

# SOLUTIONS

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## IT'S TIME TO GET ORGANIZED

Don't fool yourself into thinking that you operate better with a little mess! Here are 5 tips to help you organize your life:



**Everything must have a home.** And that home cannot be a pile on your desk or the floor. A home indicates a place you are going to put an item after you've used it—EVERY TIME! Think about the time you waste looking for things — if those things had a home, you'd know exactly where to go! If you can't find a home for something, you don't need it.

**Free yourself.** We are all prisoners of our past until we make the choice to free ourselves from the lessons with which we grew up. Did you grow up in an obsessively neat house? Or was your house messy all the time? When you grow up in an extreme like that,

typically one of two things happens: either you blindly follow the path your parents have laid before you (and wonder how you ended up exactly like them), or you make a conscious decision to be different. As with most things in life, the middle ground is the best. Be organized to the point that you can find things without wasting time, but not so obsessive that no one can stand to live with you!

**Organize by broad categories.** Whether you have a hard copy filing system or electronic files on your computer (or both), create folders for broad categories. When you're looking for that elusive article or document, you no longer have to remember the exact name of the file, just the broad category it falls into.

**Have a schedule.** You must at least have a template of how your day should go. What do you need to do first? And after that, what will you work on? That way when you get interrupted, you can easily remember what you were working on based on where you are in your schedule.

**Prioritize.** Everything you do in the course of your day falls into one of three categories: "must do," "should do," and "nice to do." You need to begin to organize your day based on these categories. "Must do" items are necessary to your goals, and typically have a deadline attached. Prioritize them and work on them first. "Should do" items are important, but don't have a deadline. They can be worked on after the "must do" stack is completed. "Nice to do" things are those items you would enjoy doing, or that would be fun when you have free time, but they are not necessary. Those are tackled after the first two categories are complete. Obviously, you need to review each category regularly, as items will move from category to category (deadlines get attached or moved, or priorities change).



# Emotional Intelligence: Happiness

Is the grass greener on the other side? We often conclude that we would be happier doing something else or being somewhere else. Soon, we find what we thought would make us happy fades into the background with everything else. The truth is, we need to be aware of where to find the happiness in our own life. If we look in the right place or in the right way, we can discover our present happiness.

Being smarter about our emotions means we need to understand how we feel and understand the situations that help us feel different emotions. Simply, we need to be smarter about our emotions.

Understanding where to find happiness is like the saying “beauty is in the eye of the beholder.” Our happiness is already there. We need to find ways of bringing happiness into awareness.

If we try to make ourselves happy, we generally have a hard time doing it. Happiness is not a thing we do; it is a byproduct of what we do. For example, research shows that for an event (like New Year’s Eve) if we set out to be happy, ask ourselves if we are happy during the event, and rate our happiness, we tend to be less happy than what we wanted. Lesson: the more we focus on it, the less we get.

Research shows that we are happier when we focus on the positive virtues in our life. This makes great emotional sense! Specifically, research has found we are happier if we focus on a few virtues once per week. You don’t even have to do them all the time – only once a week. Try these exercises and see if you become more aware of your happiness.

## Exercises to increase *Emotional Intelligence of Happiness*:

- Make a list of 5 things for which you are grateful once a week. Read the list when you have a down time or before bed each night.
- Make a list of 10 acts of kindness. Each week do one of those acts and write it down after you do it.
- Make a list of 5 affirmations about yourself once a week. Read the list when you have a negative thought and/or before bed each night.

After doing the exercises the whole week, rate your *Happiness for the Week* on a scale of 1 to 7. (1 = not happy; 7 = very happy) Do this for 4 weeks in a row. The majority of people who go through this process find they move up the scale during the four weeks. Becoming **smarter** about your emotions is one of the best ways to make relationships, work, and you more successful, as well as more satisfying!

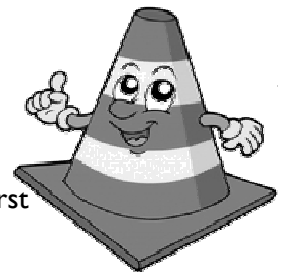
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## Travel Safety Tips

The Safety Council SWLA advises vacationers to take these safety precautions:

### Road Trip Safety

- Have your keys ready when walking out to the car from any location.
- Remember to bring road trip essentials: flashlight, road flares, duct tape, wrench, screwdriver, and first aid kit.
- Make sure the car is mechanically sound – always get a tune-up before going on any road trip.
- If you are using a rental car, learn about all the features before taking off.
- Bring appropriate maps as a backup to your pre-planned route in case of detours.



### Safety Begins With Packing

- Pack only the necessities. Traveling light allows one to move more quickly through crowds.
- Instead of cash, use traveler’s checks and credit cards.
- Pack the proper phone numbers in case your checks or cards are lost or stolen.
- Pack the minimum amount of valuables needed. Plan a place to conceal them or secure your valuables in the hotel safe.
- Be sure to pack all prescription drugs, even the ones you are not currently using but may need.

### Dress for Safety

- Wear conservative clothing. Avoid the appearance of wealth to keep yourself from becoming a target.
- Avoid carrying handbags or using fanny packs. Instead, use a pouch or money belt that is easily concealed.
- If you are carrying passports, traveler’s checks, or credit cards, put them in separate places, not all in your wallet.

### Foreign Travel

- Know your Embassy when traveling abroad. Obtain in advance, the telephone number and location of the U.S. Embassy in the area you will be visiting. This is crucial should legal problems arise.
- When traveling abroad, pack extra sets of passport photos. You may also want to include photocopies of birth certificates and drivers’ licenses for each person going on the trip.
- Check the legality of prescription drugs in the country you will be visiting before you travel.