

## Do Something!

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### Making Lists

This newsletter comes to you from Kate Harper of Harper Coaching

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Welcome to this issue of **Do Something!** – the bi-weekly newsletter that is intended to inspire you to change the way you think and to stimulate you into action. If you like what you read, please pass it on to your friends and colleagues.

Welcome to my new readers. I am delighted to have subscribers from the UK, USA, Canada, Japan, Switzerland, Ireland, Albania, Italy, India, South Africa , Pakistan, Australia and New Zealand .

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How do you keep on top of all that you need to do each day? There are so many things that have to be done, especially at this time of the year. We juggle professional requirements with personal ones. For many a business year-end is looming, (for others that will be at the end of the tax year). There are various celebrations on the horizon, as well as thoughts of the coming New Year and all that we'd like to achieve before its end. We plan what to eat, what to wear, who we need to see, what we need to do and what we need to buy. There are cards to be written and posted, and gifts to be decided on. Do we have the time and the inclination to give lovingly home-made presents, or are we time-poor as well as cash-poor, so have to think very carefully about how to choose something great on a small budget. Oh my goodness, what are we going to eat tonight?

So we make lists. To-do lists. Menu plans for the week, or the month. Lifetime goal lists. Grocery lists. Mailing lists. Shopping lists. Checklists for particular projects. Invitation lists. Attendee lists. Lists of gifts received for our thank you letters. What would we do without them? We store them mentally, on paper or electronically. Sometimes we spend more time making lists than we actually do on what needs to be done! Lists are a boon and a curse, depending on whether we use them productively or as a time-wasting activity. It really comes down to one thing - what do you need to do today?

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**Do Something** to move you towards your goals. Planning is a lot about looking forward, making lists and setting priorities. Just be sure that your to-do list

is manageable and doable. It is really disheartening to see a long list of things undone at the end of the day. Be realistic. You can even make a list of all the things you have achieved at the end of the day, however small, to let you see how much you have actually accomplished. Remember though that lists are really only to give you something to aim at. They are about controlling the controllables.

**Do Something** today that you've been putting off for a while. You can use the lists you make to free up your mind of all that you think you need to be doing. It could be that you have never listed all the things you need to do because you are afraid there is too much to do. So you avoid even thinking about them, even though they are niggling away at you. By making a list you can confront what needs to be done and also assess how you are going to deal with everything, rather than avoiding it. Once you make the list, your mind is free of those niggles and can be used to move you forward rather than dragging you down. You can even make lists of pros and cons to help you decide whether you need to be undertaking particular tasks. The January 2009 issue of Real Simple magazine even suggested listing the things that you are *not* going to accomplish! How liberating is that!

(If Procrastination is one of your challenges and you haven't already done it, go to <http://www.harpercoaching.com> to sign up for my complimentary 7-day mini e-Course on this subject.)

**Do Something** for yourself. place yourself at the top of your list. Ask yourself what you most want from life right now. It could be a more satisfying job, a happier relationship, or a more healthy lifestyle. Consider how you might feel if you haven't made any progress towards that certain goal within the next 5 years. Make a list of 3 or 4 actions that you can take now towards your goal - refreshing your CV, discussing how you can develop your current position with your manager, enrolling on a training course; planning regular time for you and your partner each week, allowing clearer communication by actively listening to what your partner is saying, expressing your wants and needs; adding more fruit and vegetables to your daily intake; making time to be physically active each day - this can be in 5 minute blocks - aim for at least 30 minutes; loosening up and laughing more! Commit to carrying out the items on your list for at least one month.

**Do Something** active every day. Make a list of qualities that you would like to have, such as strong, healthy body etc. Then make a list of the qualities that you do have, such as determination. Match the two together and make a commitment to yourself - "I am determined to ....."

**Do Something** because you want to, not because you *have* to. If you have aspirations to be different in any way, ask yourself if that is really how you see yourself, or how you think others would like to see you. Don't limit yourself, but nor should you also think that you have to make too many changes, especially not if they are for other people.

**Do Something** new every day. By writing a fresh list everyday you will allow yourself to take control of how you wish to spend your time. Do you really need to

do everything on your list today? What would be the most productive thing for you to do? What are you resisiting? Having more than one list can be useful, as it can be quite overwhelming to have a list for all of your life. Each aspect of your life, or your work, can be subdivided and have lists allocated to them. For example, you may be working on a particular project that has a deadline in two weeks, as well as one that won't be completed for months. If you create separate lists for both of them, you will be able to get a clear picture of what you need to do and when. This allows you to focus on what needs to be done sooner, rather than later. Put your focus where it needs it, not scattering it everywhere.

**Do Something** creative every week. Who says that your list needs to be in solely in words? You can create visual stimuli to get you going. If you are attempting to learn something, then there are different ways of learning. Creating lists has been proven to assist in memorizing information. These lists can be in the form of pictures, rather than words, if you are more likely to recall those. Lists also do not have to be linear. You can use Venn diagrams, mind maps, or any other way that suits.

**Do Something** for nothing. Last week, many people celebrated Thanksgiving in the US. It reminded me that although this is one day dedicated to being thankful, we don't need to limit it to one day only. My favourite list is one that is ongoing, with no deadline and with no limit to the number of items allowed on it. It can roll over from day-to-day and nothing is too small or trivial to go onto it. What is this list? It is a Gratitude List. This is where you list absolutely everything that gave you joy or that you are thankful for in the day. Sometimes it can be challenging to feel joyful when things are tough, so it is useful to think of those things that we do have, rather than those that we don't. For example, I am grateful that I have a warm and comfortable house that is sheltering me from the biting cold that has now arrived. I am grateful that although my children and I have been poorly, we are going to recover after a period of rest and recuperation. I am grateful that the sun is shining through the windows at the moment, brightening up this winter's day. I am grateful that I have the means to communicate with you all and that so many of you let me know on a regular basis that you are grateful that I do. And that's just the start! Enjoy making your lists, and use them well.

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Do enjoy this quote:

*"Confront your fears, list them, get to know them, and only then will you be able to put them aside and move ahead."*

*Jerry Gillies*

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I do hope that this issue of **Do Something!** has inspired you to make a list to help you through your day!

Have a good fortnight, and even if it's only a *little thing*, **Do Something!**

Warm wishes,

Kate

**Passionate about helping you achieve your goals**

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### The **Do Something** Coaching Package

Many of you will already be familiar with **Do Something** - my newsletter that is intended to inspire you to change the way you think and to stimulate you into action. In fact, today you are reading it!

Well, now I can offer you the **Do Something** Coaching Package. This is a three-month long Coaching Programme based around the ideas that form the basis of the **Do Something** newsletter.

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Do Sign Up for my e-Course ~ "**Discovery ~ a 6 module journey to a better you**" on [www.harpercoaching.com](http://www.harpercoaching.com) under [e-Courses](#) on the main menu.

Here is a little bit about it:

**Discovery** is a comprehensive 6 module e-Course for you to work on at your own speed and in your own time, which will appear in your in-box each week. Within each module there are exercises and actions for you to take, covering such subjects as "Where are You Now?", "Choosing Your Ideal Life", "Taking Care of Your Body", "Happiness", "Motivation", "De-Cluttering", "Improving Your Self-Esteem", "Making Time for Me", "Understanding and Practising Assertiveness", "Dealing with Stress", "Managing Your Anger" and more...

Here's what one of the first purchasers of the **Discovery** e-Course have said - "**Your Discovery course is outstanding. Thanks**"

Your investment for this e-Course is UK£29.99

If you would like to know more, please contact me.

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**Do try this for nothing!**

Alongside "**Discovery**" and to give you a little taster, to see if you like my style, I am also offering a complimentary 7-day mini e-course on **Procrastination**. To sign up for this, please go to [www.harpercoaching.com](http://www.harpercoaching.com)

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