

## BALANCING TOMORROW, TODAY™

by Dr. Stacie



**T**oday I will respond to a popular request, common theme, and universal desire...to simplify our lives. No matter whom we are, what we do, or where we live, we all tend to get overwhelmed at times and wish to make our lives calmer, easier, and simpler. Whether you sometimes feel encumbered by too much stuff, stimulation, or information, we'll look at how you can simplify tomorrow's life, today.

I'll start off with the nature of "stuff" since I just moved into our new house about a month ago and I am still entrenched in "stuff"—unpacking stuff, looking for stuff, trying to find places for stuff, and finally, trying to get rid of stuff. Some of you may remember, many years ago, the comedian George Carlin, delivered a provocative monologue on the acquisition of "stuff." I, too, have noticed, as well as experienced, the perceived need to acquire stuff, which is ultimately followed by the need to reduce the amount of stuff. The drive to acquire and the desire to simplify can be tied to your age or stage of life. Young people and those just starting out on their own are looking to *build* a life and that often takes "stuff," where as those in later stages of life want to *find* life, wherever that may be, and find "stuff" ties them down and gets in their way.

Some of us may not feel as encumbered by stuff as we do by the stimulation of life's activities, events, and demands. When we ricochet through our daily schedules, barely noticing the world around us it is time to slow down and simplify. When the events and trends in the world feel like they are crashing in on us, we crave a way to have a simpler life.

And finally, when the daily influx of information from the people, technology, and the world have us overwhelmed, we need the respite of a simpler life if only to give us the chance to process the information we have just received and get us ready to receive the next inundation of information!

So how can we simplify our lives and still be engaged in modern life? The steps, just like the results, are simple. You can simplify tomorrow's life, today by using these quick tips:

### For simplifying "stuff"

- Determine if what you are about to bring home today will help you simplify tomorrow's life or will it quickly become clutter.
- Look at the stuff around your home (inside and out!) to see what stuff you use, look at, or notice. If you don't consistently use it, wear it, gaze at it, or even notice it is there...you know what's coming...that's right, you don't need it...b-bye!

### For simplifying stimulation

- If you are longing to have time to stop and smell the roses, there is one thing you need to accept—you are the only one who can make that happen.
- Choose to simplify your schedule and do it! Take a good hard look at how you spend your time and eliminate or reschedule those activities that really don't need to happen that day or at that time.

*When our schedules are already full with things we have to do that day, we don't need to try and squeeze in all of our errands and side trips to feel productive. Just focus on what really has to happen today and you will have a more relaxed and productive tomorrow.*

### For simplifying information

- Skim and scan for highlights and the general gist.

*Although I really like to read everything completely, time just doesn't permit that luxury when there is so much information to digest. So for me, it often comes down to skimming and scanning or ignorance. I choose to struggle with skimming and scanning!*

- Choose and loose. You cannot read every newspaper, read every book, watch every television program, etc. Choose what you can digest in a day and don't worry about the rest.
- Try alternating your information sources on a daily or weekly basis until your skimming and scanning is to the level you want it to be or to just widen your perspective without becoming overwhelmed.

Simplifying your life is like balancing, it is a process you choose to incorporate into your life...it is not a destination.

*E-mail me your topic ideas for future columns and I'll take a crack at it! Thanks to those who have already sent your requests in.*

Dr. Stacie Morgan is the author of **Balancing Tomorrow, Today —AT HOME**, (New Strategy Press). For more information visit her website at [www.balancedmanagement.com](http://www.balancedmanagement.com) or e-mail her at [stacie@balancedmanagement.com](mailto:stacie@balancedmanagement.com).