

angel

at my table

Anya Kussler meets a woman dedicated to making other people's lives easier so they can enjoy the good things in life.

EVERY DAY I FLOP INTO BED WISHING THERE WERE 48 HOURS IN THE DAY. JUGGLING DEADLINES, AN ENERGETIC MUTT WHO NEEDS ABOUT FIVE HOURS' EXERCISE A DAY, DOMESTIC CHORES, APPOINTMENTS, GST RETURNS ... MY TO-DO LIST JUST NEVER GETS SHORTER. AS A RESULT, THE THINGS I ENJOY – SOCIALISING, HIKING, ESCAPING UP NORTH FOR THE WEEKEND – USUALLY PLAY SECOND FIDDLE TO THE STUFF THAT MUST BE DONE.

Enter Charlie Perry, owner of Charlie's Angels, a lifestyle management company that specialises in freeing up time for busy Kiwis. Charlie points out that while a fifth of New Zealanders work 50 hours-plus a week, they are becoming more aware of the ill effects of stress and recognise that enjoying their free time after a hard week's graft is not just a luxury but essential for their health.

In order to help people free up more time for themselves, Charlie and her extensive network of "helping hands" will literally take any chore off your hands. Charlie's Angels have done just about everything, including picking up dry-cleaning, making golf appointments, arranging a house move, walking pets, tidying gardens, planning a travel itinerary for overseas guests and de-cluttering a home (complete with trips to the tip). And, following our meeting, Charlie was off on a recce for a client who needed Sky installed, a barbecue delivered and the internet set up in his new home.

Charlie says it doesn't matter how big or small a job is. "Some only take an hour, some people pre-book 10 to 15 hours a month in advance, and some need us for a solid day or two to help out with something. It all depends on what the client wants." And those clients, she adds, can be anyone from working mums and business/family people to young professional couples or retirees.

Charlie says her diverse background, and especially a six-year stint as PA for Vodafone's CEO, prompted her to come up with her time-saver concept. "I just loved the job. It gave me an opportunity to do many different things, like filming internal videos, organising conferences and helping my boss on a personal level by arranging presents for his wife or organising holidays."

It was then that Charlie decided she wanted to become a professional organiser, so when she left Vodafone she started doing odd jobs for friends. "I was prepared to do anything – and having spent all my life in Auckland, I had a huge network of contacts in different industries."

The day Charlie finally decided to set up shop was when a client thanked her for doing a chore by saying: "Charlie, you're an absolute angel." She launched the company in July last year, using only tradespeople she'd tried and tested herself, as well as a number of highly recommended women she contracts out to. In fact, Charlie does a lot of the work herself: she enjoys it, but, more importantly, it gives her a good understanding of clients' needs.

I look forward to handing over my to-do list ... ■



Fact File

Charlie's Angels charge on average \$50 an hour, at increments of 15 minutes. They offer discounts for block bookings of 15 hours or more. The service is currently restricted to a 20km radius of Auckland's CBD, but Charlie hopes to be operating in all New Zealand city centres within the next two years.

More Info

Ph. 360 4126 or visit www.charliesangels.co.nz