

Beachpreneurs Message in a Bottle: Home Organization for More Productivity.



ABOUT OUR GUEST, HELENA ALKHAS:

I AM HAPPY YOU ARE HERE AND IF YOU NEED HELP ORGANIZING, I'M HERE TO GET IT DONE.

WHEN YOU WORK WITH ME, WE BUILD A RELATIONSHIP, NOT JUST A BUSINESS ARRANGEMENT.

WE WORK TOGETHER, MOVING FORWARD TO ORGANIZE YOUR HOME AND GIVE YOU MORE TIME AND SPACE FOR WHAT YOU LOVE AND WANT IN YOUR LIFE.

MY PERSONAL AND PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE, GENTLE COACHING STYLE AND HONEST APPRAISAL OF YOUR SITUATION HELP US GET YOUR HOME ORGANIZED EXACTLY AS YOU WANT.

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Nicole: Welcome to [Beachpreneurs](#) Message in a Bottle. I'm Nicole Dean. Kelly McCausey is off on vacation this week. I have a very special guest here that I think you are going to love. I don't think—I know—you're going to love what she has to say. She has strengths where I do not. I admire her for her transparency as well as her talents and the years of knowledge that she's gathered in her area of expertise.

I think this is a really cool topic. I hope that you will, too. The topic today is home organization for more productivity. Our guest is Helena Alkhas from [APersonalOrganizer.com](#). She was just at the [Beachpreneur Mastermind Retreat](#) where I got to spend the weekend with her. To know her is to love her. I know you'll feel the same. Welcome!

Helena: Thank you. How are you?

Nicole: I am awesome. I hear you are doing much better yourself after a little bout of not feeling so well.

Helena: Yes. I had my two weeks of caring for others. Of course, after two weeks of caring, you just fall flat. Your body gets sick. I am doing better. I'm feeling stronger today. It's great to be here.

Nicole: Good. I'm so glad you were able to get on today. Is productivity really tied to organization? If someone is not organized at all, can they still be productive? What are your thoughts on that? I know you have all kinds of opinions, so just let them loose.

Helena: We each work in a different way. Our brains are so different. We each process information in very different ways. For those like me who are very visual, having a cluttered space will definitely clutter my mind, my thought process and even how I get things done. My husband says that I have a love affair with my Mac. Even if it's Mac and me, if I don't have the walls in front of me clear of papers and notes, that clutters my thought process.

If you notice that you are a person who needs some white space, I do encourage you to leave your desk as clutter free as possible. This goes for the walls in front of you, your desk and your computer.

Try to leave out only what is absolutely necessary for you to remember. For example, I have papers from school on my walls that I need to sign. I have due dates of things that are coming up because I need that visual reminder.

However, if these things do not confuse you, I encourage you to stay organized, but it's not as essential for someone who processes information visually. The first thing I do when I start working with a client is try to assess how they process information. I ask them, "Can you show me how you use your space?" I'll notice things. Do they need a visual reminder? Do they use a calendar? Do they have a filing system by their desk? Some people say, "I can't file anything because then I'll forget. The bills will never get paid. The papers never get signed. If it's out of sight, it's out of mind."

Organizing is an invitation to learn more about yourself, how you process all of the information that the world is constantly sending you and how you can best use it to your advantage.

Nicole: I am a cluttered person at this point, which is why I really wanted to have you on this call. I wanted to pick your brain a little bit. My motto has always been Albert Einstein's saying, "If a cluttered desk is a sign of a cluttered mind, of what then is an empty desk a sign?"

Helena: I love that. Creative people have so many ideas popping into their heads all the time. There are so many possible projects and new things. Creative people are usually great starters. This is an invitation to know more about yourself and how you process information. Know that you are a great starter and create processes and systems that will help you finalize all of your projects.

For instance, you have a great team. You have a structure that allows you to delegate your ideas from start to finish. But for someone who is a one-woman show, that becomes a big challenge and source of frustration. That person might feel, "I never get anything done." My suggestion is that you might want to have a notebook where you have all of your projects. You will tackle one at a time. As exciting as it can be for a creative person to have all these balls in the air, you are doomed to let them fall. Maybe you'll catch one. You're setting yourself up for failure. The best thing to do is to work on one thing at a time.

I am a very creative person. I love the excitement of a new idea. I know that I can't get it all done. I got tired of feeling disappointed in myself. Now I work on one thing at a time. This week is this project. If I'm done next week, then a new project comes on my list. Just focus on your priority and tackle that one thing.

Nicole: I love how you work with clients. You have very high-end clients. For everyone listening, Helena is a professional home organizer. She goes into people's homes and works with them for days, correct?

Helena: Yes, days and sometimes weeks.

Nicole: She gets them organized. One of the things I love so much about how you work with your clients is that you do not have a cookie cutter approach. It's not, "You must fit inside these parameters." It's, "Okay, let's see how you work. Let's see how we can adjust that." It's so that, when you leave, they don't go back to the same chaos.

Helena: Yes. The main goal of a professional organizer is the transferring of organizing skills. It's not our goal to create any sort of, "Can you please come back? My house is a mess." If that happens, that is a sign that the assessment you did was not correct. The less a client needs you, the more successful you are in the future. Clients will notice that the systems you implemented are staying in place. They will feel successful. Then they will refer you. That's when you start building a solid client base from referrals.

My focus is on understanding each client and then designing systems that work for them. Many times, clients will say, "This is perfect. This looks great, but it's not working for me." We go back to the scratch pad and see what's not working. We fine tune things.

Nicole: That makes a lot of sense. In my office, sometimes I just dust around things. Then I still have to keep dealing with them. Let's start with the home office. Now we have an overview of the importance of productivity and having some sort of organization in your life. Pretty much everyone listening has a home office of some sort. What if I like a little mess? Is that okay?

Helena: Yes, that's perfectly fine. The goal of being organized really isn't Home & Garden television standards. As beautiful as it is, they created a standard that is not realistic. On the other hand, we have shows like Hoarders. That is the complete opposite. They don't really show reality. They show either perfection or the extreme of a disease.

We all live very fluid, intense and active lives. If you have kids, life is chaotic from the front door all the way to your bedroom. There is no way of keeping things perfect. The goal is to make things work for you. If you like a little mess, if you don't want to clean up and keep things super tidy all the time, that's perfectly fine. You have to find what works for you. Again, that's an invitation to know who you are, how you work in your environment and design it to be the best it can.

I say this from a mother's perspective. I am the one who manages the house, pays the bills and takes care of all the stuff for the kids. I also run my business from home. Our home offices are not just work. They are house management spaces. They are kid's management spaces. If you have kids, you have these three areas in your life. If you don't, it would be two areas. You need to create different spaces, even if it's a drawer or shelf for each thing. This is so that you don't have piles mixed up in front of you all the time. You will not have a sense of control if things are mixed up.

I don't shop in malls. I can't stand going to the mall. I shop online.

Nicole: Me, too.

Helena: I don't get the fun of going to the mall. That means that, if I am on the computer shopping, it may look like I am working. It's also important to define working hours and house management hours. You end up on the computer 24/7. We do so much on the computer. It's important to create space both physically and on your calendar for the things that are different to keep your productivity focused on what you're doing for work. When you are working, you're really working and not shopping for an extra pair of sneakers.

Nicole: That's a really great point. I didn't realize how much that bothered me until you started talking about it. All of a sudden, I'll end up with a form that I need to sign for the kids on top of a paper for an interview that I have. Then I can't find the form for the kids because I wouldn't look here. I don't want it here. It needs to be separate.

Helena: A quick solution for you would be to have three separate inboxes in your space. You can have one for the bills, one for the kids and one for your work. You can also have baskets hanging on the wall in front of you. There is a neat product that doesn't look pretty, but that might not bother you. It's a file that becomes a portable case, but when you hang it from a hanger, it scrolls down from behind a door and has several pockets. You can assign one for each child. That helps me a lot to have separate boxes for the kids. Then I know which day of the week I have to check that. I try to automate as much as I can. When it comes to bill paying and anything else that you can automate, get it off your desk. It will be out of your mind. It's one less thing for you to worry about.

Nicole: I am all about automation. We'll get to that more in a little bit. I want to stay with the home office for a bit. Is your home office perfect? You are a home organizer.

Helena: No, it's not perfect. But my desk is always clear from piles and papers. I try to keep what we use most often on my desk, like pencils, tape and a stapler. I make it pretty because I love it to be pretty. Some people say, "That's silly." My stapler is gold. My tape holder is a gold dog. It's fun stuff. The kids know where to find everything. There is a funny thing about boys and husbands. They never know where things are. You are the easiest way to find things.

I always say, "I don't use boxers so don't ask me where they are." I try to keep the desk as clean as possible. I use a rolling cart. It's a filing cart by Alpha. You can find it at The Container Store. It's an open cart. I roll it under the desk at the end of the day. I have all my files there. I use a system where you have a folder for "to do," "to call," "to mail" and "to use." I keep all my coupons in there. I know where to look for my coupons, for example, if I want to shop online or if I'm going to Target for some groceries.

Nicole: That's great. Your office isn't perfect and you are a creative type.

Helena: Yes.

Nicole: That is hard to balance, like you said. I just did [an interview with Natalie Collins](#). I know that you know Natalie from the Beach House. She said that she has the two parts of herself that she has to foster. She mentioned that she wants to exercise both brains, the business side of her brain and the creative side of her brain. She keeps her desk completely clear but she has drop cloths on the floor with art supplies. If she feels stuck looking at her computer, she can turn and exercise that part of her brain without having it all cluttered together. I thought that was an interesting thing, to understand and appreciate that while still fostering a sense of order instead of chaos.

Helena: That is a great way of breaking from work. She can say, “I’m stuck on an idea. Let me just go somewhere else in my brain.” It’s almost like meditating. You go to a space of nothing. Then you come back fresh. Maybe for her, that’s a way of breaking out from being stuck.

Nicole: I love that. I would bring it all back to my desk. Then I would be frustrated because my desk would be messy. I love that understanding that you have a separate area. I have a separate writing desk in my office with my laptop that overlooks the pool. I go there when I need to break away from my main PC. Having a sense of purpose and order for different areas is an important part of your home office organization, too.

Helena: Yes. I work really well from our dining room because I have the view of the street and the rest of the house. You need to understand that you don’t have to sit at the same desk all the time. Creating new spaces will bring new ideas. It’s a great resource for those of us who always work from the same desk.

Nicole: Part of your home office organization can be spreading it out throughout the house, too.

Helena: That’s the thing about my filing system that it is in a rolling cart. I can bring that rolling cart to the front of the TV to file bills, shred paper or to go through things. I can bring that filing cart to my dining room. If I need a paper, it will be right there. I do encourage people to have something portable. If I work with a mom and she’s frustrated that she needs to sit at a tiny desk in the kitchen to write the checks, I say, “Let’s create a tray or box where you have your check book, stamps and envelopes. Everything that you need to pay your bills can go with you to your favorite spot, even if it’s watching your favorite show at night.”

Nicole: That’s really smart. It could also be in your car while you’re waiting for your kids.

Helena: Yes, absolutely.

Nicole: That’s the thing with home office organization. So much of it is so simple, yet so powerful. When my desk is chaos, like it is right now, I don’t want to come in here. Everything suffers. I think, “Look, I have all this stuff in here.” Instead of just taking 15 minutes and dealing with it, I’ll sit here, look at it and say, “Eeewww.”

Helena: Yes. You said something very important. You said, “I don’t deal with it.” What’s important to remember is that you could set a timer. You could say, “I’m going to work 15 minutes at this.” Let’s say you get down one fifth of your pile. Slowly, you will get down to zero. We have this idea that, to get organized, we need to suffer for long hours. I would say that this is why people hire organizers. Misery likes company.

When I start a large project and look, for example, at a huge garage packed all the way to the ceiling with boxes, I would have a sense of overwhelm. Now I learned that I don’t need to do this in one day. I don’t even need to do this in one week. We have to learn that we can set the time that we’re willing to work on something. If it’s 15 minutes, do 15 minutes. You don’t have to work at it for six hours in a row. That’s not how you want to do it.

Nicole: Yuck.

Helena: Who likes that? Here is another thing that I find interesting. For me, a pile means a pile of decisions to be made. That's where we get exhausted. We need to make decisions for every piece of paper and every item in the room. That's where breaking things down into small pieces is also helpful. Then you know you don't have to make this many decisions for a long period of time. It's only for a bit.

Nicole: This is starting to feel like a therapy session. I have to make decisions all the time in my business and as a parent. Then I sit down to de-clutter. You're right. That's exactly what it is. I think, "My brain hurts. I'll just drink a glass of wine." Then I end up saying, "Forget it. It will be there tomorrow."

Helena: Exactly. People ask me, "How long is this going to take?" I say, "It really depends on how long it takes you to make a decision. I am here to empower you, guide you and coach you. I'm not here to make the decision for you. It's really how long it takes you to make that decision."

Nicole: It's not like you can throw away Grandma's quilt.

Helena: I will not.

Nicole: Speaking of 15 minute timers, is there a 15 minute "mother-in-law is coming" method to organizing your office? Is there a system? What do you do when you walk into your office and think, "I need to get rid of it. I need order. I need to sit there and I can't stare at this stuff one more time?" What would you recommend?

Helena: A large bin. Really, I don't encourage you to do that. If it goes to a bin and you do not need it for the next three or six months, go through that bin quickly and see if there is any sensitive information in there. If there is not, it means you will never need that. If it's in the bin and, all of a sudden, you need a paper and you can't find it and you look in the bin, that means you seriously need to address that. Let's say that you have a guest coming and you do not want to show your space. They need to stay over. Your guest room became a dumping grounds for everything in the house and you need to clean up for your mother-in-law. By the way, my mother-in-law would be thrilled to see a mess in my house.

Nicole: Mine, not so much.

Helena: I would use my garage to remove anything that would be in that room. I would just put it away. If the person says, "Your garage is a mess," I would say, "Yes, you were coming." I think what you're saying is, "I can't stand the clutter that is in front of me. I also can't stand the idea of organizing it. Can I just get rid of it?" My question to you would be, "Do you need it?" If you don't, just let go.

Nicole: On the practical side of things, I want to know what your opinion is on standing desks. You do study movement and how people work. What are your thoughts on that?

Helena: I think they're great if you're the kind of person who gets bored. I also think it's nice to have it as an option. I don't use one but I believe many of them are adjustable. You can lower it and sit on a

chair or a ball. Having the option is nice, especially if you're a physical person. So many of us organizers are physical. That means that we process information as we move. For example, if I am organizing a space, I need to move the pieces. I need to move the parts so that my brain identifies them. It's almost like a puzzle. It becomes clear to me as I move. If you are the type of person who is very energetic, you like exercising or you like to engage in physical activities, even if it's working with others on their projects, you may enjoy standing while doing your work. You will be moving around. That's probably how your brain processes your information to its full potential.

Nicole: That's a really good point. You can have a standing desk as an option but not have to make a permanent transition to it. I like that idea.

Helena: You will get tired of standing for many hours.

Nicole: I'm sitting on my bouncy ball right now. What about dual monitors? I just went from two to three monitors on my computer.

Helena: Oh my God!

Nicole: It seems to have decreased my productivity with the third monitor. Two increased it but three seems to decrease it. Do you have any thoughts on that?

Helena: I have never experimented with that. I don't believe that more is more. I believe that we are in a day and age where we are too social. We are processing a barrage of information. We are dealing with too much all the time. I believe in closing your screen to focus on one activity at a time. If you feel tempted because you're so addicted to check your social status and you want to see what's going on at your favorite blog, just set a timer and work for 15 or 30 minutes. It's whatever you feel will bring you the best productivity.

For example, with kids, I like to set the timer for 20 minutes. Then they get a five minute break where I let the boys check their phones or favorite YouTube video. They think, "I get a break from that awful math work." Get it out of your system. Then get back to your activity. I do not think that working with three monitors will increase your productivity. You can only focus on one at a time.

Nicole: I agree. I've been turning off the third one. I've noticed that it is more distracting than it is helpful. The second one really did help. A lot of times, I'm researching something while I'm writing. I don't have to keep closing windows. I can just glance over. I keep my main activity on the screen in front of me. Then the other two are on the sides. The one on the left is my research screen. The one on the right, I never really found a purpose for. It seems to have become my Facebook screen.

Helena: I use a cool Chrome extension. It's called [OneTab](#). I open all the research screens that I need for my work. Let's say that I'm building an affiliate blog post with a lot of affiliate links. I need to go into two or three affiliate programs to get all the codes. It can become quite overwhelming. I use OneTab to collect all my screens. Then if I need to go back to one of them, I just click on that. I always have no more than two tabs open. That also increases the speed on my computer. If you don't have two screens, you can use that extension.

Nicole: We've been talking a lot about home offices. Time management and energy management are two things that I love to talk about. We've already talked about how if you feel like your house is a mess that your business will suffer. If your house and life are a mess then your business will not be at its optimal.

Helena: Yes. For instance, let's say you did the laundry but you didn't fold it. You have a basket on the floor. You shopped for the groceries but you didn't put them away. You have boxes all over the counter of pasta and Cheerios. Your kids finished their homework but didn't put it away. Our eyes go to an object and your brain processes the information. When you see the laundry basket, your brain tells you, "I need to get this done."

Then you go to the kitchen. You see everything out there and think, "I need to get this done." You are just creating a huge to-do list in your brain. My best strategy, and what I encourage my clients to do, is the 15 minute AM and PM. In the morning, I walk around the house. It takes me no more than 20 minutes now that I have it down. It may take you about 30 minutes in the beginning. It's worth doing. You walk around the house. You make sure the beds are made. You wipe down the counters. Pick up everything. Don't leave anything on the floor. Get things out of the way. Get your kids to help you. It's their job. They need those skills. It takes a lot of energy to get the kids engaged and involved. It's worse if you don't do that because then you'll be doing it alone forever.

Nicole: Amen, sister. I have a daily list that the kids have to do and check off. It's saved my life. It may have saved their lives.

Helena: Yes. It's so important. I grew up in a culture where kids are just kicked out of the way of the maid. I didn't have those life skills when I got married. I was 33 and helpless. I couldn't cook the food I needed to eat. I know from experience the importance of knowing those life skills. If you look at my country right now, the only people who have those life skills are the maids. The people who hire them don't know anything. They can't wash their own clothes. This is essential.

Our kids leave our home so early in the United States because of college. They will need this to succeed, just like we need these skills to succeed in our businesses. Tackle your daily clutter. I'm not saying to organize your whole house, closet or garage in 15 minutes. I'm just saying to pick up the daily clutter. Pick up your house in the morning. Then in the evening, get things out of the way again. You will need to go through the house again. In 40 minutes a day, your life will be so different. You will feel that you're living in a much cleaner environment. It will be a stimulation free space. That's what we are looking for. We're trying to eliminate messages to our brain.

Nicole: It was very telling. When you started to talk about the laundry sitting out, the groceries and the kid's homework sitting out, I felt this lump growing in my throat. I started to breathe shallower. I can see how that eats up your energy on a constant basis. It is funny. I've found myself guilty of the ridiculousness of walking by dirty dishes repeatedly through a day. They bug me all day. I timed myself one time. It took me three minutes to load and unload the dishwasher. It was done.

I thought, “I let that bother me all day and eat up much more than three minutes of my time and energy because I kept putting it off for other more important things.” If I had just stopped and said, “This is going to take me three minutes,” I would have just done it. That’s a great tip. Take 15 minutes in the morning before you go to your office and 15 minutes before you go to bed. Then you have a little more sanity. You will be able to focus more on work. The topic is home organization for more productivity. It’s all about freeing up your brain so that it’s able to focus on growing your amazing business.

Helena: Yes. A lot of entrepreneurs decide to rent those communal office spaces because they can’t stand being in the house with so many reminders of things that need to get done for the family, the house and themselves. They can’t focus on their business. I find that, if you just act in little blocks of time in the morning and night, you will enjoy working from home all over again.

Nicole: I am feeling so inspired right now.

Helena: Good.

Nicole: You did say that, if your house is a mess, your business will suffer. Do you have one tip for home organization that will change our lives forever? Then we’ll move onto business and wrap up.

Helena: My biggest tip is to tackle your house in the morning and the afternoon. There is another thing that I try to implement. I do it for myself and teach it to my clients. I say, “I could not tackle the clutter today. Let me look in my calendar for when I can get this done.” The biggest fantasy out there is that you have a to-do list and things will get done. That’s the biggest illusion that we create for ourselves.

The to-do list becomes the biggest source of anxiety in your life. Here is your to-do list. Here is your calendar. They are officially introduced. If you do not place your to-do list items on your calendar, they will not happen. Look at your calendar and schedule your to-do list items. If laundry is a to-do, you need to have an official day where things get done. It’s that simple.

Nicole: That is really great advice. Let’s talk about minimalism. I am addicted to minimalism blogs. I think they’re so inspiring. They are so fun. I come from a family of keepers of stuff. If you don’t keep the stuff, there is guilt associated with that. How could you possibly get rid of that? It belonged to so-and-so. One time, you wore it when you were a baby. I go through these minimalistic blogs and drool. It’s like a drug for me. It looks so freeing. What are your thoughts on that, especially tied to us business people who have so much going on?

Helena: I love [Joshua Becker’s blog](#). I absolutely love his thoughts. You have to understand that he and his family went through a process. Right now, you are just flirting with that idea. We have a saying in Brazil, “Don’t look at where I am, look at my walk.” We have to look at the trajectory that the person took to come to the point where you’re admiring it. It is a process. It is a decision that you make to live with less. The levels of minimalism that one will live with are really up to you.

That’s something that I have learned from reading these blogs. For some people, it really means four knives and four spoons. It’s the essentials. For others, it means a little cushion. What is your comfort

level with the things you have? Again, it's an invitation to know how you relate to your space. Things have meaning. We give meaning to things. We impart importance to items. What your child wore for their christening, for example, might be something that you're not willing to let go. That's okay. I don't like hard rules. We are so different. We are so rich as individuals. We shouldn't look for a cookie cutter solution.

I think you're looking at the very opposite of where you feel you are. That sounds so soothing. But it's a long process. It's one that you are embracing. That's wonderful. You are questioning, "Do I need these things? How can I simplify my life?" We all go through that.

I became a person who easily lets go of things because of the Navy. We moved so many times. It just became easier for me to manage my life with less. I only keep what I love. I don't have to make decisions on the things that are questionable. Do I really like this? If I'm asking, it's going. Thank God that I have a Goodwill very close to my house.

Nicole: I know that you specialize in organizing homes. I also know that you're the bomb when it comes to efficiency in business, too. Do you have a tip for us to organize our blogs, calendars and social media that has saved you a ton of time? I know you love this stuff.

Helena: When I started blogging, it was time consuming. Blogging and social media became so time consuming that it irritated the life out of me. I worked as a VA for some professional organizers, Feng Shui consultants and marketers. Here is what I suggest today if you're doing it on your own like I am. I have a twice a month touch rule. I do not allow myself to spend more time than twice a month on blogging and social media.

Let's say that you have a writer and editor. I write my blog post. I send it to Emily. She is from EditingEmily.com. She's adorable. She's a great writer and editor. Emily reviews everything for me. Then she sends it back. I upload everything. In the process of sending it back to me, Emily updates a spreadsheet. My blog post becomes social media tips, newsletters to my subscribers and my blog post. One blog post comes back with all you need for your online presence.

Then I go to my spreadsheet with Emily's curated social media tips for each blog post. Now I'm using a tool that I'm totally in love with. You do it once and it's done forever. It's called MeetEdgar.com. It's \$50 a month. I find it totally worth it. You upload it in Edgar. You define on a calendar how many times that type of tip is coming up. I have my blog posts coming out two times a day on Twitter. They come out in a way that looks like a tip but links back to my website. My traffic has gone way up by doing that.

Nicole: That's a great tip.

Helena: Once a month, I upload my blog posts into MailChimp. That's the tool I'm using. That goes on the scheduled time. Emily makes a summary of my blog post. Then we link back to the most popular blog posts. Let's say that I just wrote a post on Thanksgiving. Then Emily sends me the summary for that post. I use that as an autoresponder. I have my blog post, newsletter, social media tips and my autoresponders all in one.

Having someone to create that content for you is awesome. If you can't pay that right now, just do it yourself. It will save you a ton of time. It's one day a month that you will be working on all of that. All you have to do now is engage, monitor and respond. Keep communicating with people. You don't have to look for content. That also gives you time. Let's say that you love sharing other people's content. That gives you a buffer in your schedule. Now you're just having fun and not working in social media.

Nicole: That is great advice. I am huge in batching, too. I would rather batch stuff. I am big on once a month freezer cooking. I always say, if I'm going to make one lasagna, I might as well make eight. Then seven of them go in the freezer and one goes in the oven. It's the same with chili. I can make a small batch or I can make a ginormous batch. Then I can put it in small containers for healthy meals.

It's the same thing with my business. I would much rather write out five blog posts in one sitting than write one blog post a day for five days. I work better that way. I try to do that whenever possible.

Helena: I found that my process with the blog posts is better if I divide my calendar in topics. I open a spreadsheet for next year. Emily and I already worked on it. I have my next year planned. We have all the way through June scheduled. We work in topics. For example, take a look at all the holidays and how they relate to your business. How can you use the holidays for your business? Then work with topics for your business associated with some cultural holidays. You're creating a topic for the month. Then you're not scrambling and jumping from A to B to C to write for a full month. That will help you to be more productive.

Nicole: That's wonderful advice. Thank you so much, Helena.

Helena: It was so much fun, as always, talking with you, Nicole.

Nicole: I want to remind everyone that they were listening to Helena Alkhas from APersonalOrganizer.com. Where can we learn more from you?

Helena: You can find my website at APersonalOrganizer.com. I just published 31 days of holiday organizing tips on The Candle Store. Then I have my set of printables. It is a full kit of checklists and calendars for everything that you need to keep your mind off your papers and know where things are. If you are listening to this, I would be happy to give you a coupon. You can use the coupon "urawesome."

Nicole: We will put that on the download page where you get this audio, along with links to Helena's website and some of the resources that she has mentioned. Helena, thank you so much for sharing your wisdom and many, many years of experience with us.

Helena: Thank you. I hope these tips help you to get more organized. If you have any questions, just send me an email. I will be happy to answer anything that you want to know.

Nicole: Thank you so much. We appreciate you. Thanks for listening to this episode of Message in a Bottle. We'll see you next time.

Beachpreneurs Message in a Bottle: Home Organization for More Productivity.

- [Helena Alkhas – A Personal Organizer](#)
- [Organizing Product that Helena Recommends](#)
- [Helena's Printable Binder for Organizing your Home](#) (coupon to save: urawesome)
- [EditingEmily.com](#)
- [Natalie Collins Interview](#)
- [Joshua Becker – On Becoming Minimalist](#)
- [Meet Edgar](#)
- [Standing Desks](#)
- [31 Days of Holiday Organizing Tips](#)