

GILLIAN PERKINS



SORTED

freedom through structure



ORGANIZE YOUR LIFE
TO DISCOVER RELAXATION AND
YOUR IDEAL LIFESTYLE

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Gillian Perkins

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1

MY SORTED LIFE

Your life is not formed only by the big decisions you make, such as what career you pursue, who you marry, or where you live. Rather, much of your happiness, success, and direction in life are decided by how you manage the seemingly small aspects and day to day tasks.

Your life is made up of individual days, and the quality of each day is decided by so many small factors. Some of the greatest contributors to having good days are your environment, level of stress, and attitude. By developing a better system to manage your life, you can gain much greater control over those little things, which in turn affect the greater course and quality of your life.

In SORTED, you'll learn a faster, easier way to achieve your ideal lifestyle. However, in order for you to trust me as your guide, you first have to understand where I'm coming from, and what "SORTED" did for me. So, we begin with a little about me.

All through school I was an intelligent, motivated student. Yet somehow, my grades did not always indicate such. Besides many low grades, I dropped out of more classes and activities than I would like to admit. Why? I wondered this myself. I felt motivated to succeed, but overwhelmed by the work (even though I knew that once I sat down and did the work, it actually wasn't hard at all). I would forget deadlines, work half-heartedly, and "procrastination" was my middle name.

As I got older, not much changed, except the titles the obligations had. Now they were called "chores," "correspondence," "work assignments," and "meetings." I felt like the more I advanced through life, the further behind I got. For someone who has a natural drive to succeed, this was increasingly stressful for me, and I felt like my life was spinning out of control. Some parts of my life improved (I was getting paid more), but other parts (such as the state of my house) were continuing to deteriorate.

My life took another turn when I became a mom. Motherhood is a very nice thing, but it certainly didn't help me to gain any order in my life. It was then that I began to see that something simply had to change. The disorder around me was creating a fair bit of stress, and the disorganized state of my time was making me wholly unreliable as a person (and unreliable people typically don't do so well maintaining friendships or jobs).

My organization strategies began by starting a to-do list, which was some help—until I found the list was growing increasingly long over time and causing even more stress. These undone things were now staring me in the eyes. Also, this didn't really help me with remembering to fulfill regular my commitments. It seemed silly to write the same things ("check emails," "wash the dishes," or "write report") on my list over and over. I still procrastinated terribly, and the state of my house didn't improve much.

Then I began reading lots of self-help books. In vain, I hoped that perhaps one of the books would contain a secret that would magically help me stay on top of everything. A couple dozen books later, I can tell you that I didn't find what I was looking for.

After that, I determined to just buckle down and DO the work. I worked really hard. I worked hard to keep my house clean and I worked hard to stay on top of things. Alas, I ended up exhausted, stressed out, and frequently sick in bed.

Why is this so hard?! Have you ever asked yourself that question? I felt like I was giving life everything I had, but it still wasn't enough. *I* still wasn't enough.

Eventually, after my fair share of struggle, I began to discover some (small) things that actually did work, and actually helped. Things began to get somewhat easier. I as found more tools my responsibilities started to make more sense.

Around that same time, I committed to a morning routine. Each day, first thing, I practiced a series of habits in a certain order. I did this inconsistently for a while, but the difference in my energy and focus was so great when I did complete my practices that I eventually got serious and stuck with it.

That was when my epiphany began. Suddenly, over the course of just a few months, my life took a 180 degree turn. In one fell swoop I organized my entire house—and it *stayed* perfectly tidy. I beat procrastination like a fiend. I was on fire and unstoppable. My entire life was suddenly in order. I was remembering everything and on top of it all. I was truly getting the most out of each day and doing so with a completely relaxed state of mind.

Not only was my personal life in order, but my professional life took off as well. My existing business doubled in size (in terms of profits, employees, and clientele) and I even started a second business. I began writing around 1,500 words each day. I truly became the most productive I have ever been in my entire life.

That would have been plenty, but there actually was even more! Not only were my businesses doing so much better, but I was working fewer hours than ever and getting to spend much more time focused on my family.

I also lost weight that I'd struggled with ever since the birth of my son. I began consistently working out four times each week. I easily ate an amazingly healthy diet. My body fat percentage went from 36% down to 23%.

The most amazing thing: I wasn't trying any harder than I previously had been. I did not develop great willpower or strength of focus overnight. But all of the sudden, I felt I had somehow *gained* enormous amounts of willpower, focus, and drive.

With my life impeccably organized, I no longer had to spend time, energy, and willpower managing my housework, possessions, or schedule. I stopped spending my limited resource of self-discipline trying to convince myself to do things I didn't feel like doing, losing the fight against procrastination.

It was truly a life changing experience, and this book is the product of that. I felt I simply had to share with others the tools I had found that gave my life such a dramatic transformation. As you continue to read, you will learn the tools and strategies I used to accomplish all these things in just a short amount of time.

Hang on tight, because your life is about to get seriously fun.

2

BEGIN WITH THE END IN SIGHT

DO YOU KNOW WHAT YOU WANT?

Take a moment to think of what you would do if you were gifted an extra hour each day. Would you pursue your favorite hobby or maybe do a bit of freelance work for some extra money? What do you really **want** to do with your time?

If you're like many people, you might not really know *what* you want to do with your time. You might have a few ideas of activities you enjoy doing, or you might even have a hobby you're really passionate about. Having a passion is a wonderful thing! If you do have a passion, do you get to spend as much time working on it as you would truly like to? And even if you have a passion, is that **really** what you want to do with your life?

What big things do you want to do, really? Perhaps you dream of someday traveling to Spain, starting a small business, starting a BIG business, writing a book, volunteering to help a charity, having a fit body, or getting married to a wonderful partner. What is holding you back from doing any of those things right now? Could you do them right now?

The fact is, you probably could start immediately. You could sit down and start writing a book, put on your joggers and go for a run, or email a potential business partner—but unfortunately, that would probably result in you dropping the ball on other things you're responsible for: things like picking up your kids from school, completing projects at your job, making dinner for your family, or managing your finances. (Are you even managing your finances?) Believe me, I understand. You have a lot on your plate.

But let's go back to those first questions: What would you do if you had more time? You could pursue your dreams, goals, and passions **WITHOUT** failing any of your current commitments. You certainly could be “that” woman who easily balances her home life and career while writing a book and casually starting a nonprofit on the side.

If you had more hours each day, you would also have more time to **think**. Why would you want that? Because *without* plenty of time to think, you won't know what it is you *want* to do with your time.

You probably already have some ideas about what your “dream life” would look like. You might imagine a perfectly clean house (that stays clean all the time) and a couple of perfectly clean, perfectly well-behaved children. You would have a very satisfying job that allows you to work at home most of the time and provides you with plenty of money to spend on things you love, maybe that be fashionable clothing, tropical vacations, or eating out with your loved ones.

If you have a significant other, then I'm sure you would also imagine having an even better relationship than you already have! You and your partner wouldn't argue about silly little things. Oh, and your partner would have a good attitude, pick up after himself, and frequently compliment you on how organized and efficient you are and how beautifully you keep the house, teach the children, and earn a great income—all while looking fantastic.

Where would you go in this dream life? Perhaps you have a trip you've always wanted to take: London, Paris, or Japan. Maybe you just want to spend time traveling and visiting different places! On the flip side, maybe you enjoy staying cozy and grounded at home.

There are a lot of variables in this fantasy life, aren't there? So many different things to choose from—and we didn't even really touch on what you want to *do* with your time. While your kids are busy playing together or away at school, what will you do? Your house is perfectly clean, so you don't need to spend your time on that. Your finances are perfectly in order, so you don't need to spend any time worrying about that. You also wouldn't need to rush to the store to grab some food to throw together for dinner, because, of course, your pantry and refrigerator are generously stocked with delicious ingredients, and you have a specific plan for the healthy meal you'll prepare for dinner that night. (Yes, in this dream life you are a wonderful cook because you've had plenty of time to practice.)

So what will you *do*? Well, don't worry; there are certainly plenty of options! Maybe you would like to spend your time dreaming up new recipes in the kitchen, or perhaps Pinterest DIY's are what really set your heart on fire (not mine, but whatever floats your boat!). Heck, with all this extra time, you could work out A LOT and get in the best shape of your life! Maybe you'll think of a new business to start today, start learning a foreign language, or read an article about a great investment that you'd like to pursue.

The point is, there's no shortage of great things to do with your time, and the best part is that with all this extra time, you'll have plenty of time (and space) to *think* about what you really want to spend your time on. Right now, you typically feel so rushed and behind that you don't have time to think about what you actually want to do, so when you do get a little bit of free time, you just waste it on things that don't really fulfill you or your purpose in life. (Do you even have a purpose in life? Oh, wait, maybe you haven't had time to think about that either!)

Right now, your free time is sporadic, isn't it? Sometimes the day whips past you and you only had a free five minutes while you were waiting for your child to finish his dinner (and let's face it, that wasn't *really* free time, since you actually should have been doing the dishes). On other days, you unexpectedly end up with a solid five-hour block while your kids are at school and there is NOTHING you need to do. So you frantically binge watch Netflix because *who knows* when you'll get another chance. Never mind that you haven't mopped the kitchen floor in over a week and you *know* all that TV really isn't going to make you feel any better about your life.

But what if you knew that you'd get some free time *every day*? Perhaps then you'd be able to plan and consider what you really want to spend that time on. Maybe it really is watching an episode or two of your favorite show—but maybe it's not. Maybe instead of watching that exciting show where the characters live exciting lives and travel to exciting places, you would rather be living that life yourself.

Right now, you're barely keeping up. Do you feel like you are behind or like you don't even know where you're going? Some extra time, plus a plan of how to use that time really can make all the difference.

So, I have a gift for you. The gift is not this book, but this book will give you the gift. The gift is *time*. With enough time on your side, you can do anything—and be the Unstoppable you know you can be.

SORTED IS DIFFERENT

You might be wondering how this will be any different than all those other times when you tried to organize your life, clean your house, or start using a planner. First, understand that this **WILL** be different. Completely and 100% different. The strategies outlined in this book are not about your life being “a little easier” or “somewhat more organized.” If you follow the guidelines and get your life SORTED, your life will be completely changed—not just in appearance; you will actually feel extremely different. You will feel in control of both your day and your destiny. You will feel confident of yourself and the path you are taking. That change in feeling alone is quite definitely reason enough to do the simple work that is required.

This will be different from other times when you've tried to make changes for two main reasons. First, because I'm not just going to tell you what you need to change, or even just how to change things. I'm going to walk you step by step through the details of what and how you will change, explaining why the change is helpful, giving you a practical plan of how to implement the changes will simplify your life and help you to be more relaxed and successful.

Secondly, this will be very different from times when you've tried to organize in the past because it is a **complete** system. I'm not just telling you how I clean my house, how I plan to achieve my goals, or how I remember to follow up with my correspondence. I'm giving you a **system** that will give your daily life a strong, practical structure.

The wonderful thing about structures is that they provide **support**. Just like the structure of the house supports all the decorative parts that make the house pleasant, so can structure in your life support the fun and interesting things that make life pleasurable.

We're going to set all of the boring, necessary parts of your life on autopilot so you don't need to spend any more of your valuable time thinking about when and how you are going to do those things. Instead, you can focus on things you enjoy accomplishing: things that are new, exciting, or that you've always wanted to do. Why would you use your valuable, limited resources of time and willpower on menial tasks like answering emails or deciding when you might be able to muster up the energy to do the dishes? Instead you could simply create a **process** and decide, once and for all, so you never have to consider it again in the future. Let me tell you, this saves SO much time and decision making!

Once you've set up some practical, simple structures that will help support your daily life, two wonderful things will happen. First, you will discover that you suddenly have an abundance of clarity and time for your true passions. Second, you will discover JOY in the "boring" parts of life. While previously, perhaps you dreaded and procrastinated starting the laundry, now you will know that every Monday is laundry day, so that's just what you do. You will not fear it, because you will know it is already decided and is a positive thing that frees you to do the things you love. When you stop fearing tasks, you open yourself up to actually *enjoying* them and being able to savor the moment and live in the present.

Once you get the menial tasks in order and your house SORTED, then comes the fun part! We'll move into Phase Three, where you'll actually plan how you will close the gap between where your life is right now and where you ideally would be. Because let's be honest—there are aspects of your current life that you are not terribly fond of, whether it's how many hours you have to work, the level of stress from your job, the amount of money you make (or don't make), where you live, or the quality of food you buy.

With all the "chores" taken care of, you'll be able to focus on the actions that you can do each day to close that gap and change your life. You'll have the time and energy to complete those daily tasks consistently. It really won't be so hard! Yes, you will run into some snags—almost definitely. They might be little problems, or they might be huge. However, setting your processes up for success practically guarantees that you actually will achieve your dreams.

It's all about one baby step after another. In his book *The Compound Effect*, Darren Hardy discusses extensively how small daily actions add up to huge changes in the long run. Each time you go to the

gym, you look in the mirror and don't see any change since the day before; however, when you continue the habit consistently, over several months, HUGE changes can take place.

Every dollar you add to your savings account doesn't seem to make much difference at all (really, \$12,001 isn't much more useful than \$12,000, right?), but in the long run, those dollars add up (literally) and **compound** with interest, making retirement actually possible.

The “compound effect” is a wonderful and important concept. However, after reading Darren's book and trying my best to actually apply it, I really didn't see much of a change in my life. I wondered why it was so hard to do easy little things every day, even when I had big incentives (a fit body, a rich retirement, etc.).

I knew that reading ten pages a day would result in 12 to 20 books being read over the course of a year—that is a lot of knowledge that I would like to have in my head! Yet somehow, reading even ten pages each day was so often pushed aside for other “more important” or “more enjoyable” things (idly browsing Facebook, anyone? Netflix? Doing lots of busy work?).

It wasn't until I developed and applied the SORTED method to my life—which took care of all the *chores* and *must do's*—that I was actually able to find the time and willpower to take those baby steps toward my goals each day.

It's great for authors to write books about focusing on our top goals, visualizing them, or applying principles such as the “compound effect.” But often authors write such books, then sit back and wonder why their readers don't just DO it. “It” is so simple! And the authors are right: “It” *is* so simple. However, the reality is that the laundry has to be done and the emails need to be answered...even if this is generally labeled “busy work.” The fact is, if you don't spend some time answering emails, your customers, vendors, or friends will probably leave.

So this is what we are doing differently: First, we are going to take care of the chores and the “stuff” that is cluttering up your life. Then, once everything is in order, you will have much more space to think and consider what you really want to change in your life. Right now, your “things” (time commitments, chores, physical clutter) are distracting you from enjoying the present or understanding how to close the gap between where you are now and where you want to be. Once those things are taken care of, you'll have clarity. Once you have increased clarity, the daily actions you need to take in order to reach your goals will be obvious, and you will actually have time to consistently complete these actions. In fact, we'll even be able to put those “success drivers” on autopilot.

YOUR SORTED LIFE IS RELAXING

When I was finally making big changes and starting to achieve big results in my life, I began to worry that I might not be able to handle it. After all, when my life was ho-hum and I wasn't getting much done, I was barely able to keep up. What would happen if I was doing much more? I assumed I would get busier and busier and my stress levels would correspondingly rise.

Now in most situations, this is indeed the case. As people's businesses become more successful, the time they spend with their families and on themselves diminishes. Of course, their relationships and health often suffer the consequences. It is quite a common situation that when someone becomes successful in one area of their life, other parts deteriorate.

Fortunately, for me, this was not the case. Now, I do not say this to brag, and I don't think that I was just lucky. I *do*, however, think that I fortuitously learned several important skills that allowed me to develop the tools needed to make this possible. So maybe, for me, it was "luck" in a way. However, the good news is that I can now share the tools that I was blessed enough to discover. This means that you can experience the same calm, easy success that I did. That is, you can benefit from my "luck" also.

Really, that's why I'm writing this book. I feel so blessed to have stumbled upon the things I did that I feel it is my duty to share these techniques with others so they can benefit as well.

When my business began to grow increasingly successful, rather than becoming more stressed, I actually became more and more relaxed and happy—and this wasn't just because I was pleased with my business. In fact, it had very little to do with that. I was feeling relaxed because everything was being completely taken care of, either by myself (who no longer procrastinated) or by one of my competent employees.

(To be clear, it is not at all necessary to have employees to get your life organized. However, if you want to hire employees, you will find that that will become possible once your life is in order.)

The knowledge that everything is being taken care of is very stress relieving. Before I got my life SORTED, I would try to "relax" on weekends or holidays but found it simply wasn't possible. I could objectively choose to do "relaxing" activities or to do "nothing," but I still felt stressed and that I should be working on my business, cleaning my house, or some other such work activity. I felt guilty if I wasn't working because I always felt behind.

Once my life was organized and I had a routine for my work, I discovered, first of all, that nearly everything was taken care of at any given point in time. Secondly, if something was *not* already taken care of, I knew the exact time in the future when it would be.

Examples of the latter: If the floor is dirty, this does not bother me because I know that tomorrow is Thursday and on Thursdays the floors get mopped.

If there are emails in my inbox, this does not concern me, because I know that I always deal with emails immediately after lunch is completed, leaving my inbox free of messages.

When everything in your life has a place—both physical objects and time commitments—you will suddenly discover that your life is virtually worry-free because you have set everything on automatic. All you have to do is continue the process, and everything will continue to flow. “Continuing” means you are able to remain in the status quo. Continuing is much easier than starting out or determining to do something. It is much easier to do the laundry every Monday than it is to persuade yourself on some random day that you “really should do the laundry.”

Not only is it easier because it has already been decided but also because it quickly becomes a habit. When you do the same thing at the same time every day or every week, it is soon a rhythm that you are used to. Habits are easy, and done without even thinking. You are in the habit of getting dressed every morning. Getting dressed is a bit of a chore, but you don’t generally dread or procrastinate getting dressed, do you? There are many little things in your life that are “chores” that you are used to doing; you have developed the mindset and never give them a second thought. You certainly don’t dread, procrastinate, or stress about having to do them. What if your clean house was like that also? What if you cleaned automatically without any annoyance? Maybe you will begin to actually *enjoy* cleaning (I certainly did). However, even if you never actually enjoy it (some people don’t), you could at least take all of the dread out of it, freeing your mind to think about and enjoy other things while you wash the dishes or sweep the floor.

What of work tasks? With those on automatic, again, you might actually discover enjoyment. Even if you don’t, you would at least be able to appreciate them much more. Simple little tasks of replying to customers, writing a report, or planning a project can become easy stepping stones on your way to larger goals. The tasks become enjoyable projects, such as getting a better job or creating your own business that you love.

The summary is thus: Make the boring or unpleasant things in your life automatic, and you will no longer have to think about, dread, or worry over them. Free yourself by giving yourself the gift of time. It’s a wonderful gift that will benefit both you and your loved ones.

YOUR SORTED LIFE BRINGS CLARITY

Do you feel distracted? Distracted from what? Well, you wouldn’t know, because you are distracted.... Being distracted isn’t necessarily a bad thing. If you are happy with your distractions, then they are probably a joyful diversion. But if things distract you and become boring, stressful, or unpleasant, this obviously is not what you are striving for. If you weren’t distracted by *things*, you would have the clarity needed to create the life you would like to be living.

Do you think you will ever reach your dreams? At this moment, do you actually **believe** that one day you **will** achieve what you hope for? When is that “one day”? If you don’t know when, then it’s most likely never. But that doesn’t have to be the case! You can change this, and you can make it possible.

Honestly ask yourself: Right now, am I doing the work to get to where I want to go? Am I putting in the time and making the plans? If you aren’t, then you’ll never get there.

If you really put in some thought, you can figure out what the first step you can take towards your goal. Once you figure out the first step, you can mark it on your calendar. However, you are the only person who really knows if you will actually do it. You know how consistently you follow through with your commitments.

Here’s a better first step, one that I guarantee **will** get you closer to all your dreams and guide you to your ideal lifestyle. Your first step must be to get your life SORTED—not just the inconvenient parts, not just the big pile of dishes in the sink, and not just a to-do list for work. We need to overhaul your life and really “take care of business.” Only then will you have true freedom to pursue the life of your dreams.

PURSUIT OF [WHAT MATTERS TO] YOU

The fact that you are reading a book about creating structure in your life indicates that you feel that you don’t have enough resources to pursue everything you would like to. The good news is that by creating a SORTED life, you’ll unlock resources you didn’t even know were at your disposal.

Additional resources afford new possibilities. More time means you can fit more into each day. More energy means you can do more and enjoy it more fully. More motivation means you’ll stick with your new projects.

Whatever you desire to do, this is your chance. This is your chance to stop “just getting by” and start really getting ahead. Why waste so much time, energy, and willpower on the chores of life? You could be using those resources to reach new heights, enjoy new experiences, and *be* more.

By leaving your life cluttered, disorganized, and unstructured, you are robbing yourself of the chance to achieve your full potential. Why do I say this? Because you are wasting your limited resources of time, energy, motivation, willpower, or even money on just managing your “stuff.”

All you have to do is *start* the process, believe in the process, and commit to continuing with the process. The good news is it will get exponentially easier as you continue. The longer you live your

SORTED life, the more natural and effortless it will become. Before you know it, you'll have that promotion you want, have a new little business that's humming along nicely, have finished the first draft of your book, or be on your way to visit Japan. Whatever you dream, when you truly have the resources, the doing is easy.

YOUR SORTED LIFE IS EASIER

Here it is, all laid out. You might have read the last few chapters with a bit of skepticism. How can I claim that your life will be easier? *Life is hard*, you think, *How could changing the way I do things really make a big difference? I'll still have the same life, same problems, and the same needy people. This won't give me more money, and I'll still have the same number of hours in the day.*

On the one hand, you are right. Life can be somewhat difficult. Life has its challenges. No, your SORTED life won't be problem free. You'll still have situations you have to work through. You'll still be short on time or money occasionally—but this will seriously help.

How? Two ways:

1. You will be enabled as a person. Your mind will be clearer, you will be more confident, and you will be less distracted.
2. Resources will be freed up. Resources you didn't even know were at your disposal will suddenly be abundant. You will absolutely enjoy more time, motivation, and willpower. You quite possibly will even discover you have more money and space.

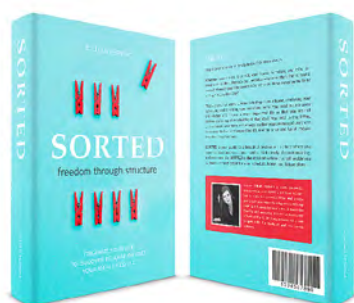
How can structure make your life easier? Imagine trying to build a nice house without any foundation or framing. Without the foundation, your house would be very unstable, and foul weather would leave it crumbling. Without framing, you'll never be able to achieve any real height. You can only stack bricks so high without structure.

The same thing happens in your life. You can continue to build, build, build, but you'll never get anywhere without structure to support it. Also, without a firm foundation in your life, whenever anything disrupts your normal flow of things, everything goes to hell. Have you ever gotten really behind on the dishes because something was keeping you extra busy at work? How about your house getting quite messy while you were sick? Did you ever put on a few pounds over the holidays? These are all the "foul weather" of life. Without a good foundation, your seemingly organized life crumbles whenever the winds change course.

When you are ready to really run after something in life, you'll be thankful for the structures that will support you and enable you to achieve anything you set your mind to.

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Author & Entrepreneur
Gillian Perkins



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SORTED

freedom through structure

When you pick up SORTED on Amazon, you're not just getting my #1 international bestseller. You're getting the *system* that will enable you to finally get your life under control!

Stop fighting your house, and start enjoying living in it; turn your endless to-do lists into an organized plan for success; quit the endless cycle of working a job to don't enjoy just so you can buy more stuff that distracts you from real life.

I know it might seem impossible to break out of the way you're currently living, but it's not! You just need a good plan and some guidance. That's what SORTED can provide: the structure to find freedom!

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