

Want to feel stronger... in mind, body and spirit?

Free yourself and your environment of clutter, chaos and excess "stuff."

If you tackle a little bit at a time, you will find that getting rid of the excess is pretty painless and oh, so freeing.

Try out one task a day, or one a week if you feel overwhelmed. Make the process your own.

In the timeless wisdom (and marketing genius) of Nike, "Just do it."

You'll find that you really do get more out of life with less.

Jan



Permission To Pitch and Purge

We all tend to hold onto "things" that really serve NO purpose.

Maybe they brought us joy at one time, but perhaps that time has long passed and they are just collecting dust.

You have hereby been granted permission to get rid of things in your life that you really don't want.

Real Life Example

I used to love to collect miniature pewter figurines. I worked in a Hallmark store throughout college and happily spent some of my paychecks on the cute inventory.

I moved those trinkets around time after time throughout the years and dutifully displayed them in each apartment and home.

With my last move, I asked myself why in the world I was keeping the collection when I had tired of it years before.

The answer was that I felt guilty when I thought about tossing the figurines.

Guess what? That's not a good reason to keep something!

So I gave myself permission to get rid of them.

I donated the pewter to a local charity and I like to think that the little figurines are making someone else as happy now as they used to make me.

Task 1

Walk through your home with two bags - you pick how big they are - one is for the trash can and one is for donations. Take a good look at the items on display throughout your home.

If you see anything that just doesn't bring you joy anymore, and hasn't for a while, place it in one of the bags. By the time you've finished going through your house, you should have a nice donation for your local charity and/or the garbage truck!

De-Junk Your Mail

Task 2

Sort your "snail mail" the moment you enter your home. Or before, if you're lucky enough to have a recycle bin near your mail box.

Whatever you do, don't start a pile on the first flat surface you come to! Those piles tend to grow and lead to the worst home clutter.

If you can, toss ALL junk mail. Most of that is designed to make us feel like we need something we really don't.

If you are like most people and do the majority of your banking and bill paying online, you probably don't get much besides junk mail anyway.

Put any mail that needs your actual attention in the place where you will attend to it and recycle the rest.

Real Life Example

My kitchen counters used to have stacks of mail, magazines, circulars and flyers. These days, there is not one stack to be found.

It's hard to express how much better that feels!



Check Your Drawers

Task 3

Pour yourself a beverage of your choice - some nights I want hot tea while others definitely call for wine.

Sit down in front of any drawer in your house.

Take out all of the contents of the drawer asking yourself if you really need and/or use each item.

Be honest! Have you ever actually used that shrimp de-veiner or that loose tea leaf strainer?

If you answer "Yes - I really do use this," then replace it in the drawer.

If the answer is "No - I hate shrimp and my son is allergic so we never even eat it," then toss or donate.

You may want to pick up some drawer organizers to help tidy the drawer. I've even used shoe boxes (kid's shoe boxes are great) to separate items in some of our clothing drawers.

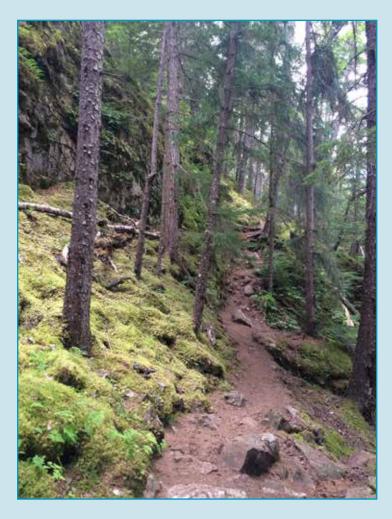
Real Life Example

One of my friends does this task to a random drawer in her house most nights of the week. She says it totally de-stresses her. She forgets about everything that happened that day and just completely concentrates on cleaning out and organizing a drawer.

Aside from these zen benefits, imagine how nice it would be to know exactly where to find items like fingernail clippers, stamps and scissors.

Remember to keep your two bags handy - one for trash and one for donations.

Take A Hike!



Task 4

...or a run or a walk or a stroll.

Just get outside and take a breath of fresh air if you can.

Nothing will de-clutter your brain faster or more efficiently.

Real Life Example

We recently moved from a house into a much smaller apartment.

I was a bit nervous about having less space, especially since we had a pretty big yard with our house.

I was pleasantly surprised to find that our apartment complex is next to a trail system that goes for miles.

All I have to do to go for a suburban "hike" is walk out my door.

Who needs a big house when there is so much beauty OUTSIDE?

I can breathe, I can stretch my muscles and I can relax. What else is free and so beneficial?

Stop Watching Television Ads

Task 5

Just like junk mail, television commercials are designed to make us feel like there is something missing in our lives, or something wrong with us that can be cured if we buy the product on our screen.

Unless you can watch to ads purely for entertainment (think Super Bowl), then just stop watching them all together. Go get a glass of water or mute the to and talk to your family—those are much healthier alternatives.

Your wallet and your sanity will thank you!

Real Life Story

If you've ever had kids who watch children's television shows in the weeks and months prior to Christmas, you know what this task is all about.

My kid's Christmas wish lists were a direct reflection of the commercials they had seen.

Adults are not immune either. For instance, I know for a fact that I don't want to live in a big house again. I don't miss the upkeep, the isolation from my kids in another part of the house or the bills that come with it—there is nothing I miss about having a bigger house.

But recently I saw an ad for a product that showed a man pulling up to a beautiful, big home in his gorgeous and expensive car. He then casually walked through this opulent home, discarding car keys and his tie...settling in as if he had just come home from work.

By the end of the commercial, I was thinking to myself how nice it would be to have such a big beautiful home. As soon as I caught myself thinking that, I put the brakes on my thoughts and wondered if I really did want a big house again.

The answer is no - absolutely not. That commercial did a pretty darn good job of convincing me otherwise though!

Make A To Do List

Task 6

We may get wiser as we grow older but I've never heard anyone say that their memory is better now than when they were younger.

The surest way I know to free up some of those memory circuits is to make a list.

Once you write something down on a To Do List, you don't have to think about it... worrying that you're going to forget.

Making a To Do List also helps out just in case something does happen to slip your mind.

And finally, there is no more gratifying feeling than crossing off those "Done" items on a To Do List!

Your list can be on a notepad, on your ipad or I guess even the pad of your thumb (although I don't recommend this), but you get the idea... just write it down.

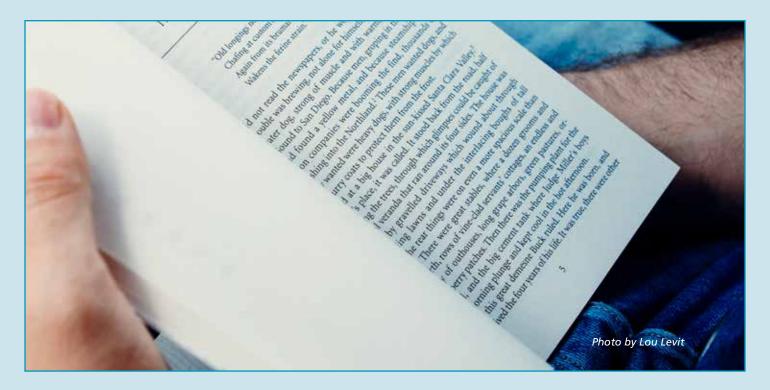
Real Life Example

If you have little ones, you will be modeling a valuable life skill if they see you in the habit of making and using a To Do List. My kids have seen my lists their whole lives and yes, I've seen them using their own too!



Read A Book

Task 7



When is the last time you relaxed and lost yourself in a good book? Here's a hint: if you can't remember, then you're long overdue.

Go to the library or your local bookstore or download one onto your device.

It's so easy, it's really good for you and it's fun. Enjoy!

Real Life Example

This is another way to model great habits to kids.

When my boys were younger, we used to all grab a book and have reading time together.

My kids were able to see that in our family, we enjoy reading and don't view it as another homework chore that has to be done.

If the kids are really young, you can spend the time reading their books out loud or listening to them read out loud. It builds their confidence as learners and readers and is a wonderful family bonding experience.

So many people I've talked to have expressed their wish to live a simpler life, get rid of extra "junk" and just get MORE out of their lives.

I know how they feel. I'm the same way.

I hope you enjoyed this booklet of easy ideas to start getting more out of your life. I hope to explore these ideas and many more on www.lessformore.life. There's a wealth of information out there on the subject that I have researched and plan to delve into more deeply.

Join us on this journey of simplicity and freedom.

Simply yours,

Jan

