

To-Do List

chalene johnson 30-DAY CHALLENGE

The Carefully Crafted and Diligently Maintained To-Do List

Here are the five essential steps to building the Carefully Crafted and Diligently Maintained To-do List. If you follow these steps your life will change. I promise. But you have to do them all and you have to commit to making it a habit. Ready?

1. Make your to-do list at the same time every day.

I make mine at 7 a.m. every morning, after my workout and before I enter the house and tackle the morning rush of getting everyone out the door for school and work. The time you make the list has to be non-negotiable. If I waited until I walked into the house, I would be distracted by phone calls or other people's needs. A news story might catch my attention or I might get involved in a conversation. No. The list-making must occur at the same time every day and become as much a part of your routine as brushing your teeth. I admire those who make their lists before bed. They can sleep with peace of mind.

2. Make your to-do list in the same place every day.

I know most of us have made to-do lists before. We put them on post-it notes or in our calendars. They are on scraps of paper, the backs of envelopes. This doesn't work. How much value do you attribute to the crumpled grocery list in your pocket? Not much, right? The to-do list needs to be easy to find and accessible!

3. Keep your list with you at all times.

I am going to suggest that you use your smart phone and task software to manage your to-do list. When are you ever without your phone? Don't be afraid of the technology, it will take you an hour tops to learn and it will change the way you manage your life in a meaningful way. I check my list constantly. And, even more exciting – I add to it. If you ask me to send me the number of my babysitter, I can add that to my list. I won't forget. It keeps me accountable and takes it off my mind so I can focus. It doesn't matter which smart phone you use, just learn to use the task software. The tasks that you haven't completed will scroll over to the next day. There is no way you're going to forget! Absolutely everything I need to do goes on my list. There is nothing too big or too small. If I need to call my sister, it goes on my list. Return a dress, on the list. Call the vet, on the list. Put the people you need to connect with on the list. If there is someone you wanted to get to know better, or a call you had been meaning to make, put that on your list. Use the list to make yourself the kind of person you want to be. It's a prescription for success. If you wanted to do something and write it down, you will do it and check it off your list and before you know it you will be making progress like you never imagined.

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4. Add two or three small steps that will move you forward on your list every day.

This is a critical piece of the to-do list. Now, you have scheduled your dental appointments, sent the birthday cards, returned the phone calls. Your life is rumbling along smoothly. Let's be sure it's moving forward in the direction you want it to go! The three steps that move you forward aim you to achieve your big dreams.

5. Think about what you want to achieve in life.

Don't put them on a vision board and hope that they materialize. Make continual progress towards the realization of your dreams. You need a strategy and it doesn't have to be huge. Know where you are headed and take small but meaningful steps to get there. Connect with a mentor, take the next step in achieving a goal, make a call you are afraid to make, sign up for that course, build the website, get started on your social media campaign – and then break these goals into small do-able steps that you can achieve today! Walk for 30 minutes is a great way to get started on a big goal of getting back in shape. There is no reason to wait – do it now. Put it on your list and you're going to check it off. Take some time to reflect on what your life goals are and then make a start on them by taking three small steps a day. Imagine how that is going to change your life. This isn't about hope. Action will get results. Motion begets motion.

6. Review and revisit the list.

You have heard about positive thinking and how our thoughts create our reality. This is a way to cultivate positive and meaningful thoughts. Note your progress! At the end of the week, you have made 21 small steps towards your bigger life-goals. Your life is in order, the kids permission slips were signed and returned to the teachers on time. You called back the clients who had questions. You are not out of milk. It's easy to see how good things are when you have a written record. You don't need to rely on natural optimism this is black and white. You are making progress towards huge life-changing goals as well as meeting the requirements of every-day life. Take a minute to reflect on your progress and to see yourself as actively changing your life every day. Talk about power! You have amazing resources of power because you are taking action!

Get out your phone and begin.

Keep it up until it's long enough to be a habit and you won't believe the results!