

# *From the Heart. . .*

## *. . . Life Skills for Today*

*By Sharon L. Benedict MS, ACC*



## **Housekeeping—clean enough for healthy, dirty enough for happy!**

Let's start out this first month of summer with housecleaning definitely not on the list of "to do's." I know, this month is supposed to be about housekeeping. Yet, maybe for you too these last couple months have been a whirlwind of "to do's." So, I officially call, at least this week's issue, a housekeeping holiday for all!

I believe my motto, *Clean enough for Healthy, Dirty enough for Happy*, still applies. This will just be the week or two where the dirty side of happy reigns supreme. One thing about dirt, grease, and grime, they are always patiently waiting for you to clean them up. So, what difference does a week or two make anyway?

While you take advantage of this *Dirty Side of Happy*, get outdoors in between the cooling showers we are having lately. And don't forget *Adventure Fest* tomorrow, Saturday, June 6, where just about every kind of fun is there for your happy time—including kayaking practice before heading for the Guadalupe or Frio Rivers!

Let's start the summer out right. Kayaking first; maybe Fiesta Texas next; maybe a visit to a train history museum; then, we'll really get down to *Clean Enough for Healthy*. In the meantime, give yourself a few moments to ask yourself this question, "How do you see yourself—as a *Cleanie* or a *Messie*?" I won't spoil your *Dirty Enough*

for *Happy* time with too much detail right now. Here' just a short definition by the master maven of housekeeping, Sandra Felton (<http://www.messies.com/>):

**Messie** = We all know them. They are the people who never seem to get control of their housework and their time, the type who need all day to accomplish nothing. They live in dread of opening a closet door, for fear they will be buried under an avalanche of canned goods, flashlight batteries, tissue boxes, and stockings with only one run that might come in handy someday for something. (Well, you never know.)

**Cleanie** = Unlike Messies, Cleanies have mental schedules they themselves are not aware of. Their minds are like computers going down their list of things to do. The power that activates the computer is in the eyes. Again and again they say, "When I see..." or "If it looks dirty, I..."

I know you probably assume I am one of the most obsessed Cleanies based on my byline covering each month one of twelve practical daily lifeskills throughout the year. Believe me, I'm really a recovering Messie who periodically puts on the Cleanie mindset. Just look at my shower stall where the orange mildew grime is building up! Or wait a minute, don't see the grime. It will spoil my pristine image you may have of me! Honestly, I do report I'm getting closer to being a balanced Cleanie as each season passes.

In the next issue, you will have an opportunity to more clearly pinpoint how you see yourself—either as a *Cleanie* or a *Messie*; and if a messie, which style you may favor the most. In the meantime, for those who hate housekeeping, ask yourself this question, "How can I change my perspective of housekeeping from being an intolerable chore to put off as long as possible, to pacing myself into an established routine, bringing order & harmony into my home and surroundings?"

In the meantime, get out there and enjoy your *Dirty Enough for Happy* time!

--

Sharon L. Benedict, MS, ACC, is a certified life wellness coach-consultant, specializing in life skills, wellness, and creative arts development for individuals, businesses and organizations ([www.harvestenterprises-sra.com](http://www.harvestenterprises-sra.com)). She welcomes your questions and comments and can be contacted at [seekreachachieve@gvtc.com](mailto:seekreachachieve@gvtc.com).

# *From the Heart. . .*

## *. . . Life Skills for Today*

*By Sharon L. Benedict MS, ACC*



## **Housekeeping—Cleanie or Messie?**

Remember last week's definition by Sandra Felton (<http://www.messies.com>)? Messies probably represent most of us who really don't like housecleaning and would much rather be doing something else, even going to the dentist, maybe! We live in dread of opening a closet door, for fear they will be buried under an avalanche of canned goods, flashlight batteries, tissue boxes, and stockings with only one run that might come in handy someday for something. A Cleanie is just about the opposite. They have mental schedules they themselves are not aware of. Their minds are like computers going down their list of things to do. Their cleanie computer mind moves into action when they see any dust, grime, or little spot in the corner of the book shelf.

As confessed in that last issue, I am a recovering Messie doing quite well as being an occasional balanced Cleanie. It's now your turn to more clearly pinpoint how you see yourself—either as a *Cleanie* or a *Messie*; and if a messie, which style you may favor the most.

In the world of housekeeping, we can score ourselves anywhere from 0-10—zero meaning disaster, ten meaning perfection, and average somewhere around six. Extremes of zero or ten are never a desirable goal. Yet, like with all other daily lifeskills, you can find balance in this world too.

So, take this moment to rate yourself in the chart according to Felton's description of a Cleanie and Messie. By all means, if you are one of those wonderful Cleanies, say so and be proud of it! We Messies need to learn all your special tricks. Whether you consider yourself a cleanie or a messie—what have you discovered about yourself? After you mark your scores, write down your thoughts and any changes in routine you may want to make, if any. Then share your thoughts with your family or close friend.

Ask your friends to score themselves, just for fun, really! Then, whoever is the Cleanie in the bunch, ask if you Messies can come over to observe the master housekeeper at work for tips to take home and try! And if you have a Cleanie in your family, by all means encourage them to become the master housekeeper of your clan! Yet, remember, you messies will need to do your best to learn from the masters; otherwise your family cleanie will be in perpetual frustration. So, keep the home fires burning as you both learn how to dance together while dispatching the dirt—*clean enough for healthy, dirty enough for happy!*

--

Sharon L. Benedict, MS, ACC, is a certified life wellness coach-consultant, specializing in life skills, wellness, and creative arts development for individuals, businesses and organizations ([www.harvestenterprises-sra.com](http://www.harvestenterprises-sra.com)). She welcomes your questions and comments and can be contacted at [seekreachachieve@gvtc.com](mailto:seekreachachieve@gvtc.com).

<b>Are you a Cleanie or a Messie?</b>	<b>Score</b>				
<b>Description</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1-3</b>	<b>4-6</b>	<b>7-9</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>Cleanie</b> (the scores 0 to 6 do not usually apply to cleanies)					
<b>Perfectionist Messies</b> Very high standards for individual jobs. Yet, indecisive about approach to tasks. So, they decide not to decide.					
<b>Rebellious Messies</b> Although they know what they need to do, they refuse to do it. Sometimes determined to be independent from the way "Mom" told them to do it way back when.					
<b>Relaxed Messies</b> Rationalizes that the world outside is hostile and home is their place to relax. So things are let go. The home then actually becomes hostile with clutter...actually making others and sometimes themselves feel unwelcome in their home.					
<b>Sentimental Messies</b> Every scrap brought home is precious and valuable. You never know when you will need it. So, the piles grow and every drawer has loads of undeveloped film of precious memories.					
<b>Spartan Messies</b> They cut out or lock up the things they need because it will just mean more to care for. They usually don't get rid of things just exclude them from care. "Out of mind; out of sight!"					
<b>Clean Messies</b> As long as things are clean they can be left out...like clean clothes in a basket, not folded; dishes washed but left out on counter. But they are clean!					
<b>Safe Messies</b> Leaves bed unmade so it can air out better. The floors are not waxed because they might slip and fall. Dishes not dried by hand because air drying is more sanitary; so they stay out. One cannot be too careful.					
<b>Old-Fashioned Messies</b> Just love to do things the old-fashioned way...like scrubbing the floor on their hands and knees. Some are appropriate but not just for old-fashioned sake. They lose out on new technology or simple ways to ease the task.					
<b>Idealistic Messies</b> Their heads are in the clouds...great thoughts and ideas but results either don't appear or are disastrous. Tuned to loftier things, seldom notice the relationship between their messy home and their fading dreams.					

# *From the Heart. . .*

## *. . . Life Skills for Today*

*By Sharon L. Benedict MS, ACC*



## **Housekeeping—Club Soda magic!**

During one of my online cruising moments, I recently came across another website that has all kinds of information and resources on gardening, organizing, product reviews, and housekeeping. Just bookmark the Housekeeping Channel (<http://www.housekeepingchannel.com/index.php>) alongside Good Housekeeping online (<http://www.goodhousekeeping.com/home/how-to-clean>), and you will have two very useful ways to get ideas and tips on cleaning everything from acrylic and glass surfaces, carpet, ceramic bathtubs, windows screens, to wicker furniture.

Among the many tips, I've been looking for other ways to remove stains from our carpet. Between our outdoor landscaping projects that bring in who knows what and our senior Schnauzer pet, Daisy, having an "accident" on rare occasion, we have any number of areas to experiment the best solution for stains and odors. I read that Club soda is the best emergency spotter there is. The Housekeeping Channel recommends you keep it on hand to clean up spills on carpet and clothing. Yet, it all depends on how fast you take care of the spot about to become a stain. Club soda is known to remove red wine, coffee, tea, even red Kool-Aid. Go the [http://www.housekeepingchannel.com/a\\_789-Club Soda Always Keep it on Hand](http://www.housekeepingchannel.com/a_789-Club_Soda_Always_Keep_it_on_Hand) for details. Also, check out the *green cleaning links* at these websites for environmentally friendly ideas.

As I continued cruising for other tips, I wondered what products or homemade concoctions my readers may use to remove stains and odors that are friendly to your family's health and environment. So, how about sending me some of your ideas as you check out these two housekeeping resources? Here are some categories to consider when offering tips. Try to be as specific as possible on the product(s) you use, how you use them, and the results. In the next issue, I'll try to share them with others who are also looking for simple and better ways to keep home *clean enough for healthy, dirty enough for happy*. And by all means, tell me if Club Soda works magic for you!

#### Cleaning Categories:

- Appliances
- Art and Décor
- Bathrooms
- Cabinets
- Carpets & Flooring
- Computers and other office equipment
- Fixtures
- Furnishings
- Kitchens
- Laundry, and laundry room
- Outdoor furniture (plastic, wood, metal)
- Pets and pet stains
- Upholstery
- Walls, Ceilings, Door portals
- Window treatment/drapes



--

Sharon L. Benedict, MS, ACC, is a certified life wellness coach-consultant, specializing in life skills, wellness, and creative arts development for individuals, businesses and organizations ([www.harvestenterprises-sra.com](http://www.harvestenterprises-sra.com)). She welcomes your questions and comments and can be contacted at [seekreachachieve@gvtc.com](mailto:seekreachachieve@gvtc.com).

# *From the Heart. . .*

## *. . . Life Skills for Today*

*By Sharon L. Benedict MS, ACC*



## **Housekeeping—Yard Duty, Down, and Dirty!**

For the past three weeks I have watched my husband early in the morning and in the heat of the day, dig a big hole in our yard. You may wonder, what for? No, it's not a herculean effort to find a pesky rodent tearing up our yard. Nor is it the cooling thought of a swimming pool to dive into during these sizzling summer days.

It's going to be a Koi pond he has long dreamed of. As you can imagine, John is a major talented guy that loves do-it-yourself jobs. Just when he finishes one he's off to another. Every day is a surprise as to what will next show up in our yard. Being the naturalist that he is also, our yard front and back are 95% native plants. I can't complain that's for sure. And I better not. Although I help with mortar and messes, he really does it all. And that's no easy task either for a sixty-plus skinny Paul Bunyan, with more than 3 feet of Texas hill country compacted gravel. No soft soil for this senior to be found! One nice advantage is it provides a very stable base for the pond.

You've heard the adage, "build it and they will come." Well, for a native plant lover, that's just what has happened. In our little backyard, arrayed with God's native colors, birds of all shades and shapes, hummingbirds, butterflies, bubble bees, and even lizards are frequenting a flower or fence line. I'm sure they are saying to themselves and their cousins, "Now, here's what life is all about!" In the cool of the early morning and cooling evening, I do love to settle into my chaise lounge to watch the parade.

Very soon we will have the sound and sights of a whispering pond with a delicate waterfall trickling down a miniature stream to an awaiting pond filled with water plants, Koi fish arrayed in diverse colors, and of course some turtles that will bask on the nearby rocks and ledges, strategically placed for quiet observation. Our critter visitors will also have more than a small bird bath to quench their thirst.

What are your yard plans? For some, they just as soon have a rock lawn and garden. No need to mow, weed, or water, that's for sure! There are very creative ways to fashion a very low maintenance yard that works for you. Whatever your bent, have fun with family creating just the right back yard that welcomes you in it for lounging and loving care. And by all means show your appreciation to the special one who did most all the work. And for all those wives who always have great ideas for their husbands to magically transform the yard, try to participate in whatever way you can. Be sure to have a cool pitcher of lemonade handy for him; and help move a few pavers or two also!

For those women and wives who are avid yard lovers and do most of the work themselves, Kudos to you! I bow in profound admiration! You are helping us women with the overflowing ideas to maybe start walking our talk—and get down and dirty! I know husbands would appreciate our hands-on assistance, if only to cheer them on!

--

Sharon L. Benedict, MS, ACC, is a certified life wellness coach-consultant, specializing in life skills, wellness, and creative arts development for individuals, businesses and organizations ([www.harvestenterprises-sra.com](http://www.harvestenterprises-sra.com)). She welcomes your questions and comments and can be contacted at [seekreachachieve@gvtc.com](mailto:seekreachachieve@gvtc.com).