

Take Control - Module 6

Let Go



Objectives

- Compile the steps you need to take on your project
- Further contemplate your needs and wants
- Make a plan to address the obstacles

“The more you know the less you need.”

--Aborigine saying

“If you're trying to achieve, there will be roadblocks. I've had them; everybody has had them. But obstacles don't have to stop you. If you run into a wall, don't turn around and give up. Figure out how to climb it, go through it, or work around it.”

Michael Jordan

Instruction

You have done a lot of planning up to this point and have begun the process of decluttering and working on small steps to move your project forward. You have created goals for your project. In this section, you will compile all of that great information and your plan in order to give you something to work from.

You may already be printing out these modules and compiling them into a binder for reference and to take notes. If you prefer a digital format, you may work from your computer, [Google Drive](#) or [Evernote](#) to keep all of your information and notes in one place.

In one 3-ring notebook or in a file on your computer compile the following assignments in this order:

1. Visualization (Module 4, pg 3)
2. My Plan (Module 6, pg 3)
3. Goal Setting Worksheet (Module 5, pg 8)
4. Room Plans (Module 3, pg 9)
5. Clutter Identification:
 - a. Clutter Identification Chart (Module 1, pg 8)
 - b. Acquisition Pathways (Module 2, pg 3)
 - c. Time Study (Module 2)
 - d. Unhelpful Beliefs Chart (Module 2, pg 12)
6. Obstacle Removal Chart (Module 6, pg 12)
7. Small Steps Chart (Module 6, pg 13)

On the form that follows, you will compile the information that you recorded on pages 2-3 of Module 3. You may find that some of your answers have changed. That is ok. You may wish to download this document to enter the answers on your computer. If so, [click here](#).

In addition, you may download a template for listing your projects and 'next steps' to help you clarify the tasks that will take more than 1 step. You may access this template [here](#).

My Plan

Goals (in priority order)

Goal	Deadline	Completed
1		
2		
3		

Project Time-Line

Start Date:	Projected End Date:
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My 'Why' - For this Project

My Personal Values

What Strengths Will I Draw On?

The More You Know the Less You Need



I was walking through a little shop while on vacation and found this sticker which I picked up right away.

I thought it was fitting given the simple lifestyle that I like to promote. I am always sharing that when you have less, then life is easier and you focus on what is important. This quote seemed to say to me that if you know more,

you are wise and you will come to the understanding that you do not 'NEED' so much.

NEED

But what do you NEED? This question comes up a lot in the classes I teach. What is a need? We often say things like, 'I NEED these shoes,' 'This dress is perfect for the wedding I am going to Saturday, I really NEED it,' or 'This tool would get the job done, I NEED it to complete my project.' I think 'need' is misplaced. We have three basic NEEDS for survival. These are shelter, food and water. Without them, we will die. Period. End of discussion. So when we apply the word need outside of this context it seems wrong to me. Instead, we should be saying WANT. Our desire to have something beyond our basic needs is a want.

I think this distinction is important. We have confused our needs and our wants putting greater and greater importance on our wants. This focus has overcome our thoughts to the point where we think that without our wants we would not survive.

Now, it is not wrong to want something, and to work and save and perhaps sacrifice to realize it. Owning a home, buying a car, a college education, all are very worthy goals. Not exactly food and shelter, but still things that make the journey more agreeable, or even more possible. The trick is to make sure that the acquisition is in the service of a virtue, or for others, and that you are not in service to your possessions. To what end is this new possession going to be used? Is it to serve as a means to you becoming a better, more effective person? Or is it simply a way to make

you feel better, either for self-worth, or to feed an addiction? You are not the sum of what you own, and you are not better because you have more. You are not to be in service to stuff!

How would it feel to do without the shoes, dress or tool that you WANT? When you are confronted with a purchase or are making a decision to keep or let go of an object, ask yourself these questions from Module 4:

- Do I LOVE it?
- Do I USE it?
- Do I NEED it?

One More Question

There is just one more question that I encourage you to consider and that is:

If I let this go, how hard would it be to get it again?

We hold onto things, worrying that we may need them someday. But, if you know that you can acquire it when you need it, either by borrowing, renting or purchasing again, then there is no need to store that item for 'someday.' This question is great for physical items but also for paper and information. We can access a lot of information on the internet now so that it is no longer necessary to hold onto papers in our homes and offices. The Bible in the Book of Matthew, Chapter 6 has a lot to say about our possessions. It is easy to see that today we live in a world of excess, but even in biblical times people were taking and storing more than their share because they were worried about 'someday.' Matthew 6:34 says "Therefore do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Sufficient for the day is its own trouble." When you are considering that next purchase or whether to keep what you already have remember, "The more you know, the less you need."

For a quick 2 minute YouTube Video on this [click here](#).

Look to Nature

by Jennifer Merkel

March is a month of action. The Earth prepares for another season of growth, and this month, as it comes “in like a lion and out like a lamb” we get a taste of nature’s own order. Nature knows what is needed and what needs to be shed, and its cycle of productivity can be a great lesson to us.

For example, look at the trees. Every fall the trees shed their leaves. It is a beautiful show, but it is also a necessary part of the tree’s life cycle. The trees cannot hold onto their leaves year after year, because the new leaves are needed. The old must be dropped to the ground to make room for the new, and in their own way the old leaves do good for the soil.

Over the winter and early spring, heavy snows and winds cause the dead wood to be broken off and cleared from the treetops so that the new, productive sprouts and buds can form.

We can learn to clear out our own “dead wood” and shed the clutter that is keeping us from being positive and productive. We can wake up to the light and sunshine of spring and find that restless lion inside as we pace around our overfilled homes.

Use the feelings of restlessness and invigoration that come with spring. Open the windows, let in the fresh air and open up the space inside as well. Welcome the new season as a chance to clear out the things that have been a burden and make room for the things that make life truly enjoyable. Be like the tree, make shedding the old stuff a habit, so that you can welcome the new!

Family Treasures...

There is a gray area, in the quest to declutter and simplify, and it is something that most of us have to deal with at some point in our lives so we want to be sure to touch on it here.

As you are working through the possessions that you have acquired, and making decisions on what to let go of, you may come across family heirlooms or items that may or may not be

antiques or collectibles. These items usually have value, either sentimental or monetary, and whether you want to keep them or not, the process for letting them go may require a little more effort, but will pay off in the long run.

When it comes to things that have been in the family for generations: furniture, collections, papers, pictures, jewelry, etc., there is no accounting for taste. If you have living relatives that you know may want to keep the items in the family, it's really important to get in touch with them and at least let them know what you have and offer them a chance to take them off your hands. If there is a "family archivist", then anything pertaining to family history should be offered to that person. If there are items that have a story, and you are familiar with it, write it up and pass it along with the item to the person that is taking it.

It's so easy to share and show what you have in this digital age. Pictures and old family recipes can be scanned and emailed or it into a digital album and shared. That way the person in the family that wants the originals can let you know. You can take pictures of furniture, books, jewelry, and collections and share them as well.

Create a deadline for family members to claim and remove the items. After that, let them know that the items may be donated or sold outside the family.

Don't try to do all of this in the middle of your priority project. These things have been in cupboards and drawers for awhile now, so you can make finding them new homes a lower priority. DO gather them into one place, in bins, tubs, or boxes, carefully labelled and stored. DO keep a box or tub with you while you work and place the items into it as you go. DON'T discuss your finds with just anyone. You might tell members of your family or close friends, but keep the fact that you have discovered potential valuables within a small circle.

Even if there is no one in the family that may want the things that you find, some of these things may have historical significance or be worth selling.

It is very important to find the right person to consult about these matters.

Be sure to go to licensed professionals to have your items appraised.

Read reviews and ask people that you know and trust for referrals.

A much more detailed discussion of this topic can be found in the book

"Moving On- A Practical Guide to Downsizing the Family Home", by Linda Hetzer and Barbara Hulstrand.

The book is available on Amazon.com and in larger bookstores.



Obstacles

“Whoa, that’s a big piece of earth.” That was my daughter’s response to seeing the image at the beginning of this module. She is 7. Do you ever feel that way? You have a path and a plan, but there is something in the way of getting and staying on that path. Something big that does not seem moveable even if you take it one small step at a time?

In Module 5, you were asked to identify the obstacle that would get in the way of your goals and to also determine your response to that obstacle. We are going to go further with this idea.

Why? Because you have hit these ‘road-blocks’ in the past and they have stopped your progress forward but this time you will overcome them. You have within you all that you need to accomplish what you have set out to do.

What kinds of obstacles might you encounter?

The following list reflects the answers that I hear the most. It is long, but not exhaustive. You may have others that you would like to share and I would encourage you to email them to me.

Check off the ones that you find impeding your progress:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Kids <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Toys <input type="checkbox"/> Homework <input type="checkbox"/> Resistance <input type="checkbox"/> Getting things done <input type="checkbox"/> Prioritizing <input type="checkbox"/> Memories (Emotional Attachments) <input type="checkbox"/> Losing Things <input type="checkbox"/> Forgetfulness <input type="checkbox"/> Focus/Attention 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Time Management <input type="checkbox"/> Implementing Systems <input type="checkbox"/> Overwhelm <input type="checkbox"/> Knowing where or how to start <input type="checkbox"/> Piles of Paper <input type="checkbox"/> Schedules (too much to do) <input type="checkbox"/> Family Buy In <input type="checkbox"/> Motivation <input type="checkbox"/> Money <input type="checkbox"/> Health Issues <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Limitations
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Using the chart that follows, look for ideas to address the obstacles you identified above. Check off the items that speak to you

Ideas for handling obstacles

Kids	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Color code belongings <input type="checkbox"/> Use timers for tasks. Kids love to try to best their own time! <input type="checkbox"/> Create a chore chart <input type="checkbox"/> Learn about developmentally appropriate tasks <input type="checkbox"/> Streamline the toys and clothes <input type="checkbox"/> Create a plan as a family.
Getting Things Done	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Start your day with a planning session <input type="checkbox"/> Create a “task list” just for the day <input type="checkbox"/> Keep tasks short, between 10 and 15 minutes <input type="checkbox"/> Define your tasks. (Make the bed, do the dishes, clean the bathtub)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Complete your tasks, start to finish <input type="checkbox"/> Time yourself doing one task <input type="checkbox"/> Create a Master To Do list with ALL the things in your head, on scraps of paper, etc.
Prioritizing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Create a Master To Do list with ALL the things in your head, on scraps of paper, etc. <input type="checkbox"/> Choose 3 items to work on daily from your list <input type="checkbox"/> Work on a project to completion. <input type="checkbox"/> Choose to work on an item because 1. it will save the most money 2. It will make the most money 3. It is due the soonest. 4. It will save you time.
Memories/Emotional Attachments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Take pictures of items <input type="checkbox"/> Share the story of the item with someone else <input type="checkbox"/> Give beloved things to people who will love/value them. <input type="checkbox"/> Have a funeral for the item before letting go. <input type="checkbox"/> Ask the question, “What is the worst thing that could happen if I let this go?” <input type="checkbox"/> Ask the question, “Why am I holding on to this or doing this?” Continue until you get to the root of the answer
Losing Things, Forgetfulness & Remembering to Remember	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Use alarms <input type="checkbox"/> Use clear or open topped containers that give you a visual cue <input type="checkbox"/> Create a launch pad <input type="checkbox"/> Utilize a ‘stubby to-do list’ - a short list no more than 5 items in bold writing <input type="checkbox"/> Make sure your to-do items start with a verb/action word <input type="checkbox"/> Develop habits & routines <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce stress <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce Distractions <input type="checkbox"/> Declutter (Space, Schedule, Brain)
Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Utilize relaxation techniques (breathing, walking, stretching) <input type="checkbox"/> Try a timer, set for short intervals <input type="checkbox"/> Break tasks into small chunks <input type="checkbox"/> Utilize non-invasive fidgets (gum, music, etc) <input type="checkbox"/> Create the right environment <input type="checkbox"/> Reduce distractions (commitments, clutter, noise, visual stimulation) <input type="checkbox"/> Find a buddy to help with ‘hyper-focus’ <input type="checkbox"/> Create time for daily reflection
Time Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Add padding to the schedule <input type="checkbox"/> Utilize analog clocks and digital alarms <input type="checkbox"/> Check out the ‘Time Timer’ <input type="checkbox"/> Make appointments with yourself for activities

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Track your time and make a guess at how long it will take to perform an activity. Record the actual time. <input type="checkbox"/> Departure checklist <input type="checkbox"/> Plan to arrive early <input type="checkbox"/> Avoid the 'one more thing' activities <input type="checkbox"/> Create a 'waiting' kit for in between times <input type="checkbox"/> Utilize relaxation techniques <input type="checkbox"/> Complete a time study <input type="checkbox"/> Simplify your routines
Implementing Systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Change the way you do one small thing. <input type="checkbox"/> Create a system and stick with it for several months (rather than continually switching gears) <input type="checkbox"/> Create your own system rather than relying on 'out of the box' solutions. <input type="checkbox"/> Understand why you are creating the system and define your desired outcome.
Overwhelm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Remove everything except the project you are working on at that moment. <input type="checkbox"/> Cover clutter with a large plain sheet and pull back one corner to work on just that area <input type="checkbox"/> Limit your work time using a timer, 15-30 minutes. <input type="checkbox"/> Visualize working on your project, imagine yourself happy and successful. <input type="checkbox"/> Ask the question, "What is the worst thing that could happen if I let this go?"
Know How or Where to Start	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Read the Module 'Where to Start'. <input type="checkbox"/> Set the timer and start anywhere for 15 min.
Piles of Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Remove yourself from mailing lists by calling companies as you receive catalogs & solicitations. <input type="checkbox"/> Remember 1 inch of paper takes about 1 hour to process. <input type="checkbox"/> Use a guide to determine what to keep and what to discard.
Schedules/Too Much To Do	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Use the rule - 2 activities out for 1 new activity started. <input type="checkbox"/> Learn to block time for yourself first then add in activities to the schedule <input type="checkbox"/> What can be streamlined? <input type="checkbox"/> Create a master schedule on a shared calendar <input type="checkbox"/> Pick 3 important tasks each day <input type="checkbox"/> Create a color coded calendar <input type="checkbox"/> Set up reminders and alarms for activities <input type="checkbox"/> Use a timer to keep on task and limit activities to a specific interval
Family Buy In	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Have a family meeting

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Set goals that are meaningful to each family member <input type="checkbox"/> Understand family member strengths and challenges <input type="checkbox"/> Read Seven Habits of Highly Effective Families by Stephen Covey <input type="checkbox"/> Make it meaningful: If the toys are picked up from the living room for 1 week, we have Movie Night on Saturday <input type="checkbox"/> Create chore/reward charts <input type="checkbox"/> Ignore the unwanted behavior and recognize the positive
Motivation & Procrastination	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Determine the reason for the procrastination <input type="checkbox"/> Break big jobs into small pieces with deadlines along the way <input type="checkbox"/> Find an accountability partner <input type="checkbox"/> Create priorities
Money	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Understand the cost of clutter and disorganization: Read http://sapparisolutions.com/2014/12/whats-clutter-costing/ <input type="checkbox"/> Look for inexpensive or free financial guidance: http://www.daveramsey.com/ <input type="checkbox"/> Earn money by selling what you part with by using local consignment or Craigslist.com
Health Issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Enlist the help of a body double¹ <input type="checkbox"/> Routinize your health care tasks <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on sleep, food and exercise first <input type="checkbox"/> Work in small increments
Physical Limitations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Enlist the help of a body double <input type="checkbox"/> Work in small increments <input type="checkbox"/> Set up systems that support your limitations instead of trying to change who you are <input type="checkbox"/> Play to your strengths
Organization Organization (con't)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Organize to your strengths <input type="checkbox"/> Keep just what you need <input type="checkbox"/> Make it fun <input type="checkbox"/> Cover up the mess and uncover it pieces at a time <input type="checkbox"/> Use music to get you in the mood <input type="checkbox"/> Work with a friend/partner <input type="checkbox"/> Increase sleep <input type="checkbox"/> Utilize routines <input type="checkbox"/> Conquer the clutter <input type="checkbox"/> Adopt a mantra “One in - Two Out”

¹ A body double is an individual who serves as an anchor for a person to get tasks or work accomplished. Prince, Terry. “Body Double Work.” NSGCD, 2003.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Assign a home, use labels <input type="checkbox"/> Keep like things together
Decision Making	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Create decision-making criteria before you begin <input type="checkbox"/> Use a 'ripening drawer' or purgatory <input type="checkbox"/> Set a deadline to make the decision <input type="checkbox"/> Limit the options <input type="checkbox"/> Limit the time to research <input type="checkbox"/> Set a budget <input type="checkbox"/> Set goals and priorities
Routine & Mundane Tasks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Create habits and routines <input type="checkbox"/> Create a schedule <input type="checkbox"/> Utilize a timer <input type="checkbox"/> Use small rewards (5 min of task = 5 min of tv, exercise, etc)
Memory Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Repeat things out loud <input type="checkbox"/> Write things (everything) down <input type="checkbox"/> Do it when you think of it, repeat in your head until the task is attended to <input type="checkbox"/> Use an artifact to keep your place, jog your memory <input type="checkbox"/> Relate new information to old <input type="checkbox"/> Record messages/reminders (voicemail, digital recorder, etc) <input type="checkbox"/> Use a memory notebook (small enough to fit in pocket or purse)

Recommended Resources:

[More Attention, Less Deficit: Success Strategies for Adults with ADHD](#) by Ari Tuckman

[ADD-Friendly Ways to Organize Your Life](#) by Judith Kolberg & Kathleen Nadeau, Ph.D.

[Never Check E-Mail in the Morning](#) by Julie Morgenstern

[Getting Things Done](#) by David Allen

[Seven Habits of Highly Effective Families](#) by Stephen Covey

Obstacle Removal Chart

Name of Obstacle

When Does this Obstacle Often Appear?

Strategies I can use to move this obstacle:

Small Steps to Change²

Another useful tool in overcoming obstacles is to circumvent the alarm system in your brain that causes you to resist an activity. You can do this by taking small steps that act more like a puzzle for your brain to solve than a task to complete. Small steps should take 30 sec to a 1 minute and cause your brain to begin to create solutions without much intervention from you! Here is a worksheet to get you started thinking about what small steps you could take.

Overall Theme/Goal/Vision - What are you striving for?

Ask Small Questions

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Think Small Thoughts

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Take Small Actions

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Solve Small Problems

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

² One Small Step Can Change Your Life by Robert Maurer

Identify Small Moments

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Bestow Small Rewards

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Additional Reading

Do You Want To Be Green? Get Organized!

Published April 2012 by Nettie Owens

Going Green green and getting organized go hand in hand. There was a time that I believed efforts to be more environmentally conscious should be postponed until a person was more organized. However, this led to waiting until 'just the right moment' to start and often that time never came. But going green does not have to wait until organizing has occurred, in fact, these two efforts can support each other.

Follow the R's of environmentalism: reduce, reuse and recycle.

Reducing what you bring into your home has an immediate positive effect on both the environment and your efforts to reduce what you have overall. If you are bringing less in, then you have less stuff to handle. You will make your organizing task much easier. How can you reduce? Remove yourself from mailing lists that send catalogs and other advertising mail. Shop with a grocery list and be conscious of what comes into your home via purchases and gifts. Remember the rule of one in, one out when purchasing new items and if possible donate or recycle the old item.

With the Internet and such sites as Pinterest.com it is even easier these days than ever before to find ways to **reuse** what would otherwise be trash. At first, pick only one or two items to reuse such as newspapers in your flower beds or bags at the grocery store. Set up a system around reusing and designate a place to store your saved items. Be sure to also set a limit so that once you have enough newspapers for your garden projects you recycle the rest. Reusing can turn into hoarding when taken to an extreme. Be mindful that reusing is a great next step in helping the earth.

Recycling comes into place when reducing and/or reusing are not options. Earth911.com is a great website for finding places to recycle unusual items. If you have single-stream recycling in your area then commit to recycling as much as you throw in the trash. Be sure to have recycling containers just as you would trash cans in all the most used spots commonly used areas such as

bedrooms, kitchens and offices. Talk to family and friends to let them know you are trying to recycle. Think outside of the box with recycling as well; use Craigslist.org or a local thrift store to unload unwanted items, earn a little cash and then purchase what you need from those same places. Set a reminder to take out the recycling weekly until you get in the habit.

Making lifestyle changes around earth friendly practices is the final step. A habit takes 28 days to build. Pick one area to focus on such as using cloth bags at the grocery store for one month. Then, focus your efforts on remembering to use those bags by keeping them in the front seat of the car and returning them after shopping to reinforce using them. Then, invest your time and energy to a new skill such as making a meal plan for the week. It is easy being green when you are organized. A desire to be green is a great reason to apply organizing ideas to your home.

Tasks

- Compile your notebook using the guide on pg 2.
- Fill in the “My Plan” Worksheet found on pg 3.
- Check off the obstacles that are impeding you right now.
- Complete an Obstacle Removal Worksheet for your top three obstacles pg 14
- Continue to work on the goals you set in Module 5.
- Complete the [Review of Module 6](#) and meet with your coach.