



The Productivity Puzzle:

What's *Your* Missing Piece?

I wouldn't be where I'm at in my life
and this book wouldn't be alive
if it weren't for the help of a few key people...

Steve, my love.

Sophie, my sister.

Lisa, my mentor.

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**You can find more of Sara's writing and work at
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INTRODUCTION 4

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK..... 7

WHAT IS THE PRODUCTIVITY PUZZLE? 8

Part 1: Physical Systems

Physical Systems Overview 12

Working with Your Physical Systems..... 19

Part 2: Time + Calendar

Time and Calendar Overview 28

Working with Your Time and Calendars..... 34

Part 3: To-Do's + Tasks

To-Do's and Tasks Overview 43

Working with Your To-Do's and Tasks 47

Part 4: Planning + Maintenance

Planning and Maintenance Overview..... 57

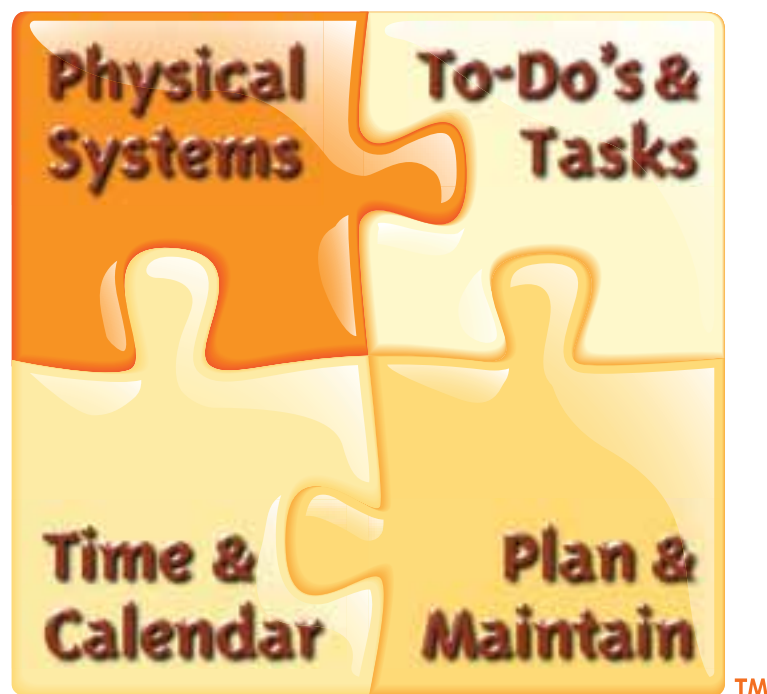
Working with Your Planning and Maintenance..... 60

FINISHING UP! 66

Introduction

I'm Sara Caputo and I am a productivity and organization consultant. I own and run a business called Radiant Organizing and I am passionate about helping people create more space in their lives for what is truly important to them.

After coaching thousands of people in the areas of organization, productivity, time management and life maintenance, I have learned that all of our challenges can be traced back to four specific areas, or what I call "**The Productivity Puzzle®**." This framework will capture every process or activity that gets in the way of being your best self. In this e-book we will visit each piece of The Productivity Puzzle in depth, one building on the next. The Puzzle is a simple model that I created to help people have a structure for self-evaluation in these four most important areas.



The good news?

Part of your puzzle is working—or you wouldn't have gotten to where you are now.

The bad news?

Part of your puzzle isn't as effective as it could be and that's what's keeping you where you are now.

Have you ever thought about how you learned to put together The Productivity Puzzle you have at work in your life today? Where—exactly—did you learn organization principles, or best practices for time management? Most of us were not formally taught how to be on top of our lives, and yet getting a handle on these attributes can make or break you in the real world. If you learn it all through happenstance, it's inevitable that you'll need to refine and redefine these areas over time.

Lasting change comes from self-evaluation and once we have a deeper understanding of where we are and how we got here, we can then make better decisions about where we want to go. We can then choose from a balanced and present place inside of us, and identify actions aimed to achieve the results we want to see in our lives.

As you deconstruct each piece of your Productivity Puzzle, you will have the opportunity to examine it under a microscope, add what you need, take out what you don't need, and get crystal clear as you move forward. Through journaling and self-reflection, you will then reconstruct your puzzle in a way that matches your life, your priorities and your mind set.

Oddly, it is the routine, mundane and boring activities of our lives that actually hold it all together. Balance a checkbook, keep a schedule, plan for the future. Yet for some reason we align routine, mundane and boring with easy. But there's the rub. Because we think it should be easy, we often feel shame, guilt and frustration lingering at the edge, and judge ourselves and others harshly. We should just know this stuff, right? It shouldn't be so hard to figure out, right?

So how we struggle to get and stay organized in our offices, file cabinets, kitchen counter tops and e-mail; how we effectively manage our time to get to the important things that we really want to focus on that we "know" we should be doing; how we hold it all together in a simple way that makes sense and supports our natural way of living. That's the terrain we'll cover.

Whatever you are doing in your life, I hope you find what you need in this book to support you in a way that feels good and allows you to do what you love to do—and let go of the details...**Let's get started!**

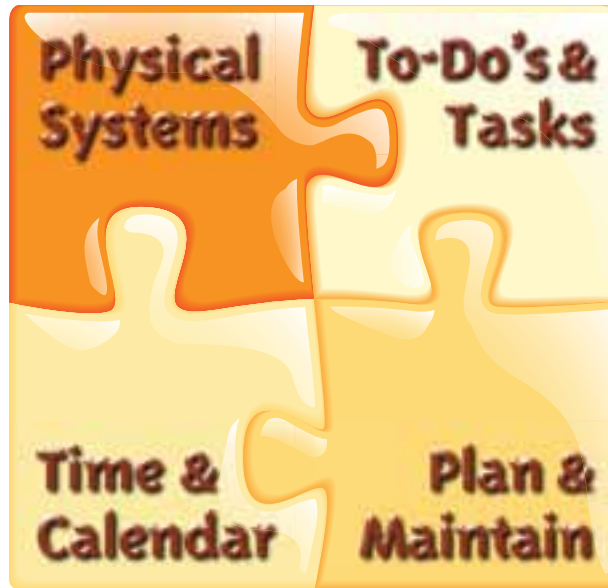
How to Use This Book

This book is not intended to teach you all of the skills you need in order to overhaul and organize your entire home or office. It is not a book that will teach you how to become a better time manager. It is written under the assumption that you are already on this journey and you already have many well functioning systems in place to support your work and life. This book is designed to help you reflect on how you are doing in each of the areas that we'll discuss. It is this reflection that will propel you forward as you find your own answers and solutions.

Use this as a workbook, as a learning tool, or as an ongoing process for improvement. Most importantly, be prepared to capture your insights and thoughts along the way. Buy a notebook to use for this purpose. You will be prompted throughout the book at specific places through inquiry, journaling and noodling, which are simply places to pause, reflect and write. There are four parts to the book and in each part there is an overview or description and a "working with it" section including my favorite tips, tools and homework that pertain to that piece. This is deep work and it has the power to transform everything in your life, therefore it's worth writing down the delicious thoughts and ideas that are sure to arise.

**Enjoy the book and please feel free to contact me
with your thoughts, comments and feedback
...I would love to hear from you!**





What is The Productivity Puzzle?

The Productivity Puzzle is about **Systems, Time, To-Do's** and **Planning**. If you fail to have a plan for each of these areas, then you are planning to fail. How many times have you come home from a long and busy day at work knowing you didn't have a second to breathe, yet when you stop and think about what you actually got done, it feels like nothing.

If this is a daily occurrence, you will get immense value from your work in this e-book.

Physical Systems

Our file cabinets, desktops, e-mail systems, bookshelves, reading materials, overstuffed credenza's and bulging in-boxes.

Time & Calendar

Finding and refining the calendar system that makes the most sense to your life, learning to use it effectively, and then letting it act as a compass in your days and weeks and months and years.

To-Do's & Tasks

The substance of your life and the continual flow of stuff you gotta do—some you like, and some you don't, but it all has to get done. It's also about understanding the essential action of getting things out of your head so you can be present, focused and get a good night's sleep.

Planning & Maintenance

The glue that holds your life together. It's about understanding that all of your efforts to get organized, create a to-do list and manage your calendar effectively are for naught if there is no ongoing planning and maintenance structure to give context to and maximize your efforts.



The reason this structure works is because each piece of The Puzzle builds on the next. Each piece is important to the last piece, which is important to the next piece. This will become clearer as we venture forth through each piece. The goal is to **work our way through each of the four pieces** to have a complete and in-depth understanding of the pieces of your Productivity Puzzle .

INQUIRY, NOODLING AND JOURNALING:

- 1. Now that you know what you know about The Puzzle, which piece of your puzzle needs the most attention in your life? Why?
- 2. Which piece or pieces do you feel solid and good about? Why?
- 3. What are 3 "Bright Spots"? (What works really well for you?)
- 4. What are the triggers and events that cause things to break down?
- 5. If you could wave a magic wand, what would you want to change the most?

