



Trick Yourself Into Doing Well

By Dr. Linda Hancock

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email office@drlindahancock.com

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It is so easy to just let things slide! And then suddenly you look around and realize that your house or office is a mess and cleaning it up seems overwhelming! Following are some tips to help you to avoid this type of situation:

Don't let things get out of control in the first place - When you take off your clothes at night either hang them up again or put them in the laundry hamper. Do your dishes right after each meal. Clean off your desk or work area at the end of each day. It only takes a few minutes to keep things in order but hours or even days of frustration and effort if you don't.

Start setting up systems that will help you in the future - Designate a place that is easy to access for your recycling items. Sort your closet, keeping only the things you enjoy wearing, that fit and are in good condition. Put all of your passwords and pin numbers in one place so you can easily find them. Make note of anything that you are "tolerating" and then think about how you could improve that situation.

Never walk anywhere without having something in your hands - My father taught me this strategy as a child. It is easy to keep an organized environment when you just pick up and deliver items such as jackets, garbage cans or supplies to their proper place as you walk from one room to another. Even one journey around your living or work space can make a huge improvement in your environment as you eliminate clutter and put things where they belong.

Try not to touch any piece of paper more than once - Put a garbage can, shredder and labeled file folders in the spot where you open the mail so that you can immediately sort, destroy or file things. Technology allows me to receive bills through email, set up payment with a date that I specify through online banking and then put any necessary receipts in filing - all on the same day. What a time saver!

Utilize "power working" - Set an alarm for an interval of fifteen minutes and, during that time, focus on one task or project. When the alarm rings, take a short break and then set the alarm again for another interval of fifteen minutes. You will be shocked at how quickly you reach the finish line using this technique. Cut a deal with yourself that you will watch a movie on cable but do your housework in the commercials. Each of them allows enough time to load the dishwasher, washing machine or dryer and then relax while they are working while you relax during the next segment of the movie.

Keep an ongoing list of things you need on your iPhone, the computer or on a sticky note - It is always better to write it down and order it before you run out. Waiting until you are out of printer ink in the middle of an important project is annoying and no one likes the idea of running out of toilet paper!

It is always easier to get things done and enjoy life when things are organized. These tips will help you to not only get things in order but also keep them that way.