The 5D Mind Dump

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Ever have those days when you feel so overwhelmed you don't know where to start? You know there's NO WAY to get it all done, but you're going to try anyway? As women, we often have a lot on our plates. With so much to do, it usually goes one of two ways: procrastinate and reach for the chocolate; or react to the stress without thinking, putting out the hottest fires on our to-do lists. By the end of the day, we can feel exhausted and even discouraged when we realize that what we didn't have time to get to today will become a roaring fire tomorrow.

The 5D Mind Dump is a tool to put you back in the driver seat of your life. It helps you sort out the chaos running amuck in your head, eliminate what isn't necessary, and strategically tackle the right things first. This is your go-to strategy when you feel the pressure mounting. So take a deep breath! You've got this! Just follow the 5 D's.

Determine Roles

Because we wear so many hats, we have responsibility for a lot of different kinds of tasks. Determine your various roles by listing them out on a paper: Mom, Wife, Homemaker, Work, Volunteer, Sister, Friend. And one tip – please don't forget to add "Personal Care" to the list. If you don't take care of yourself, eventually everything will come to a screeching halt (and then you'll really fall behind!) It's in everyone's best interest that YOU are a category on your to-do list so that crucial self-care tasks can get some visibility.

Dump

Now that you have a clear snapshot of your different responsibilities, your mind might begin swirling with all the tasks related to each role. Start listing them now! Don't worry about completing one role before you start thinking of the next one. Just write things down as you think of them. Your mind is very thorough and won't be at rest until you've emptied it of all there is to do.

Only a clear mind can discern the truly important things to be done. By listing out the tasks, you can quiet the chatter that can make some tasks feel bigger and more important than they really are.

Delete

Now take an honest look at your list. If you were to assign a time to each of the tasks, how much time would it take to get everything done? Most women notice they need double or triple the time available to complete their entire to-do list. So now it's time to make some decisions. Usually there are Nice-To-Do Tasks hiding among the Have-To-Do Tasks. Can you identify them? Make a conscious choice to delete things that really can wait for another day...or maybe don't need to be done at all. Some of these tasks are going to slip through the cracks anyway, so take control of the situation now by choosing the right things to let go of.

Delegate

Of the remaining things, ask yourself if YOU really need to be the one doing them. Just because you usually do it, like to do it, or do a better job, doesn't mean you can't delegate to someone else. For example, one busy spring afternoon when I had a lot to do, I decided that my 15-year old daughter really should be the one calling potential workplaces and printing out applications in her search for a summer job. That really wasn't my responsibility. I also realized my 10-year old was perfectly capable of starting the simple dinner I had planned. What a relief to move a few essential tasks off my plate!

Date & Time

With the list of remaining tasks, it's time to prioritize. What absolutely MUST be done right away? And what needs to be done first? Assign a date to each of these tasks – today, tomorrow, next week. For "Today" tasks, you might even want to assign a time – while the kids are at school, when they get home, or after work or dinner. Then sit back and watch the magic! You'll find your chaotic, impossible day dwindling into some manageable tasks you can actually do something about.

Remember...

We make poor decisions when we are overwhelmed. We are reactive instead of strategic. We aren't very fun to be around. And unfortunately, our stress and distraction can keep us from noticing the truly important moments, like that conversation with your teenager you almost didn't have, snuggling with your little ones, or calling a friend and really connecting.

So the next time the tasks are adding up and all you want to do is hide under the covers —or if you find yourself firing away at your list like a crazy woman running out of time— pull out the 5D Mind Dump. You'll know what to do.

Want more great tips?

Join The Happy Gal's Inner Circle!

http://www.thehappygal.com/innercircle/wait-list/

About Jenny Layton

Ten years ago I woke up. I decided there was more to life than just getting by. In a leap of faith, I promised myself I would do whatever it took to get better. I certified as a professional organizer and organized everything that can be seen from the outside. Then, five years later, I had the courage to pull all the skeletons out of the closet. Almost 20 years of secret food bingeing and obsessing over my body began to stop as I bravely reached out for help. I learned about healthy eating. I learned about healthy, effective exercise. And then I learned that my eating disorder was really about control and anxiety, and I had to learn to fix that too.

All of this knowledge was bursting out of me at the seams. I started The Happy Gal blog, and neither myself, my husband, or my five kids knew what an amazing, grueling, life-changing decision that would be. I now balance my very busy household with my love for helping women organize their lives. And when it all gets to be too much, I sneak away with my husband for a massage and some sushi, or maybe a little time outdoors. Balance restored!

I know life isn't easy, and there are probably things you wish were different for you. Please know you're not alone! I'm here to help. Every single one of the beautiful women I've connected with through The Happy Gal has their own unique story, and without exception they have made huge strides when they finally asked someone to join their team. The Inner Circle is the first step to effective, affordable, real change. Don't spend one more day wishing things were different. If I can do this, you can too! Join the Inner Circle today, and watch life get happier – and a whole lot more organized!