

The Counselor's Corner

The List

Nothing can ever be accomplished without planning. Making a "to do" list is critical. Studies have shown that we will get more done with a list than without. The idea of writing things down reinforces an awareness of what needs to be done. Although we may never accomplish everything, we have a greater chance of getting some major goals accomplished.

The planner is the little booklet that holds the student "to do" list. Start by making sure the list is complete and accurate. Then, add the books and needed supplies to the list and take everything you need home. As you complete each task, take a quick break, shout for joy, do a little dance or whatever it takes to help you to go on to the next assignment. When you get through with the whole list, you should feel a sense of accomplishment. Chances are your grades will go up, too.

When students fall into the habit of forgetting or not completing their "to do" lists, the parents may have to intervene by checking that the students have their planners, books, and supplies before pulling out of the parking lot. If not, a long, frustrating evening may be in the forecast. Have your sons and daughters make a fun "to do" list as well for activities or rewards. It will teach them that certain little things need to be done before big things fall into place.

Adults need their "to do" lists as well. Like our children, we must have things that contain realistic points to be checked off. We must set our goals high for the long run, but choose smaller ones to conquer daily. For example, many of us would like to have a home that is sparkling and totally organized. Few (if any) will proclaim they have achieved this goal, even when they downsize or retire. However, some are better than others, because they take small steps daily, focusing on one room or part of a room each day. For example, the kitchen might be a great place to start, but only do part of it. Perhaps start with the counter, sink, and floor. When they are done, write thousands of reminder notes to everyone (including self) not to mess it up again. Move on to another part each day. Soon, the parts will equal a great whole. In contrast, those who want too much at once may end up accomplishing nothing and feeling overwhelmed.

Let us all make realistic and clear "to do" lists. When we attack them daily with little steps, our long-range goals will fall into place.

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