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**Find Joy in Your Photos Again – Simple Steps to Regain Control**

**By Christine Sutton**

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Photographs are intended to bring us joy. Instead most people feel anything but joy when it comes to their photographs. Most people feel challenged, frustrated, and overwhelmed by their photographs!

The average person has shoeboxes and dresser drawers full of photos that are a jumbled mess. Many people have years and years' worth of photos that have never even made it out of the film developer's envelopes! Even worse, some people have even stopped taking pictures because they feel so guilty about their already out-of-control photo "collection."

If you're feeling overwhelmed by your photos, then start by taking these simple steps to find the joy in your photographs once again:

1. Practice Photo Safety

If you were to ask someone to name their most prized possessions, they would likely tell you that their photographs and keepsakes were most important. And yet, most people are unknowingly damaging these very items that they consider most valuable!

How about you? Are you damaging your precious photographs? If you have any photographs in shoeboxes, magnetic albums, manila folders, plastic baggies or standard film developing envelopes, then your answer is YES! If you have ever written on the back of your photographs with a ballpoint pen, then your answer is YES! That is because all of these items expose your photographs to the three biggest hazards: Acid, Lignin and PVC. Here's a quick explanation of these hazards:

**Acid:** A chemical substance that can weaken paper and cloth, causing it to brown and become brittle.

**Lignin:** An organic substance that is present in wood pulp. It becomes more and more acidic as it deteriorates. (The yellowing effect of a newspaper is an example of lignin.)

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PVC: (also known as polyvinyl chloride) A chemically active plastic that, when combined with moisture in the air can emit hydrochloric acid.

This may sound complicated, but you don't need to worry about remembering the details. Just remember that acid, lignin and PVC will damage photographs! Whenever you purchase photo albums and scrapbooking supplies, be sure that they are acid-free, lignin-free and PVC free.

You also need to protect your photographs from hazards in the environment, such as excessive heat, light and humidity. For ultimate safety, you should store your photo collection in a windowless closet away from water pipes and heat sources.

This may seem like extra work, but practicing photo safety should be the first step in any of your photo organizing projects. The greatest organizing systems are useless if your photographs are destroyed in

the process!

### 2. Gather everything in one place.

It's hard to organize your photographs if you don't know where they are! Having everything in one place will bring an immediate sense of peace, and it will make it easier for your family to enjoy your precious photographs. There's a security benefit, too! If the unthinkable happens and you need to evacuate your house, you will be able to quickly gather your treasured items.

### 3. Don't get hung up on the "big picture".

If you're like most people, then just thinking about your massive photo collection is enough to discourage you from taking action. You see years and years' worth of photos and think you could never get them all organized, so why bother? Get rid of that "all or nothing" mentality!

Set mini-goals so that you can feel a sense of accomplishment. Focusing on one theme (such as holiday or vacation photos) will be a lot more manageable than trying to tackle the entire photo collection at one time. Don't sabotage yourself by thinking you need to set aside an entire day for your organizing. Take advantage of small blocks of time - even 15 minutes - and take some action. Small progress is still progress!

### 4. Purge your photos!

Photographs hold so much meaning and significance for us, and most of us consider our photographs to be among our most prized possessions. Because of this, many of us would never dream of throwing away a photograph. It sounds dreadful doesn't it?

But guess what? You don't have to keep every picture! Don't be afraid to sift through your collection and free yourself of those photographs that don't stir your emotions. For starters, release anything that is dark, blurry, or otherwise unattractive.

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If you insist upon keeping every photograph, then your truly special photographs will be lost in the mass of other photographs. Keep those photos that inspire you, and release the rest. Purging your photographs is one simple thing you can do to dramatically simplify your organizing.

### 5. Develop a system for handling just–developed pictures.

We realize that you probably have oodles and oodles of older photographs that need organizing. So, you may think it odd that we're focusing on handling just–developed pictures. The simple reason for that is that you need to feel a sense of achievement, and this will give you an easy starting point. It may take you a while to go back and organize your older photographs, but at the very least you'll feel in control of your pictures from here on out. The system that you create should be simple, so that you'll use it every time.

### 6. Capture your memories that go along with your photographs.

Your photographs will hold more meaning, for you and your loved ones, if they know the story behind them.

As you begin to get your photographs in order, you may be interested in discovering the joy of scrapbooking! Scrapbooking is the art of safely and creatively showcasing photos and memorabilia in albums using archival, acid–free albums and products. Pages are embellished with stickers, artwork, and journaling. Scrapbooking is the fastest growing segment of the craft industry, with good reason.

"Scrapbooking is truly a magical activity with immeasurable benefits. It allows us to record our family stories and reflect on life's greatest treasures".

Whether or not you plan to scrapbook, be sure to take the time to capture those magical moments in life. You know, those times in life when something wonderful happens and everything seems right with the world . . . or you're amazed by your child's words of wisdom. Capture those special moments as they happen.

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Christine Sutton and her business partner, Tracey DuBois, have helped countless people organize, protect, and enjoy their precious photographs. They co–founded

, a website

that offers a fun approach to photo safety, organizing solutions, a FREE Photo Organizing Idea Kit and more!

**Bring Home Memories With Safari Photos**

**By Low Jeremy**

Any tourist knows that one of the more important parts of any trip is to bring back tangible memories in forms of souvenirs, tokens and photos. Well, among all these photos can evoke more memories since it lets you see the actual, present images while you were there.

In this article, we have prepared four tips to help you get the most from your African safari photos.

**Know the locations of wonder**

Too many of amateur photographers don't typically have enough knowledge on the perfect locations for safari photographs. Well, this time you will know some of them. The prime locations are Kruger National Park (South Africa), Masai Mara (Kenya), Moremi (Botswana), Serengeti (Tanzania) and Etosha (Namibia).

**Bring the proper equipments**

You may not have the talent for photography yet with the right equipments and devices, you are sure to bring out the best from even the worst photos you have taken.

Your best buddy for safari photos is the digital camera as it provides you countless advantages that you may never have from other camera units.

**Be conscious of the composition**

Most safari photos are spoiled because they do not have the right subjects in them or the subjects were not thoroughly and properly positioned in the image. You have more control on the composition using positioning principles. Make the most out of the latter though.

The main focus of the composition is how you frame your subjects.

When you choose the composition of the safari photos, you have to have quick decisions, as wild animals don't normally stay for long in single locations. Be extra careful of your movements as well to avoid distracting their attention.

**And never forget...be patient**

We have no control over the animals that pass our sights. They move at their own phase and at their own time. They simply behave in manners that they naturally do so you can't obviously expect them to move as you want. Be patient in waiting for subjects to come by. And once they do, use all your advantage to capture them in photos. Remember, the most beautiful safari photos are those that depict unusually beautiful movements.

You may not control luck, and that's for a fact. Luck or opportunity is one thing that determines the beauty if action is to be captured in photos. If you are patient, nature may help you see the marvel in each wildlife scene— a chase of preys and predators, lion clubs at play and solitary trees that reserves

excellent elegance.

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