

A CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO PERSONAL ORGANISATION

By Bob Baker

- 1. Plan well ahead, up to 2 years.**
- 2. Purchase diaries and year planners in June.**
- 3. Record all events on year planner and in diaries.**
- 4. At the weekend prepare a plan for the week that starts on the Monday a full week ahead.**
- 5. Also at the weekend prepare a more detailed sheet for each day of the week that starts on the immediate Monday to come.**
- 6. Go through the sheet for the next day on the evening immediately before that day; use this as a prayer diary for the day ahead when praying before going to sleep.**
- 7. Pray first thing in the morning as soon as you get up, commit the day and its events to the Lord.**
- 8. Use this sheet for the day during the day, abstract from it any notes that you may need for what ever you have to do while you are out, keep this daily list in the same place in the house so that you do not lose it.**
- 9. Carry a notebook and pen or pencil with you in your outdoor coat or handbag.**
- 10. Using the year planner make a sheet for each month on a piece of lined A4 paper. Do this for all the 12 months of the year before the end of December. Enter up all main activities during both the day and the evening. This helps you to easily spot times when a lot is happening and to not take on any more commitments at busy times. Put morning events on the left-hand side of the page, afternoon in the middle and evening on the right hand side.**
- 11. Consider using two diaries, one for professional or work appointments and another one for personal events.**
- 12. Use lists for all routine tasks so that you do not forget to do things. Examples are prayer points list, telephone calls to do and keep a list of those who should be ringing you back to resolve the issue concerned, shopping lists in Co-op or Safeways, list of things to do when in Lerwick, list of jobs you need to do, list of points to discuss with other folk, list of points for church notices, list of points for Trustees meetings, list of points for Church Management Team.**
- 13. Organise a good filing system at home for papers relating to important issues, file papers as soon as you get them in the correct file. Examples are future holidays or trips, medical issues if seeing your doctor. Check the contents of coat pockets, bags and brief cases as soon as you get in to avoid important papers being mislaid in bags that are not checked straight away and then left in a corner in the house and buried out of sight by some thing else.**

- 14. If you have regular weekend work commitments that may vary plan out the weekends for 3 months ahead so that you can try and arrange with your employer to be free for particular family occasions.**
- 15. If you have to give an input to a meeting, preach, prepare a talk and deliver it, start planning for it at least 6 weeks ahead, put a note in your diary 6 weeks ahead of the event to remind you to start the preparation.**
- 16. Using the notebook that you carry with you at all times keep a note on Sundays of important events mentioned in the Sunday Church Meetings that may need attention from you, e.g. points to pray about, events to attend. Use a separate notebook for sermon notes.**
- 17. Identify a place near the front door of the house where you always put things that need to be taken with you when you next go out. On Sundays this will help with always remembering Bibles, Sermon Note Book etc.**
- 18. Keep a pencil and paper by every telephone in the house and in your vehicles. Most people will not remember everything they think of during the day that needs attention, jotting down a note as soon, as is possible takes away the stress of trying to remember everything.**
- 19. If your shopping list is important keep a copy at home of what you have taken with you in case it gets lost on the shopping trip.**
- 20. If you have to convey a large number of pieces of information to a group of people by telephone keep a check list with columns showing the peoples names and the important points and tick each box on the grid as you are able to discuss it with them. This will ensure that everyone does have all the information they need that you are seeking to pass on to them.**
- 21. When dealing with correspondence keep a list of the letters you send that you expect a reply to so that things do not go astray by oversight.**
- 22. If you deal regularly with individuals or groups of people, keep ongoing lists for each individual and each group, of information that they need to have which you wish to pass onto them.**
- 23. Check things are done that have been delegated to others if you consider that to be necessary.**
- 24. Keep a list at the back of the current diary of events that occur regularly, say monthly, so that they can be transferred easily to the diary for next year before the next year starts.**
- 25. Use ordinary copy paper and tear it into half and quarter sheets for keeping notes on.**

- 26. Less reliance on mobiles and answering machines on landlines will lower your stress levels. Always being available to others is not necessarily a good idea. If folks really need to speak to you they will keep ringing until they get you in at home on the landline without an answering system. Excessively long general chat phone calls may well increase pressures due to valuable time being wasted.**
- 27. PRIORITISE. DO NOT PROCRASTINATE.**
- 28. Learn to say NO.**
- 29. Applying all. or some. of these principles will enable you to lower your personal stress levels.**
- 30. Why do all this? To improve your personal integrity and enable you to serve God more effectively.**

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