

TO DO Lists

A great and simple way to Upgrade Your Day, that you can do right now, is to create a To Do list. I know, we ALL have great intentions when it comes to To Do lists, which we don't necessarily always carry out. But it's really all about forming a habit. And for me, when I write down all the things I need to do that day, or that week, and I have a visual way to check in with myself, I GET MORE DONE.

I know there are many apps available for our smartphones these days but there is something about pen and paper, actually writing something down, then ticking it off or crossing it out that works really well and pleases the brain. In this companion we have laid out some blank To Do lists ready for you to use. The exact one I use every morning!



As we write our lists, I do have a few pointers I recommend being mindful of. I think it's really important to start the list off with things that you can guarantee can be done. For example if today you need to visit the bank, or ring a colleague, but getting your task done relies on a reply from someone, or leaving the house, but you've got to wait for a package etc, they're probably best left to further down the list.

With me, if I start trying to fulfil a To Do list, but I can't because of different factors out of my control, I tend to just give up.

I tell myself, "Well I'll just cross that off tomorrow then, or later in the week." So I really try to fill up the top of the list with manageable tasks that I know can and will be ticked off today.

TO DO Lists cont.

Even if it's things like "Do the washing up", "Make breakfast", "Shower", "Tidy the kitchen", things you know you actually can do.

Once you have a list of say 15 things and the first 5 are getting ticked off quite easily, you're seeing them done, crossed off and accomplished, this creates HUGE motivation to get the rest done. I CAN do this!

I think it's a good idea to put the more important tasks next as we're all quite used to putting the bigger or more awkward tasks last, then when we get to them it's easy to put them off till the next day. "Ah I'm too tired, I've got to get the dinner on etc." Sometimes you need to encourage yourself to just go for it. Even though the tasks might seem challenging or complicated, most of the time, they're not.

This is where our fight-or-flight mode can come into play. If we walk away from it we don't have to deal with it. We tell ourselves we're in a happy and less stressed place. We've flown. However, all we are doing is the classic head-in-the-sand technique.

The task is still there, bubbling under the surface, affecting our day from a subconscious place.

At some point it will need addressing, so if we can try and "fight" it, action it there and then, it will stop the worry and underlying stress.

Most of the time, the task we worry about will actually have a better more positive outcome than we predicted from that place of fear. "Can I pay a bill in instalments or will they demand full payment? I'll call them tomorrow, the next day, next week..." Can you tell this is a personal example? Usually, if you do just ring and get it over with, the answer is just positive. "Of course you can pay instalments, in fact lets start payments NEXT month." I've been in these situations many times and on EVERY occasion the result I was dreading is a million times less scary. Its just about training ourselves to realise the worry is a waste of time. Be mindful that you don't actually know the outcome, so don't waste time fretting when you don't really know. Take a breath, take a step back, and do it.

Why not try a daily To Do list. Give it a go and see how it works for you! Let me know how you get on or if you have any questions or thoughts.

