

You're Going To Be Dead A Long Time. Here's How To Live Now.

By Jerome Shore

Make lists. Without a constant gentle push in the right direction most people will pass their time away aimlessly while complaining they don't have enough. The problem isn't that we have too much to do and too little time. The problem is there are too many good things to do and we get addicted to the ones that give us a little immediate gratification.

This is what Stephen Covey calls being a "slave to the urgent". Workaholics suffer this. We need to gently push ourselves to do things that are more important to our macro-psyche even if the gratification comes a little later. Lists help us focus on the better stuff.

Here's my list of lists.

1. **As your last task at work each day make a list of the five things you want to accomplish there tomorrow.** Even if you have a job of mundane repetitiveness there are still things you can do to advance yourself. Remember the CEO who started in the mail room and worked their way to the top by using their time to cultivate the right relationships.
2. **Each night just before you go to sleep answer this question on a 3 x 5 index card.** "If I was here reviewing my life three years from today, and all was going well, what would be different?" Each night either rewrite what you wrote the night before or make changes. Over time focus on becoming more specific. It's O.K. to change your goals. You'll find you'll be happier with your goals [and your life] each time you rewrite them.
3. **Each morning when you wake up make a list of your goals for the day.** You want to focus your mind on your objectives for today so it doesn't get caught up with whatever comes your way. Remember to include at least three items that are important but not urgent. That's exercise, eating right and building relationships. Important but not urgent.
4. **Make a "won't do" list and keep updating it.** A won't do list is a list of things you won't do. Think about all the things you did today that really were not a good use of time. Unless you're a monk you probably watched TV which should be at the top of everybody's won't do list.
5. **Make a list of the three people who will be your closest friends in ten years.** One person should be from your professional life. One person should be from your family. One person should be from your personal world, the world away from work and family.
6. **Make a list that includes three of each of the following;**
books you want to read; movies you want to see; places you want to visit; relationships you want to cultivate; other things that should be on this list.
7. **Create a victory list for yourself.** A list of all the accomplishments in your life. When you review and update this list you will lift your self-esteem and your motivation to write more lists.

Jerome Shore is an Executive Coach and Managing Partner of The Coaching Clinic, a corporate training company based in Toronto. Jerome can be reached at 416-787-5555 or coach@coachingclinic.com and www.coachingclinic.com. The Coaching Clinic has been accredited to do CPD workshops. Contact Jerome for more information.