



CHICAGO'S MOST INSPIRING STORIES

THE CHICAGO NIGHTLIFE GUIDE EVERYONE'S TALKING ABOUT

19 POSITIVELY BRILLIANT MINI RECIPE VIDEOS

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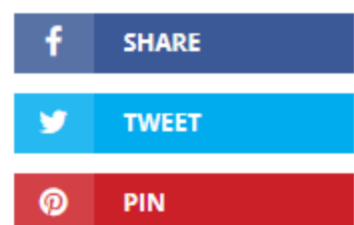
ULTIMATE GUIDE TO DATE NIGHT IN CHICAGO

JUNE 6, 2017

Meet Sarah Parisi of The Clutter Curator in River North



LOCAL STORIES



Today we'd like to introduce you to Sarah Parisi.

Sarah, can you briefly walk us through your story – how you started and how you got to where you are today.

The Clutter Curator was actually started many years ago from what my mother has told me. As I graduated from 5th grade I apparently tossed my class picture shortly afterwards. When my mother came across it in the bin she asked me why I had thrown it out. I said "I'm no longer in 5th grade so I don't need that anymore". I remember during middle and high school I would help friends clear out their rooms, closets and even remember a time I made my friend empty her backpack to organize it. She has every book and every piece of paper she had been given in there! We quickly tossed old lipsticks, papers and put the unneeded books in her locker. To me watching her lug that backpack around with unneeded items was frustrating to look at. I still feel the same way when I walk into my clients home, it's a shame that people live in uncomfortable situations be it physical clutter, emotional clutter or visual clutter. It all affects our moods, how smooth our days run and our mental health.

After graduating with my degree in Interior Design I moved to NYC to start my next life chapter. I told myself I would never sit in a cubicle after college. My first job was a project manager at a well know Knoll dealership, needless to say I sat in a cubicle. I spent 5 years there working my way up the ladder and managing some great but highly stressful jobs. I was good at my job but I knew it wasn't what I was supposed to be doing. It was close but just not right. My lifelong friend became a health and wellness coach and needed a test client. We started meeting every two weeks to discuss my goals and life plans. Quickly realizing how much "life clutter" I was holding on to. Within a year I moved to a dream apartment that I manifested, ended an 8 year relationship, and quit my job without having my next one lined up. Shortly after I started a new job in the same field which was financially rewarding but yet again not my passions. Once I realized money isn't my "driver" I had to remove myself from the NYC culture. I love NY and it formed me into the person I am today but 8 year of unhealthy stress was enough for me.

I made a plan, started saving which meant leaving my amazing apartment and moving in with my lifelong friend and life coach. After 6 months of sharing a studio apartment and saving every penny it was time to leave NYC to go explore the world. 9 months later and 18 countries visited I finally found my way to my now husband in Chicago. Once I arrive back in the states it all made sense, I had to start my business bringing joy back into people's lives through organization. Slowly but surely my business has been building. I love each client I work with and can't express the joy I get from seeing them transform during the process. Not only is their space organized but through the process they uncover the person they either were before the mess or the person they have always been but needed my assistance.

My clients range in lifestyle, age, education, careers, its great meeting such a variety of people each day. More amazing is how simple steps can get each one of them to their best selves. I look at organizing as a holistic approach, you can't solve a surface problem without getting to the root of the issue. During our sessions I tend to ask a lot of question getting my client to think a bit more about their routines and the stories we tell ourselves. We all have a running dialogue in our heads, I find once you speak it out loud most client can find the root of their problems and quickly find ways to resolve their struggle points.

I'm looking forward to seeing how my business evolves as I grow as a person and an organizer.

Great, so let's dig a little deeper into the story – has it been an easy path overall and if not, what were the challenges you've had to overcome?

I would have to say I'm very blessed and have such a supportive family, friends and husband through this process of starting my business. With my work ethic, not working it not an option! I always find ways to make money or at the very least keep myself busy. I'm also blessed to have a brother-in-law that knows how to make websites, with my help with design he pulled together a functional site that gives my client an idea of my design style and how I can help them through this process. Luckily as soon as I started my business I have had a steady client base and book anywhere from 2-5 clients a week.

I find that once you are on the right path the pieces start falling into place. Before I started following my passions I always felt I was fighting with life. Every morning was a struggle, I didn't love what I was doing and found joy in material items which were not fulfilling. Now I wake up excited from my day and seeing what transformation I can create for each and every client.

The Clutter Curator – what should we know? What do you guys do best? What sets you apart from the competition?

As I near my one year anniversary I can already see my business evolving. Each session and client are completely different which keeps me on my toes. Typically I have a call to discuss the problem area, this gives us a time to get to know each other a bit more. Working within someone's home is very personal for so many reasons. That is why it is so important to find the right person to work with. I work with my clients anywhere from 3 hours to +60 hours so ensuring our personality mesh and the style of my approach works with my clients' personality is very important.

While working with my clients I personalize the process to them. I find some organizers follow a step by step process that is not always personal to the client. Which means initially the space will look great but over time the chaos will creep back in. I've had a number of clients tell me how their babysitter, dog walker, and friends helped them organize in the past but once they worked with myself the system actually worked and is maintainable. While I work with my clients I talk through the items we are sorting to understand their habits and how they got to the point where they needed my services. Organization is a skill that can be learned as long as the client is ready to invest time into the process and ready to create new habits. Some clients are more therapy based while others are looking for a simple system that they can maintain.

I'm finding my true passion is helping people organize their space and life clutter. My favorite part of working with a client is when their friends and family can notice the transformation within the person, what I call the light back in their eyes. I've had husbands and wives ask me how I was able to get their spouse back. It's amazing how much energy clutter pulls from us and how liberating it is once you let go of the excess in our lives.

With my degree in Interior Design I enjoy transforming the space so it's functional and stylish. I've found many clients don't know what their style is so I guide them through the process. Knowing that at the end of the organizing process they will have a space they love and can be proud of keeps them motivated!

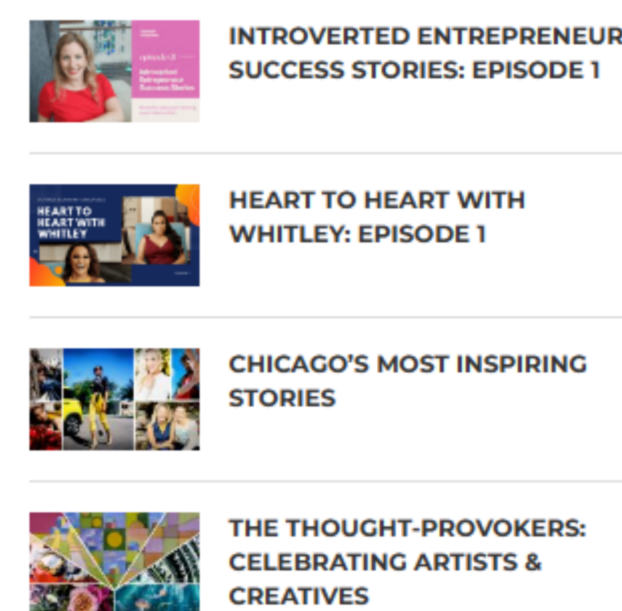
What moment in your career do you look back most fondly on?

Honestly, having the guts to start my own business and believing in myself. I could have easily stayed in sales and followed the seemingly more natural life plan. But leaving my old life to start this new chapter has been far more rewarding. I see now how each chapter in my life has prepared me for this and how I can relate to my clients situations. Sharing my story with my clients shows them they can do anything they want to with the correct planning. I find we typically sell ourselves short, being the type of home we think we deserve, career path, mate or something as simple as the clothes we wear. I truly believe once you let go of your life clutter you open up space to do what you are meant to be doing.

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HEART TO HEART WITH WHITLEY: EPISODE 1

CHICAGO'S MOST INSPIRING STORIES

THE THOUGHT-PROVOKERS: CELEBRATING ARTISTS & CREATIVES