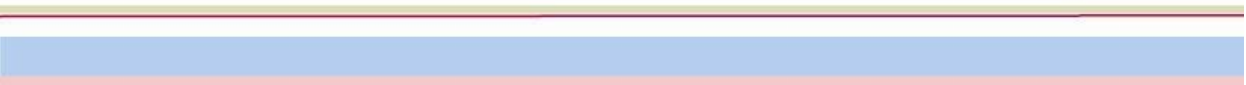




ABY GARVEY

the happy scrapper
simple solutions to get organized & get scrapping



Cover design and graphics: Sarah Bowman

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ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Aby Garvey is the president and founder of **simplify 101, inc.** She is a professional organizer who specializes in creating inspiring and efficient workspaces. For the past fourteen years, Aby has developed organizing systems – first in the business world and, most recently, in the household arena. Aby is the creator of the **simplify 101 organizing process**, which she uses to help household managers and business people get organized, stay organized and achieve greater success and happiness in their lives.

Aby's corporate organizing experience involved managing projects, organizing departments and business processes, and coaching employees on goal setting and achievement. Aby earned a Bachelor of Science degree from Michigan State University and a Master of Business Administration from Southern Illinois University Edwardsville. She is a member of the National Association of Professional Organizers, The Craft and Hobby Association and the Edwardsville-Glen Carbon Chamber of Commerce.

Aby loves to make scrapbooks for her family, which includes her husband Jay and two young children. Organizing scrapbook tools, supplies and workspaces is another of Aby's passions. She enjoys helping clients create balance and simplify their lives, giving them more time to create memories ... and scrapbook them.

Aby is editor of the **simplify 101** newsletter, a free e-mail publication loaded with organizing, time management and goal-setting tips and articles. Please subscribe by visiting <http://www.simplify101.com/enews.asp>.

If you want to create an organized, efficient and inspiring home, scrapbook space or office, please give Aby a call. Aby provides hands-on organizing sessions as well as organizing coaching for clients across the United States. For more information visit www.simplify101.com or contact Aby directly at 1-800-616-8117 or via email at aby@simplify101.com.

A NOTE FROM ABY

Congratulations!! By purchasing this book, you've decided to take your scrapbook hobby to the next level. Maybe you're a fanatical scrapbooker looking for ways to get organized so you can spend even more time on your scrapping addiction. Or possibly you're a former scrapper, looking for a way to relight your scrapbook fire. Maybe you used to scrapbook, but somewhere between the acquisition of all the stuff, comparing your pages to the scrapbook design experts' in the magazines, and having yet another baby, the thought of digging back into your scrapbooks fills you with dread.

Or perhaps you have a great friend who's been telling you for years that you would absolutely love scrapbooking. Being the practical person you are, before you get started you'd like to figure out what it's all about, what you'll need to buy, and where in the world you'll find the time to do it. Whether one of these scenarios fits you to a "t", or you're in a different scrapbooking boat, the pages ahead are loaded with ideas, tips, techniques and strategies to help you become a happy scrapper.

I got bit by the scrapbook bug when my son was just a few months old. Looking back, I realize I had no idea what I was getting into – both in terms of motherhood and in terms of scrapbooking. I literally bit off more than I could chew. A perfectionist at heart, I loved the idea of getting all my photos organized and documenting all the details of each and every event in my tiny new baby's life.

I plunged in head first, acquiring albums, sheet protectors, markers, a paper trimmer, photo splits, cardstock, rubber stamps, ink, punches, decorative scissors, die cuts and page toppers. But I didn't stop there. I purchased an inventory of stickers for every possible event my child could ever encounter – from baking chocolate chip cookies to learning how to use the potty. (And I was buying these things before my sweet baby had teeth to eat cookies, let alone knowledge that a potty even existed.) I went so far as making my family wear matching outfits for Fourth of July fireworks photos. While it is not unheard of to match your family's attire for a great photo op, I found that some events in my life simply needed to happen by chance, instead of being staged. My scrapbook supplies were dictating the way life should be, instead of providing a means for documenting and celebrating the way life truly was.

Somewhere between the 1000th diaper and my Xyron sticker maker purchase, I was overcome with exhaustion. I suddenly hated stickers (and dirty diapers) and I thought I'd lose my mind if I saw another un-scrapbooked photo. I felt like a failure when I'd look through scrapbook magazines and see other moms keeping it all together; some even had time to incorporate needlework on their pages. I thought hard before taking each picture, knowing I'd either have to DO something with it or add it to my backlog of photos and unrealistic expectations about what was possible and desirable in my life.

I'm here to tell you, some people handle all of this – babies, photos, scrapbooks, matching outfits, and keeping their life running smoothly – with style and grace. I, on the other hand, was completely blown away by the responsibilities of parenthood, let alone all the self-doubt brought on by my scrapbook hobby.

So I retreated to my comfort zone ... the place I go when life gets out of control: organizing. I bought more scrapbook supplies. I bought containers to organize my scrapbook supplies. I labeled the containers to identify my scrapbook supplies. And life was good.

My scrapbooks? Not so good. Every day I got farther and farther behind. Every day, my backlog grew right along with my stress level. When my daughter arrived, my son was three months old (in his scrapbook). In real life: age two. But it didn't stop there. By the time my son turned six, he was the ripe old age of one in his scrapbooks. My daughter ... well let's just say I had lots of really cute (and very organized) supplies and photos to create her albums, and not a single photo scrapbooked.

Bottom line, folks ... I was really missing the point. This hobby was stressing me out. As soon as I started calculating how far behind I was (both in terms of boxes of un-scrappped photos and in terms of years), I became an unhappy scrapper. I needed a simpler solution. I needed a plan.

Two things happened to pull me out of the scrapbook chaos. First, my husband talked me into a digital camera. My photos were now safe, organized and perfectly happy stored electronically. I had no visual reminders of my growing backlog. And as they say, ignorance is bliss.

The second thing that happened was a magazine called *Simple Scrapbooks*. The concept of this magazine was revolutionary for me. I learned that it was OK to scrapbook only my most meaningful photos. I didn't have to capture every single event (and non-event) of my children's lives to pay tribute to them and their significance to me. And I didn't have to put my photos into albums in chronological order – instead I could create theme scrapbooks and I was free to put some photos in traditional photo albums. I could even stray from 12 x 12 albums if I wanted to. This was a great start ... a safety net for me ... a chance to dive back in.

For me today, as a mother of two young children, the wife of a wonderful man and a small business owner, my priority first and foremost is to *make* memories. I enjoy every minute of the Fourth of July fireworks, even if my son is wearing green and my daughter is in pink (with chocolate ice cream stains down her front.) My second priority is to capture these precious memories by photographing the meaningful events of our life. And by taking snap-shots of day to day moments that pass by in the wink of an eye ... lost teeth, Sundays at Grandma and Grandpa's, and spontaneous water fights that break out in the driveway while we're washing the car. And when they'll sit still long enough (without goofy face syndrome setting in) I

snap portraits of my kids. I keep a journal on my night stand, one for each child, where I capture little details of our life from time to time ... things like milestones and the good stuff that comes just from being alive.

I don't worry about backlog. My scrapbooks and photos will be there when I have more time. At that time if I decide to make elaborate albums, I will. For now, my goals are to let life unfold as it is, wearing whatever we're wearing, and capturing the good stuff with a journal and a photo. For me, not everything has to be documented. Not everything needs to be shot from twenty angles. And not everything needs to be immediately put into a scrapbook. I work on simple projects when I get the chance but focus my priorities on my passion ... helping other people achieve their goals both in scrapbooking and in life.

My goal is no longer to get every single photo organized into scrapbooks. My next projects will be to create my little girl's baby album – using a simplified approach and products that I'll tell you about later in the book. I'm also creating a "goals" book to creatively capture everything I want to accomplish before my 40th birthday. And my next project will be a childhood memories album with pages about those things I used to do that have meaning to me today. It'll be about all those memories that tug at my heartstrings from time to time, like summers at Grandma's house on the lake, playing "scrunch" with my sister, Amy, and her friend, Suzie Laviolette, our cross country camping trips in Sherman the Tank (our forest green Oldsmobile station wagon) and of course, Mom's world famous chocolate chip cookies. I can't wait to interview my mom, dad, brother and sister about their memories of our earlier days ... how fun!

But enough about me. It's time to get *you* organized so you can get scrapping! Having plunged into the scrapbook world without a plan or a clue as to what I wanted to get out of it, I have since reassessed. If I had it to do over, I would do quite a few things differently. This I want to share with you. Whether you're new to scrapbooking or have been scrapbooking for a while and still have the fire ... there's much to be learned from someone who went about it in a way that was all wrong for her. What I share in the pages ahead is based on my personal experience in getting organized – both from the point of view of a professional organizer and a now happy scrapper.

It is my sincere hope that you enjoy *the happy scrapper* – and become one!

INTRODUCTION

get the most from the happy scrapper

Are you ready? Fasten your seatbelt because you're about to embark on a journey like none other you've been on before! In the pages ahead, you'll take a very close look at your scrapbook life. Ultimately you'll create a scrapbook plan and record all the intimate details in your *happy scrapper workbook*. (Think of your workbook as your travel diary to use as you navigate through the pages ahead!)

Your *happy scrapper workbook* is your roadmap to scrapping happiness. It will help you create a step-by-step plan for getting from where you are now to where you want to be with your scrapbooking. As you go through the process keep in mind your scrapbook situation is uniquely yours. It's probably quite different from your neighbor's or the scrapper you chatted with at your last crop. *The happy scrapper* is designed to help you figure out where you are, decide where you want to go, and give you the roadmap to get there.

Like any journey, you'll experience ups and downs. Along the way you'll come to places where you need to stop and take a rest. Feel free to do this. I'll even encourage you to take a break from time to time by interrupting the flow with a personal perspective, organizing tip or anecdote. Just look for the tips icon and a new font, and you'll know it's time to take a breather.

As you travel through the pages ahead you may find you're carrying excess baggage. Possibly you're scrapbooking based on someone else's values and priorities. Maybe you're trying to live up to someone else's ideals. I hope you'll take this chance to lighten your load a bit. Get clear about what it is you want from scrapbooking and leave your excess baggage behind.

OK ... ready to see where you're headed?

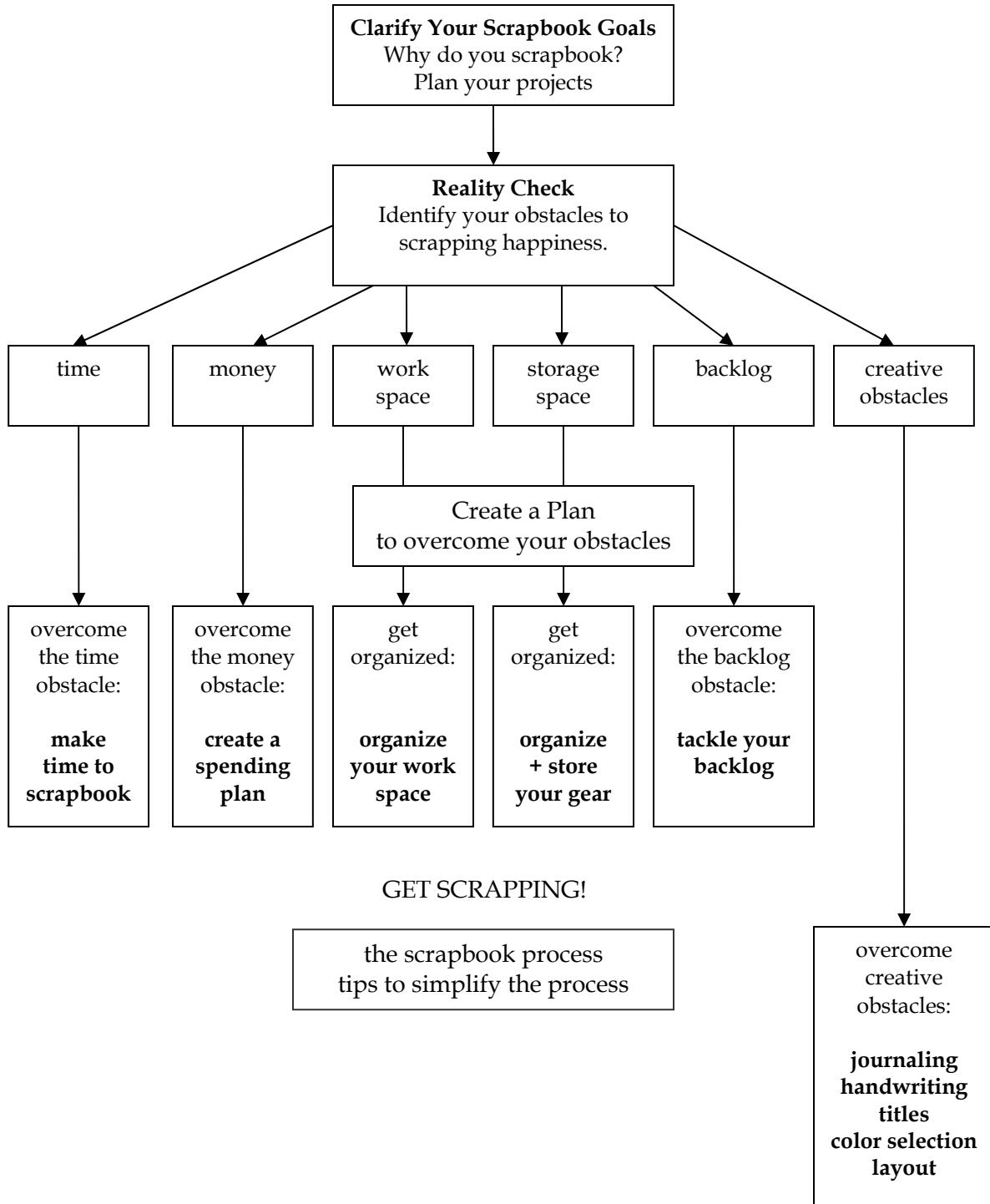
where are you going?

I'll be your tour guide for a moment and tell you about your journey ahead. If you're like me, you need to know where you're going before you start on a journey. The diagram on the next page shows you all the destinations ahead.

INTRODUCTION

← you are here!

GET ORGANIZED!



As you can see, the happy scrapper is divided into three main sections. The first section is the introduction, which is where you are now. The second part is called [Get Organized](#). This is where you'll [clarify your scrapbook goals](#) by understanding [why you scrapbook](#) and deciding what you want to make. This forms the foundation for your scrapbook plan.

Once you know what you want to make and why, you'll do a [reality check](#) and figure out the [obstacles](#) standing between you and your scrapbook goals. You'll develop a plan of attack for overcoming common scrapbook obstacles like time, money, space, disorganization, photo backlog and so on.



If a lack of **time** is getting in the way of your scrapping plans, make sure your travel plans call for a stop in the [make time to scrapbook](#) section. It's loaded with ideas and tips for fitting scrapbooking into your life ... no matter how crowded your schedule may be. Look for the clock icon throughout the book for all kinds of ideas on how to save time and get scrapping.



If your obstacle is limited **money** for scrapbooking, you'll learn how to [create a spending plan](#). Your spending plan will help you prioritize your purchases and alleviate the stress of overspending. Look for the piggy bank icon throughout the book for simple tips to help you stretch your scrapbook buck.



If your **workspace** isn't, uh, working, be sure to read through [organize your workspace](#). This section is loaded with techniques and strategies to help you create an organized and inspiring scrapbook space ... won't that be fabulous?



Does the term "clutter bug" ring a bell for you? If **disorganization** is your obstacle to scrapping happiness, be sure to check out the tips and ideas in [organize + store your gear](#).

If your **backlog** makes it impossible for you to get excited about cropping, hope is right around the next corner. [Organize + store your photos](#) will arm you with strategies to tackle your backlog (and live to tell about it).

If your biggest obstacle is the **scrapbook process** itself (or specific elements of scrapping), [overcoming creative obstacles](#) is just for you! You'll get simple solutions to help with the [scrapbook process](#), [writer's block](#), [handwriting](#), [creative titles](#), [selecting colors](#) and [page layout](#).

In the final section, [get scrapping](#), you'll wrap everything up and learn strategies to put your plan in motion.

Throughout the book you'll find quizzes, worksheets, checklists and other exercises to help you pull your plan together. It's simple: if you fill out the forms in your *happy scrapper workbook*, at the end of your journey you'll have a step-by-step plan to take you to your ultimate scrapping destination.

GET ORGANIZED!

When you think about getting organized, what comes to mind? Do you instantly conjure up visions of bins and boxes, all neatly labeled to tell you what's inside? Bins, boxes and labels are definitely a part of organizing ... but it is so much more – especially as it relates to scrapbooking.

The *Get Organized* section of *the happy scrapper* is designed to help you in a number of ways. Sure, you'll learn how to organize your tools and supplies and get creative ideas for using nifty organizing containers, but you'll also learn how to get very clear about your goals for scrapbooking. Knowing what you want out of scrapbooking lays the foundation for scrapping happiness.



The next step is to do a reality check and figure out what's really standing between you and your scrapping goals. Once you know your obstacles, you can create a plan of action and prioritize what to do first, second, third and so on.

The final section in *Get Organized* is where you'll learn strategies and techniques for organizing your time, finances, workspace and storage for scrapbooking. You'll develop a spending plan, take steps to make more time to scrapbook, organize your workspace, organize and store your gear, and tackle your backlog.

Ready to get started?