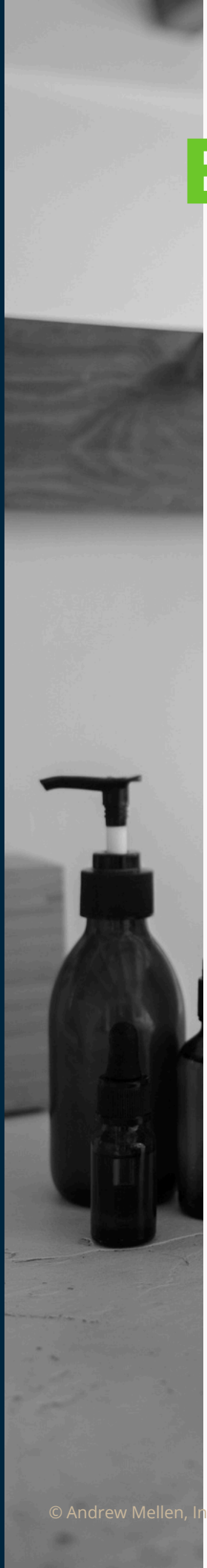
- Gather all food storage containers and their lids.
- Match every container with its lid.
- Discard stray lids or bottoms.
- Discard broken/damaged/weirdly discolored containers.
- Donate unneeded containers that are still usable.
- Stack containers inside each other and arrange lids from smallest to largest together in the same drawer.

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BATHROOM

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BATHROOM

17 CLEAR THE BATHROOM COUNTER

18 ORGANIZE THE BATHTUB/SHOWER AREA

19 DECLUTTER AND ORGANIZE MAKEUP

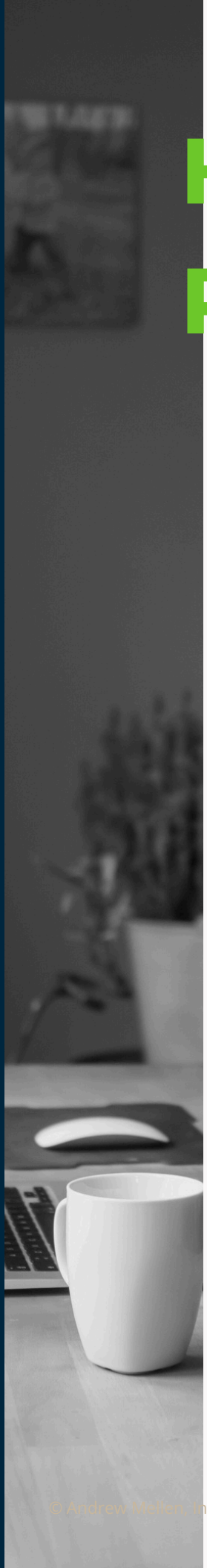
Let go of any expired or unwanted makeup and applicators. Donate any unopened makeup you won't use. Wipe down all makeup cases, bottles, and containers. Clean your makeup brushes. Only keep out the items you use daily.

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HOME OFFICE/ PAPERWORK

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HOME OFFICE/ PAPERWORK

20 FILL OUT YOUR CALENDAR FOR THE WEEK

Start by blocking out time for recurring appointments with yourself, then add in any announcements, appointment cards, invitations, errands, etc. Make sure to leave buffers between meetings and tasks that require different skills.

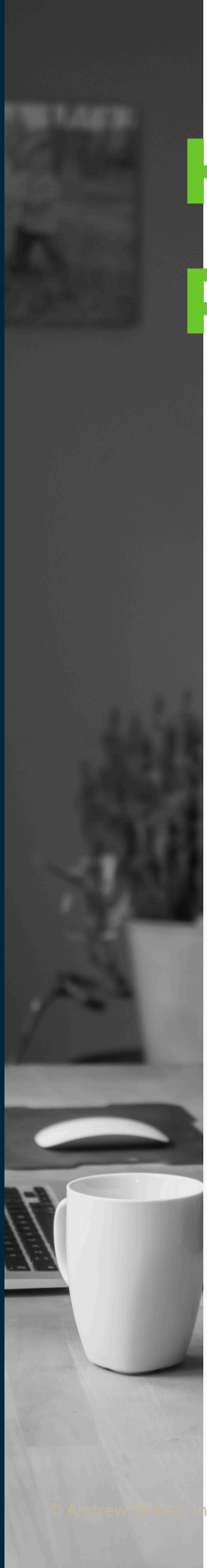
21 RETURN ONE PHONE CALL OR SCHEDULE ONE APPOINTMENT

Gather all pertinent info before dialing (e.g., insurance cards, prescriptions, and your calendar).

22 SHRED SENSITIVE DOCUMENTS

Set a timer and shred for 5 minutes.

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HOME OFFICE/ PAPERWORK

23 TIDY UP YOUR COMMAND CENTER

Review any corkboards, bulletin boards, magnet boards, baskets, and refrigerator surfaces. Remove and recycle or toss anything that is outdated or no longer needed.

24 SORT A FILE DRAWER

Set a timer for 5 minutes and start at the front of the file cabinet. Work until the timer goes off.

25 SORT ONE PILE OF PAPER

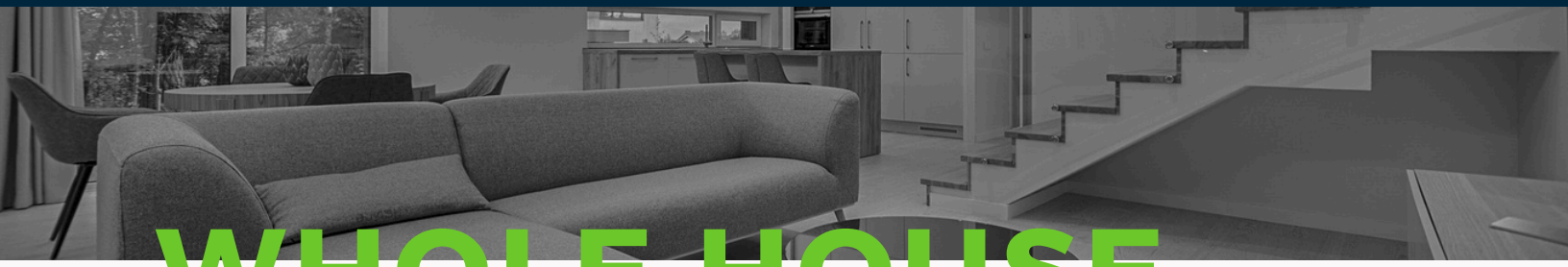
Set a timer for 5 minutes and start at the top and move through the stack either setting each item aside to file, shred or recycle. Work until the timer goes off.

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WHOLE HOUSE

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WHOLE HOUSE

26 DO A 5-MINUTE TRASH/RECYCLING SPRINT

Set a timer for 5 minutes and gather up as much trash or recycling as you can find before the timer goes off.

27 TIDY UP LOOSE CORDS & CHARGERS

Unsightly and a trip hazard, loose cords and cables are easy to organize and clean up with Velcro, zip ties, or twist ties.

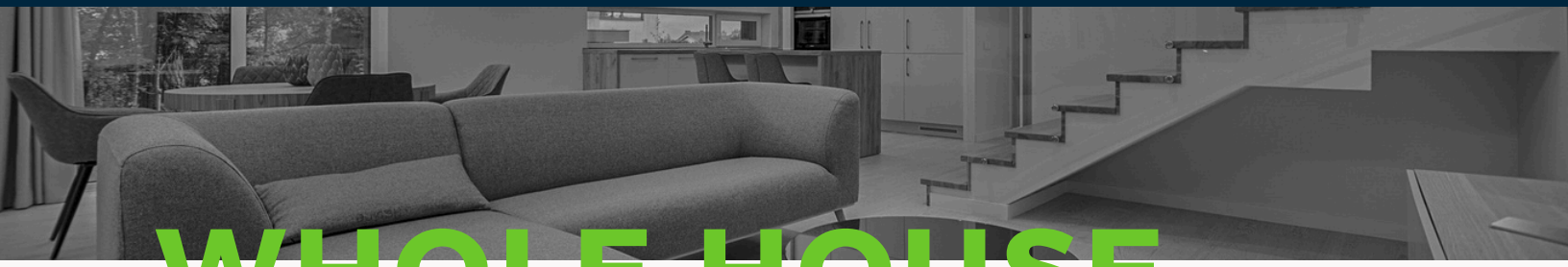
28 REMOVE/RELOCATE TCHOTCHKES & DECOR

You don't have to strip out everything on every surface, but a quick scan will often reveal that there are too many things to look at and therefore to dust. Either relocate them or release them.

29 ORGANIZE A SHELF

Pick a shelf, any shelf. Take everything off it, wipe it down, and reload it with only the things you actually need and want. Let the rest go.

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WHOLE HOUSE

30 CLEAR THE COFFEE TABLE

Chances are you have random things stacked on your coffee table. Gather everything that doesn't belong there and relocate it or release it. Toss any trash, wipe down the table, and replace anything that actually lives there. Containerize remotes in a decorative basket or bowl. Stack books and magazines by size—no more than 3 issues of any periodical.

31 DECLUTTER & ORGANIZE BOARD GAMES

Let go of any games you and your family no longer play. Sadly, throw away any games with missing pieces critical to playing the game. Organize the ones that remain vertically, like books on a shelf. They take up less space and look much tidier.

32 ORGANIZE VIDEO GAMES, CDs & DVDs

If you still have machines that play these older media types, start by letting go of any that you no longer play. Donate the ones you're finished with and organize the ones that remain. If you record movies and shows to your DVR, go through and clean out any that you've already seen that you won't watch again.

33 CLEAN OUT YOUR CAR

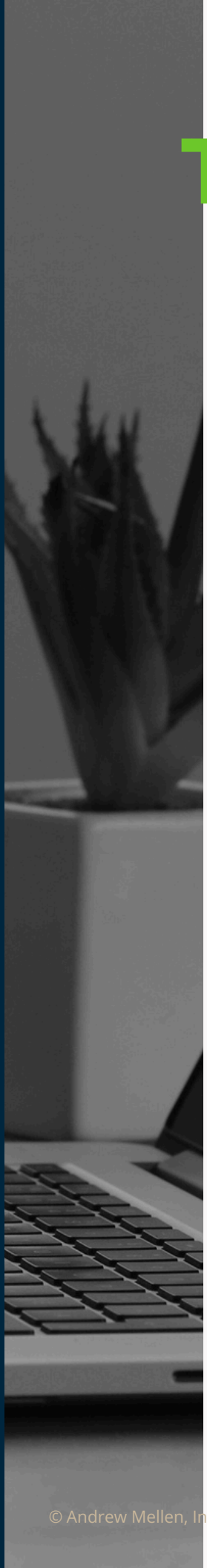
Focus on either the trunk OR the interior. Remove everything that doesn't belong in the car. Keep a few extra plastic shopping bags to use as trash bags. Return any reusable shopping bags from the house back to the car. Use sturdy containers to corral like with like items you frequently use and carry with you.

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TECHNOLOGY

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TECHNOLOGY

34 DECLUTTER YOUR CONTACTS LIST

Set a timer for 5 minutes and then pull up your contacts list and start scrolling. Delete every entry you no longer need. Marry together any duplicate entries, making sure you capture all the pertinent details from each entry.

35 UNSUBSCRIBE FROM EMAIL LISTS

Set a timer for 5 minutes and then open your email app and start clicking 'unsubscribe' until the timer goes off.

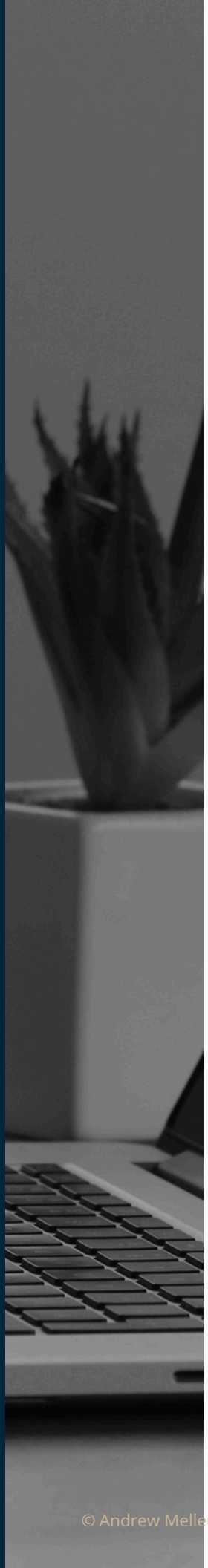
36 DELETE UNUSED APPS

Set a timer for 5 minutes and delete apps you rarely use from your smartphone or tablet. Even better, delete the ones you use to "kill" time waiting in queues, the doctor's office, etc.

37 DELETE UNNEEDED OR UNWANTED PHOTOS

Set a timer for 5 minutes and start scrolling through your photos on your smartphone or tablet. Delete all the duplicate and unwanted images until the timer goes off. Remember, as long as you wake up tomorrow, there will be new sunrises and sunsets to take pictures of.

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TECHNOLOGY

38

CLEAN UP YOUR DOWNLOADS FOLDER

Look through your Downloads folder and file or delete any files you can.

39

CLEAN UP YOUR COMPUTER'S DESKTOP

Organize and clean up files on your computer's desktop. Toss out any files you don't need or use. Put everything else in like with like folders and then put those folders in your Documents folder.

40

LET GO OF OBSOLETE HARDWARE

Gather up any retired or redundant devices, cords and other parts. If it no longer works, you no longer use it or you don't know what it goes to, recycle it. Donate old cell phones for local 911 emergency calls or to soldiers overseas.

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Joan Tufts
This isn't just theory. Andrew gives you a real plan to take back your time and energy.
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Dana T.
The clarity and confidence I've gained is worth a million dollars. The hours I'm gaining are priceless!!
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