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**Print this article back-to-back with The To-Do List Clutter Flow Chart for a fun, unique, inexpensive, educational handout.**

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## Is it *To-Do List* Clutter?

**What is *To-Do List* clutter?** Clutter comes in many forms. When it comes to your To-Do List, clutter is anything that doesn't support your Major Priorities and Goals in life. Major Priorities don't change. Examples: Family (happy, healthy), Home (warm, safe, organized), Work (satisfying, lucrative), Self (physically, mentally, and spiritually fit), etc. Goals within these larger categories may change more often (lose 10 lbs., visit Paris), as well as the Activities that support those Goals (walk 30 minutes a day, plan trip). For any new task or activity, ask yourself: **Does it support my Major Priorities and Goals?** If so, then it may indeed be something you want, or need, to do. But these are not the only criteria. **Will it throw my Ideal Schedule out of balance?** The best way to get things done is to schedule them. Group related tasks together, such as errands and chores. Checklists can help you get routine home and office tasks done quickly and efficiently. However, if a new project supports one Major Priority or Goal at the expense of another, consider not doing it. HINT: If your life consists of 90% work and 10% family it may be out of balance. **If the answer is yes – it supports my Major Priorities and Goals and fits within my Ideal Schedule without throwing it out of balance – wonderful, schedule it and do it!**

**Why can't I part with my *To-Do List* clutter?** Here are some reasons why this is difficult:

**I've always done it that way.** OK...is it time to re-evaluate and adapt to your current needs?

**I already committed to doing it.** You might be surprised at how understanding people can be!

**Someone else expects me to do it.** That's their problem, no? Honest communication is the key.

**Someone else should be doing it.** Now would be a good time to let them know you won't be doing it for them. **I've always been the one to do it.** Are you willing to let go of, or at least share, that responsibility?

**It "costs" me more than it's worth.** Don't do it if you can't "afford" it in financial,

emotional, or physical terms. **I will feel guilty if I don't do it.** Why? Are you actually doing something

wrong or hurtful? **The bottom line: If it doesn't support your Major Priorities and Goals, or if it throws your Ideal Schedule out of balance, it's To-Do List clutter.**

**What should I do about my *To-Do List* clutter?** Do it, Dump it, Delegate it, or Downsize it.

Do the task quickly and get it over with, resolving to say No next time. Dump the activity from your To-Do list or schedule altogether. Delegate (or hire out) the task to someone who is equally (or better) suited to do it. Downsize the complexity of tasks, and your expectations of doing everything *perfectly*. Done is better than perfect, in most cases (brain surgery being a bona fide exception).

**What if, despite my best intentions, I am still living with *To-Do List* clutter?**

If a week has gone by and you have not managed to schedule the task or eliminate it from your To-Do List, try the following: Practice saying No; Break the task down into smaller parts; Get the info you need to proceed; Put it on your "back burner" list. If you need help determining your Major Priorities and Goals, and creating your Ideal Schedule, call a professional organizer who specializes in time management, or a life coach, or a friend.

**Congratulations, you are on the road to becoming *To-Do List* clutter free!**