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5 Steps to Living Each Day So Tomorrow Is Easier To Wake Up To

By Barbara A. Berg

Life is often seen as being “hard enough,” without putting off everyday tasks and “inner soul missions” that can build up to being large headaches and disillusionment if we don’t stay on top of them both. It also becomes easier when we make a point of being “proactive” rather than “reactive” in our lives, while savoring life itself – moment to moment.

Many of us have found over time, that one of the first ways to getting to what we need to attend to in a “timely” manner, involves first appreciating the many wonderful joys and gifts we do have in every moment rather than rushing to get to the next step. No matter how hard or how much we go after what we believe we need to be and do next, if we do it with the attitude that “everything is wrong in our lives” and we don’t truly first take in and experience the appreciation of what we DO have and who we already ARE BEING, we’ll have a tendency to focus on the negative and miss the “good stuff” that comes along the way.

Learning how to balance and arrange our thoughts, behaviors, and “stop and savor times,” into a beautiful dance of knowing when to “be” and when to “do,” along with recognizing what is “authentically ours” to take on, can actually take the “hard” out of from life, and turn it into the “flow” of it all.

The more you tap into listening to your “inner knowing” about who you are and what you are about, the more you will recognize when to do what, so your life becomes more “wholesome,” or more of what you makes you feel you are “whole” rather than “empty.” Here are 5 steps to help you move in the

direction of “getting into flow” and getting out of your own way: (While these can be useful suggestions, they are certainly in no way a replacement for professional help.)

Step 1. Each morning when you awake, direct your initial thoughts away from “Oh no, what do I have to face today?” to “What are between 3 and 5 aspects of my life that I am thankful for right now?” This will help to more positively shift the energy of what is most likely to come your way on any given day. (Will you draw more issues and dilemmas toward you or effective solutions and joy?)

Step 2. Then consider after that, where you are on a scale of 5 to 1, in terms of how much energy and “focus capacity” you have to take on more activity, versus keeping your attention on what you already have on your plate. Being in touch with this will help you know when to say “Yes” and when to say “No,” when requests from others come in.

Being in touch with your number, (which can certainly fluctuate throughout the day), will also help you focus more on what is important to you rather than get distracted by thoughts and ideas you also generate yourself. Here is a “quick check daily self-rating scale” to help you get started. This can apply to any situation you now perceive yourself as having:

5. Life is great! I feel wonderful. I have choice in what I will take on and what I will leave alone.
4. Things are basically “good” for now. There are a few tasks and issues I know I need to address before too long, and I know I will.
3. I guess I’m “Okay,” but I know I’m not really satisfied. TODAY, I will take real steps to getting something done that I know has been hanging over my head. I’ll get help with this if I can’t seem to tackle it myself. (There are times when we seem to create or invite circumstances into our lives that actually improve when we ask for help or consultation, so we can access the answers that may be inside us but inaccessible at the moment.)
2. “In over my head and just trying to survive.” – While it may feel like speeding up and doing everything you have to do only faster is the key here, you could be in a place where the solution is quite the opposite from racing around even more.

If you are at a 2, literally take a few breaths, (which may be hard to come by), and “reach into a knowing” that actually standing still and stepping back from your circumstance can help you much more in the long run.

Sometimes we are so stuck on a “hamster wheel” either physically or emotionally, that we can’t see how to get off. Often it is difficult to see that the “hamster wheel” we have found ourselves on has got to go or be majorly modified. If confusion about your situation seems to keep you from choosing or deciding which way to go, check out the “Quick-Check Chattering Monkeys Exercise,” which is next after this rating scale.

Certainly, this is no time to take on more than what you are already doing. You most likely would do well to take on less and possibly consider what to do entirely differently to improve your circumstances.

1. Feeling disillusioned and perhaps having no idea what to do. – This is such a “bottom line,” and at times even a devastating place to be. Looking back at the times when I’ve been at or “hovered” over this number, I’ve needed to surround myself with those who could support me and also give me help and ways to be and do life differently from how I had been. A “1” is at times feeling like life had just “dropped a bomb” on you, which can happen.

If this is your situation, let others be there for you. It is no time to not let others in because you “don’t want to be a burden.” Not letting others be there is actually a “burden” to them, as it keeps them from using the gifts they have to offer you. – It actually gets in the way of “flow.” – More empowerment to you! – A “1” is actually a place where amazing things can happen in your life, often out of some horrific situations. Keep breathing and ask for what it appears you need. Do not try to do this alone!

Step 3: Throughout the day, as needed, it can be helpful to check in with this “Quick Check Chattering Monkeys Exercise” located on pages 206-207 of my book, “How to Escape the No-Win Trap” (McGraw-Hill – 2004) and available on my website at <http://www.barbaraberg.com/products.html>. This exercise can help you take the steps you need to make decisions, figure out what questions to ask, and develop a structure for what to think about when everything just seems like a blur and it’s all just too overwhelming.

QUICK-CHECK CHATTERING MONKEYS EXERCISE

For Getting Out or Staying Out of No-Win Traps

Consider the following points as you contemplate what to do in a no-win trap dilemma, or a situation that could develop into one:

1. Consider your issues. Pick the one you're most committed to following through on all the way this time.
2. What ways can you deal with it? Think of at least three. That will help you see you have options.
3. What is the best that could happen? Play your thoughts all the way out in your mind.
4. What is the worst that could happen? The worst almost never happens, but it helps you to consider contingencies. Concerning present and future "worst case scenarios," the key point is to remain open to help and input, especially in those moments when you're sure nothing will work.
5. Is there some person or service you can consult? Make good use of outside input. Remember that the final decision is up to you.
6. Consider your overall plan to resolve the situation, while making allowance for contingencies and feedback from others. Remember, what you ultimately think is what counts.
7. Decide if you'll act now, later, or do nothing. Sometimes just standing back for a while is the best thing.
8. Calm your mind with positive self-statements such as, "I can deal calmly and effectively with the consequences of this decision."
9. Surround yourself with supportive people and organizations that can help provide structure while you make changes and move on to new things in life. Create a list of names and phone numbers of people you can call upon.

Once you've gone through all the above nine steps, decide what you'll focus on next, beyond your no-win trap dilemma, and keep that focus as much as possible. Dwelling on your problems all the time can often do more harm than good. Do all that you can do then let some help and answers come to you. In the long run, what really counts is the inner belief that you'll find an effective and positive way to get through and out of your situation.

Step 4: Have the philosophy, “Nip your problems in the bud before they nip you in yours.” - After going through the “Quick-Check Chattering Monkeys Exercise, consider what number on the self-rating scale of 5 to 1 you are on concerning you various matters.

If something has bothered you over 48 hours, make a pact with yourself to do something about it. Make a point of taking the necessary steps on as high a number as you can, so the effort it takes to deal with each matter isn't as much as it would be if your number is down to a “1.”

Step 5: Take a moment out to appreciate something about yourself and/or those around you right in this space of time. Make a point of doing this every day. (I'm presently developing a habit of doing it “on the hour,” even if it's to myself and I'm in the middle of something. No one even has to know.) Every time you appreciate yourself and others, it's like smelling flowers along the way. The more you take moments of time out, (and longer periods of time too!), to enjoy and appreciate it all, the more life will seem to fall into place. Also, you will more and more experience “living in the flow,” even if “today” doesn't seem to be going so well.

I remember someone telling me that at one particular time in her life, she and her family had gone through a great ordeal in having to move around a lot. She was never really sure about where she would be living next. However, her mother made a point of always have a vase with some sort of fresh flowers in it to look at. This woman told me she learned to know she was “at home” when she had fresh flowers, and makes a point of having them in her own home now as often as she can.

More inner and outer peace to you! Let me know how it's going!

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Check out www.BarbaraBerg.com. – Would love to hear from you!