



TRANSCRIPT

Episode 28: Get Organized Once & For All: Eat Your Frog

TASHA LORENTZ *from* GET ORGANIZED HQ

WELCOME

Welcome to the Get Organized HQ podcast. I'm your host, Tasha Lorentz. Every week we share practical strategies for less stress and more peace as we dive into all topics life and home organization. I'm so glad you're here for this week's episode.

So I have been told that Mark Twain once said if you eat a live frog first thing in the morning, you won't do anything else more unpleasant the whole day. Now, somebody may need to go fact check that, because I'm actually not 100% sure if that's one of those quotes that Mark Twain really said or if it's one of those things that kind of got attributed to him after the fact.

I have heard that from several places, though I think he probably actually said it. But whoever said it, it has a really good principle for life and also a good principle for keeping your life and home running smoothly. Eating your frog is what we're going to be diving in today.

EATING YOUR FROG

This is the second principle of our Get Organized Once and For All series where we are talking about how to maintain organized spaces and systems in your home, but also how to set them up in the first place. Because the truth is that maintaining a system and setting it up, they really often go hand in hand.

So what does it mean to eat your frog? It really means do the most daunting task first. Sometimes that means it's the hardest task, and sometimes it means it's just the most unpleasant one. Or the one that for whatever reason you're dreading, it's hanging over your head.

THINGS YOU TEND TO PUT OFF

A frog task is a task that you tend to put off things like going up into the attic to put away the last of the Christmas decor that you forgot to gather up, or calling the dentist to schedule an appointment or to reschedule an appointment.

Responding to a difficult email. I can really sit on some of those emails for a long time. I or even something like cleaning the frying pan that dinner stuck to last night and knowing like, it's going to take a little extra soaking and elbow grease to get those pieces off because it stuck a little bit more than you were planning on. It happens to everyone.

But those are the types of tasks that often would show up in someone's list of tasks they would consider to be a frog task or a task that you just really don't want to do. And here's the funny thing about frog tasks.

OFTEN THEY ARE QUICK TASKS

They're actually typically relatively quick tasks.

Now that is an almost always not an always situation, right? There are some exceptions out there where there is a really difficult time consuming task. You know that it's going to take forever.

You know that it's going to be hard to track down all the things you need. I mean, maybe something like filing your taxes, right? You've done this for years. You know what a hassle it is. And so I'm not going to downplay the fact that sometimes things are hanging over our head. And unfortunately, we actually have a pretty accurate idea of how difficult it's going to be to do that thing.

ANTICIPATION IS WORSE THAN REALITY

But in general, I would suggest that oftentimes anticipation is worse than reality, even when it comes to the things on our to do list.

But either way, whether you are in a situation where anticipation is worse than reality and you're going to find out that that task wasn't as overwhelming as you thought, or if you are 100% right, and that is really a daunting thing to do, going ahead and getting that thing done first thing in the morning is really going to set you up for success for the rest of your day.

NO LONGER HANGING OVER YOUR HEAD

First of all, that task is no longer going to be hanging over your head. And I think we all know what it feels like to have something that you kind of dread. I mean, have you ever had an appointment that you're not looking forward to?

Like, maybe it's a dental cleaning or

something? Nothing against any dentists who are listening, but like, sometimes going to the dentist or like, if I have to get a filling, like, it is just not my favorite thing to do. I don't love people working in my mouth.

And so I'd probably rather have that appointment first thing in the morning instead of it being, like, late afternoon. And I get to spend all day thinking about the fact that, oh, I have to go to the dentist. Oh, I really didn't like it the last time that I had to get a filling.

Oh, I think my tooth hurt pretty bad. Oh, man, I'm feeling a little queasy. Like, I'm not looking forward to it. You know what it's like when you're anticipating something and that you don't want to do, that very same thing can happen with things that are on our to do list.

And even if you're not consciously thinking about it, if you're not having the thought of, oh, I really don't want to do this thing. It can kind of show up as a gut feeling and just put that knot in your stomach that you know that something that's difficult that you don't want to do is coming up and that you're going to have to do it eventually.

GETTING IT DONE FIRST THING

And so if you go, ahead and do that thing first thing in the morning or as soon as you realize that you need to do that task, that is going to make that gut feeling vanish, it can't be hanging over your head anymore because the task is already completed. You're also going to get an instant feeling of accomplishment by doing something that was hanging over your head.

And honestly, I think that feeling of accomplishment is magnified by the fact that

Tasha Lorentz

you know that you did something difficult. I mean, when I make the bed, I'm kind of like, great, I made the bed, but, like, I don't dread making the bed. We have three, three blankets on our bed total. It's not that hard. It doesn't take that long.

GREATER SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

And I don't feel that much accomplishment whenever I sit down and make the bed. But when I clean something that I have been putting off cleaning for weeks because I thought it was going to be difficult to clean, and I didn't really want to mess with it, and then it's finally done, that feeling of accomplishment is so much bigger.

So when you go ahead and do the task that you're dreading that's hanging over your head, you're going to feel super accomplished and you're going to get rid of that knot in your stomach. And the great news is that you do not have to wait till morning to apply, this principle. So I know that Mark Twain said something specifically about eating frogs in the morning, but you can do this right now.

Maybe this is a principle you apply when you go to work. Maybe you work an afternoon shift. You get into work at 2 o'clock in the afternoon, and every day when you get in, you sit down and say, okay, what is the thing I am least looking forward to doing on my to do list today? I'm going to go ahead and do that right now and get it knocked out.

But it's also a great thing to do in the morning when you're making your to do list or you're getting started with your day thinking, what is something I need to do that I'm really dreading? And going ahead and getting that knocked out.

APPLY IT RIGHT NOW

In fact, you can apply this principle right now. If there's something that's been on the back of your mind that you need to do, even while you're listening to this podcast, you can go and do that thing.

And one thing that I would challenge you to do, grab your phone and pull up your clock app or your stopwatch or your timer app, and just set a stopwatch, have it counting up, and see how long it takes you to finish the task.

Because I think that actual hard numbers can be super powerful. Sometimes our brain can kind of play a little trick on us. And if there's something that we don't want to do or that we find super difficult to do, our brains can tell us that it takes longer to do it than it actually did.

SEE HOW LONG IT ACTUALLY TOOK

But your phone timer is not going to lie to you. So maybe you have an email that you need to respond to and you're not quite sure how to word it. Pull up your phone, start a timer, and then see how quickly you can respond to that email. And then when you're done, check that stopwatch and see how long it actually took, because it can be super empowering to see.

Wow. I have been walking around for a week dreading responding to that email, and it took me 2 minutes and 15 seconds to actually sit down and respond to it. And that can just be really helpful the next time when, when the next email comes in, because we know that there always will be another one. There's always going to be another thing we don't want to do.

Tasha Lorentz

PROOF THAT YOU ARE CAPABLE

But when the next one comes up, you can remember, okay, last time, I kind of lived with this dread for a week, but it took me 2 minutes and 15 seconds to actually do it. I'm going to go ahead and tackle that right now. And so that can be a really powerful proof to yourself that you are capable of this and that most likely, anticipation is worse than reality in this case.

So how do you identify what kind of task might be your personal frog to tackle? So, like we've been saying, is there something that you've been putting off doing something that you've been dreading?

Is there a task that, when you think about it, your stomach drops just a little bit, or you're thinking, if I forgot about that until tomorrow, I would not be sad. Those are good indicators that that particular task might be your frog.

THE KEY

And the key to eating a frog is don't spend too much time thinking about whether or not you're going to do it. Once you identify the task and once you identify it as, something that you truly need to do, you know, we're not necessarily talking about things that it's like, you know, I've really been debating, should I repaint the office or should I not?

That's a little bit of a different type of task because there's more decisions to be made there, and maybe there's a little bit more pros and cons.

I'm talking more about things that one way or another, eventually you're going to have to file your taxes, you're going to have to call the dentist and make an appointment. You're going

to have to respond to that email. And so you might as well go ahead and do it now.

So don't give yourself too much time to think about it or to think about how difficult it's going to be to do it. Just go ahead and get that task knocked out so that you can experience that relief and go through the rest of your day.

HOW IT RELATES TO ORGANIZATION

So how does this help us with our organization and our organization systems? So, first of all, I think so many times sometimes the frog task can be a literal task in your home that you need to tackle. I know for me, once in a while there are just things that I don't enjoy cleaning.

I can specifically remember a time when we had a situation with our grill and I had to take a couple of the pieces off of our grill and, and wash them. And have you ever tried to wash a grill grate? Like, it's pretty large and greasy and gross.

So I had the bright idea, to grab a large plastic storage tub and the hose and I was going to wash it off in there. Well, then I had, like, greasy grill dirt water in a storage tub. And I kid you not, I think that tub sat on our back deck for a year because I didn't know what to do with it and I didn't want to mess with it.

And so I just let it sit there and sit there and sit there. And so for me, that was definitely a frog task that I just let sit there for forever. And I eventually did have to tackle it and deal with it and come up with what to do with my greasy grill water that had been sitting in my storage tote.

Tasha Lorentz

RELIEF FROM STRESS

But sometimes the actual task you are doing is the very thing that's going to help you have a more organized home. But I think the bigger benefit is actually the amount of stress that getting these tasks done relieves from you.

And so it's no longer hanging over your head. And it kind of frees up your mental capacity to do other things in your home.

And so maybe one of your big goals for your home is just to go to bed with a tidied up kitchen every day. And that may not be your frog. You know, maybe you don't even mind. You put on a podcast, takes you 10 minutes. You wipe down the countertops, load the dishwasher, and maybe that's even like a relaxing way to end your day.

But it's not going to be nearly as relaxing to do that if you have other things hanging over your head. And sometimes these tasks have a time crunch to them and you have to get them done on a certain day. And it's so easy to put off the things we don't want to do.

But then you're going to end your day trying to pile in all of these difficult tasks, and that's going to be what you do the last thing before you go to bed. And that is just not a great way to wrap up the day.

And so, in some ways, even if your task isn't directly related to helping your home run more smoothly or any of your goals that you have for getting and staying organized, it is still going to help you with your goal of getting and staying organized, simply because it is going to give you less stress and more peace.

NEXT WEEK

So we've talked about habits, we've talked about eating your frog, but next week we are going to talk about what to do when things simply, simply just do not go to plan. What do you do on the bad days? That's what we're tackling next week. I'll see you then.