

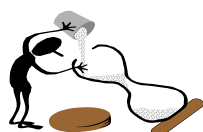


Planning Your Day

Tips for getting everything done that you need to

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I just can't find the time



Have you ever found yourself saying, “I just can't find the time to do this”, or sat down at the end of the day and thought “where has the day gone” or “I haven't done anything that I needed to”.

It happens to all of us at some time. Using the tips in this newsletter may help you to get to the stage of saying “That's great, I got things done that I needed to”.

Where do I start? (con't)

Sometimes not doing tasks you have always done such as making the beds, ironing or weeding the garden, will give you time to do other tasks you have set yourself.

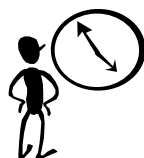
It is also important to include some fun activities in your daily schedule. Doing fun activities helps you keep on track and keep the “blues” away.

Where do I start?



The first step in taking charge of your day, is to be realistic about what you can actually do in a day. There will always be more tasks that could be done than hours in which to do them. Asking yourself some questions is one way to start to do this.

- Are there tasks I must do today?
- Can I carry out the tasks I have set myself?
- Do I need to ask for help to get things done?



Planning your day also means:

- Doing tasks today rather than “putting them off”.
- Only doing tasks that are part of your daily plan, even though other people think you should do other tasks.
- Giving yourself time to sit down and think about what is happening.



How to fit everything in



The following tips may help you to plan your day so that at the end of it you are happy about what you have achieved.

1. Allow yourself time to sit down every evening and think about what you have achieved today and what you have to do tomorrow.
2. Write out a “To Do” list. Have a think about what you have written and which one's are the most important. Re-write your list and put the most important one's at the top.
3. Plan your day around the tasks you have set yourself, write them onto the Daily Planner.
4. Take your Daily Planner with you when you leave the house, it will help remind you of what you have set yourself and not to take on more tasks.
5. At the end of the day sit down and have a look at what you have achieved. (con't over page)



How to fit everything in (con't)

- For each of the tasks you have completed, identify whether it was a pleasurable activity or a mastery activity (explanation next column). Then rate each activity on a scale of 1 to 10. Have a look back over your day and give yourself a pat on the back for what you have achieved.
- Now start to plan tomorrow and the next day.

Remember to include some exercise on your "To Do" list every day. Have a look at Newsletter 6 "Be Active" for some ideas.

Allow yourself some time to sit down and read the newsletters and to complete the worksheets. Also, go back and have another look at them, as there may be tips that could help you now.

Some "me" time also needs to be included in your day, even if it is reading the newspaper in bed.

Things aren't always going to work out the way you would like them to, however, using these tips may help make things go right more often.

Other things to think about

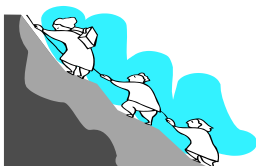


Sometimes it is a good thing to take on a challenging task or something you have never done before.

However, you need to think through:

- your reasons for wanting to do it
- what you can learn from it and
- what the costs may be.

That is, you need to weigh up the benefits of doing it against the costs. If it looks okay, do it and enjoy it, and take on a more challenging task next time. Put at least one challenging task on your weekly planner.



Pleasure & Mastery



Feeling down and not coping makes it hard to do things and to get through the day. Doing activities for the fun of it (pleasure) and those that involve looking after yourself or others (mastery) helps keep the "blues" in control. Check out the list below for some examples of "pleasure" and "mastery" activities. It is important to plan to do at least one of each type of activity every day and to try to increase the number each day so that there is less time in your day to be "blue".

Sometimes, there is too much to do in any one day and most of them involve mastery activities. If this is what is happening for you, then there is a need to sit down and think about what is happening. Is it okay or is there a need to change things? Think about how you can increase the pleasure activities that you are doing each day.

If you find that you are having plenty of "fun" (pleasure) activities and not doing many mastery activities, then it is also time to have a think about what is happening for you and do you need to take on more responsibilities.



Examples

Pleasure Activities

- Reading in bed
- Morning coffee
- Watching TV or DVD
- Phone call to friends/ family
- Going for a walk
- Surfing the net
- Painting
- Writing a poem
- Listening to the radio or music

Mastery Activities

- Doing the dishes
- Cooking meals
- Getting out of bed before 9am
- Helping friends or family
- Clearing the cobwebs
- Doing the laundry
- Cleaning out the cupboards
- Weeding the garden



Saying No is okay



Another part of taking charge of your day is to be able to say “I am unable to help you with this task” without feeling like you have let others or yourself down.

Then comes the challenge of working out what you can help with and whether you can fit it into your “To Do” list.

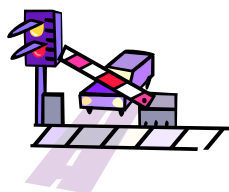
Remember, you are in charge of setting your priorities.



I still can't do anything

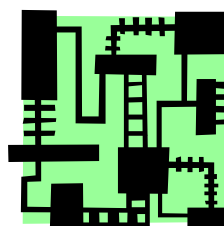
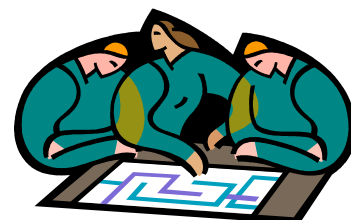
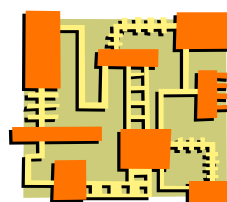
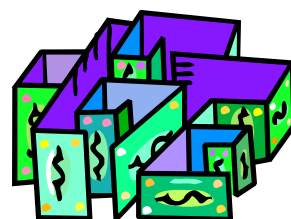
Okay, you have sat down every night, looked at what you have written down to do today and found that you haven't done any of them. Everything you tried to do turned out to be too difficult to do, or every time you started to do something, everything went wrong and you never finished it.

On page 4 is a questionnaire that may help you to better understand what is happening. Fill it out and have a look at what you have written down.



“Try Another Way” © Program

Produced by Jan Parr as part of a self-managed trial for cessation of benzodiazepine use. The finding of this study will be published in Drug and Alcohol Review in 2011.



What have I achieved today? And how to plan tomorrow?

Set yourself a time every evening to sit down and think about how your day went. What was it that you did and what were the things you were unable to do. This is not a time to worry about what didn't happen or what you “should have done”, but a time to look at what did happen and to start to prepare for tomorrow.

| What did get done? | | What didn't get done? | |
|--------------------|--|-----------------------|--|
| 1. | | 1. | |
| 2. | | 2. | |
| 3. | | 3. | |
| 4. | | 4. | |
| 5. | | 5. | |

TO DO LIST:

Now comes the hard part. Thinking about tomorrow. What is it that you need and want to do? It is important to write down what you want to do, not just what you “should do” or what someone else wants you to do. Write everything down in Column 1 “Tasks to be completed”. Remember to include a “fun” activity in your day, or even some exercise.

You now have to put your list in some kind of order. Think about how important is each of the tasks that you have set yourself. Which one's are the most important to achieve tomorrow? Write the most important one at the top of Column 2, cross it off your list in Column 1. Now work through the rest of your list in Column 1 and write each one in Column 2, then cross it off the list in Column 1.

It is okay to have tasks in Column 1 that you don't prioritise and put in Column 2. Keep this list and look at it again tomorrow night.

The next challenge is to fit your priority list into the Daily Planner. Make sure that you include a “fun” activity. If you can't think of any, have a look at the Fun Time List in Newsletter 6.

Column 1: Tasks to be completed

| | |
|-----|--|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |
| 6. | |
| 7. | |
| 8. | |
| 9. | |
| 10. | |

Column 2: Prioritising Tasks

| | |
|-----|--|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |
| 4. | |
| 5. | |
| 6. | |
| 7. | |
| 8. | |
| 9. | |
| 10. | |



Daily Planner

Now that you have your priority list, its time to write down when you are going to carry them out. Remember to put your fun activity in first. Try to carry out most of the tasks you have set yourself. It is okay if you don't get things done.

Sit down every evening and review how your day went. It is now time to rate your activities. Was it a pleasure activity (e.g. reading the newspaper, phoning a friend) then rate it on a scale of 1 (little pleasure) to 10 (much pleasure). Was it a mastery activity, (taking care of yourself or others e.g. preparing a meal, paying bills, giving someone a lift), then rate it on a scale of 1 (little sense of achievement) to 10 (great sense of achievement). Take into account how hard the task was and how you were feeling. There are no right or wrong answers, however, what you have written down will help you to plan for the next day and to set up your weekly schedule.

| Hours | Activity | Rating | |
|----------------|---------------------------------------|----------|---------|
| | | Pleasure | Mastery |
| <i>Example</i> | <i>Have coffee and read the paper</i> | 5 | |
| <i>Example</i> | <i>Make a special dinner</i> | | 6 |
| Before 6am | | | |
| 6-7 | | | |
| 7-8 | | | |
| 8-9 | | | |
| 9-10 | | | |
| 10-11 | | | |
| 11-12 | | | |
| 12-1 | | | |
| 1-2 | | | |
| 2-3 | | | |
| 3-4 | | | |
| 5-6 | | | |
| 6-7 | | | |
| 7-8 | | | |
| 8-9 | | | |
| 9-10 | | | |
| After 10pm | | | |



Weekly Activity Plan

Use this planner to help work out the things you will do over the next week. Have a look at the tasks you didn't put into your daily priority list, can you slot them in later in the week? Write in a “fun” activity every day. There needs to be a balance between what you would like to do, what you “should” do and what other's “expect” you to do. *All the best with becoming a better planner.*

| Date: | | | | | | | |
|------------|--------|---------|-----------|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| Time | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday | Sunday |
| Before 6am | | | | | | | |
| 6-7 | | | | | | | |
| 7-8 | | | | | | | |
| 8-9 | | | | | | | |
| 9-10 | | | | | | | |
| 10-11 | | | | | | | |
| 11-12 | | | | | | | |
| 12-1 | | | | | | | |
| 1-2 | | | | | | | |
| 2-3 | | | | | | | |
| 3-4 | | | | | | | |
| 5-6 | | | | | | | |
| 6-7 | | | | | | | |
| 7-8 | | | | | | | |
| 8-9 | | | | | | | |
| 9-10 | | | | | | | |
| After 10pm | | | | | | | |