

DR. OZ

A New Magazine From Dr. Oz

THE GOOD LIFE

JANUARY / FEBRUARY 2015

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Don't let harsh chemicals leave

SIMPLIFY YOUR LIFE

Too packed. Whether that describes your countertops, schedule, or mind, you're likely having trouble feeling healthy. How do you regain control? Pick one of our life detox plans—or three, or all—and start clearing out some of your psychic underbrush. You'll feel stronger, saner, *lighter*.

BY SANDY M. FERNÁNDEZ

Zen-ify Your

FRONT HALL

"Most of my clients really neglect their entryways," says HGTV host Sabrina Soto. "They think it's just transitional space. But that's why it matters—it sets the tone coming and going."

DON'T USE IT AS A STORAGE LOCKER. "I work with clients all the time who have winter coats hanging there—in August!" Soto says. "But when you see that clutter, you start and end the day feeling overwhelmed and defeated." The only items that should be kept here, Soto says, are things going right back out: your boots, keys, umbrellas, etc.

HANG A MIRROR. It makes the space look bigger. "Plus, this is your last chance to look at yourself before you go out in public," says Soto.

PUNCH IT UP. "This is a spot where you can use a little color," Soto says. "You want it to instantly make you feel happy." So paint the walls in this little space, or put up some bright artwork.

Tame Your MONEY SNACKING

How is it your bank account is low, but you can't remember buying anything lately? Blame money snacking, the constant drip of dollars you spend in barely noticeable increments.

It's happening more than ever because now we swipe a card for even small purchases, making spending abstract—and the more abstract spending is, the more likely you'll do it freely. That'll become an even bigger issue with all the new mobile apps that let you buy using just your cell phone. Get a grip on that trickle of casual purchases now.

Find out where your cash is going.

"For a week, keep a record of all your everyday purchases, either by holding on to the receipts, taking a photo with your phone, jotting a note, or using your debit card to create an electronic trail," suggests Jesse Mecham, a former CPA and founder of the cult-favorite budgeting site You Need a Budget.

Find the joy, eliminate the meh.

At the end of the week, review your records and highlight the purchases that really made you happy. "The goal isn't to give up that morning coffee that you look forward to each day," says Tiffany Aliche, author of *The One Week Budget*. "It's to cut out the rest: things you buy without thinking, or just because

you're bored." Add up the cost of the still-glad-I-bought-'ems: That's how much you should allot for your own happiness, instead of the much larger debit you see on your account each month.

Carry a reminder in your wallet.

Stick a Post-it or label right in your wallet with the questions that Aliche asks when she's shopping: *Need it? Love it? Like it? Want it?* "It's meant to make me think about why I'm buying something," she says. "Needs are clear: They're things like groceries. Loves are really going to add to your life, like that cup of coffee. Likes and wants are usually things that don't really move you, but you buy them anyway. Is that what you really want to spend your hard-earned money on?"

"HOW I STOPPED BINGE-WATCHING TV"

EVERY NIGHT, THE SCENE GOES LIKE THIS: Just when I should go to bed, my husband says, "Should we watch something?" I reply, "Oooh, yes." We beeline for the couch. And there we find ourselves for hours, gorging on our latest Netflix or Amazon or Hulu obsession. Just one more, we whisper as credits roll. Next thing we know, we're dragging ourselves upstairs, bleary-eyed, at nearly midnight. How did this turn into an exhausted screen-splurge, rather than a time to connect?

It's almost a cliché: working parents, long days, and just a few precious few hours set aside for each other. Yet instead of spending these having real conversations, or—ahem—getting it on, we're sitting on the sofa, watching all that happen on *House of Cards* or *Transparent*.

"Yours is a typical case of bedtime procrastination," says Floor Kroese, Ph.D., a researcher at the aptly named Self-Regulation Lab of Utrecht University in the Netherlands. Folks like us put off going to bed to surf the net, play video games, watch TV. For some people, the ensuing fatigue leads to memory and concentration issues; for my husband and me, the issue is not concentrating on each other. Kroese's remedy: "Make more specific plans about going to bed before sitting down to watch," she urges, recommending a vow like, "When I finish one episode, I'll turn off the TV and go brush my teeth." The first action, brushing your teeth, will break the grip of TV. Then: Shut off lights. Go upstairs. See what happens. Per Kroese's directives, we cut back. On our first night, we laughed for a good 25 minutes in bed before falling asleep. It was fun, sweet, spontaneous, and totally unscripted. —Sarah Wildman

Right-Size Your

TO-DO LIST

"People often do a mind dump and use *that* as a to-do list," says Paula Rizzo, author of *Listful Thinking*. "There's a better way."

Make it detailed.

The items on your list need to be specific and actionable," says Rizzo. Instead of "Answer Lauren," write, "Email Lauren about 10 A.M. meeting." You don't want to go searching emails to see what time you had dis-

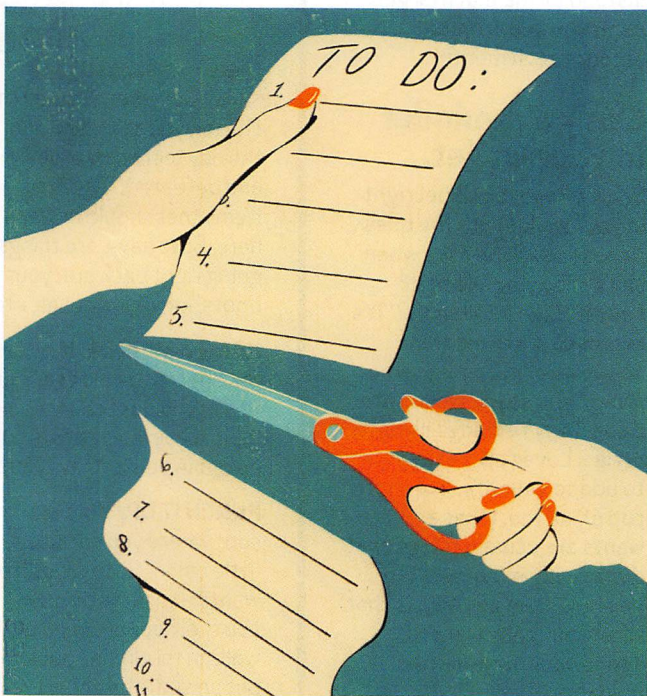
cussed and get sucked into answering 20 other messages. Rewrite your work list each night and leave it on your keyboard, to avoid getting derailed by everything coming at you in the morning.

Pick priorities.

Rizzo credits performance coach Heidi Hanna for this insight: At pressured moments, ask yourself, "What can I do that is just enough so that, even if the rest of the list is long, I can still feel I had a positive day?" Star those tasks on your list. When you finish them, give yourself permission to do something relaxing, like watch a funny video clip.

Assess and purge.

If you keep copying the same item from one week to the next, you may not be able to handle it right now. So delegate it if you can, or give yourself permission to let go of it, Rizzo says. "Sometimes you need to cut yourself some slack."



Nix That

PAPER PILEUP

"Horizontal surfaces are paper-clutter magnets," says Francine Jay, author of *The Joy of Less*. "Walk in the door, and you're almost guaranteed to land your stuff on the first one available." Here's how to get and stay clear.

STOP JUNK MAIL FROM COMING IN.

Put a trash can and a shredder near where you go through your mail and get rid of all the garbage-y stuff there, before it gets loose in your home.

CREATE A SORTING STATION.

Assign an in-box to every member of your family to hold each person's "maybe" papers—that catalog your husband *might* want, or a coupon book that *may* have goodies. Go right to the sorting station before you put anything down and distribute accordingly.

ADD A "PRESSING" FOLDER.

Make a file just for papers that need attention soon, like bills, unpaid parking tickets, or permission slips. Pick a ritual time to deal with that folder, like after the dishes are done.



DR. OZ CLEANSING YOUR LIFE

It's amazing how what I call NUTs—Nagging Unfinished Tasks—can create stress and lower your quality of life. These little detoxes are good ways to usher those out and get your balance back.