



www.Shea-RealEstate.com

858.759.5237

7 Simple Ways to Simplify Your Life



More than 60% of Americans report they are “chronically stressed out.”
Follow this simple guide to restore balance to your life.

#1



Cut your wardrobe in half

Most people wear fewer than half of the items in their closet on a regular basis. In fact, the real number is often closer to 20%. Cluttering your closets with items you rarely wear makes it more difficult to match and manage the items you truly care about. A cluttered closet can also lead you to make poor purchases, such as buying similar items repeatedly without realizing how rarely you wear them. The point is, you can live with a lot less clothing—and your life would be much simpler if you did. Any item of clothing that you haven’t worn in the last year should be instantly discarded or given to **Goodwill**. If you have items that don’t seem to fit as well as they used to, have them tailored or get rid of them. If you have expensive items that you wear less often than once a year but cannot be discarded (such as a tuxedo or a wet suit), store them safely away from your regular clothes. Once you have reduced your wardrobe, maintain its tidy size by taking an item out of your closet every time you add something new. This approach will keep your wardrobe fresh and manageable.

#2



Subscribe to on-demand services

Many technologies waste more time than they save, but on-demand services are becoming sophisticated and simple enough to recommend as legitimate time-savers. On-demand services allow you to view and manipulate content (audio, video, text) on your own time and on your own terms. For instance, signing up for **DVR television** service allows you to record your favorite shows and watch them when you want. You can also fast forward through commercials, which saves you an average of 14 minutes per hour of television viewing. Many cable TV providers also offer a wide variety of on-demand movies. Priced around \$5 each, these movies are cost substantially less than a night at the movies, and they eliminate the time and hassle of driving to the theatre. Podcasts (available through **iTunes software**) allow you download audio content free—such as on-demand radio shows. These shows can be downloaded to your computer, car, mp3 player, or smartphone, so that you can play them whenever you desire. RSS feed managers, such as **Google Reader**, allow you to monitor dozens of different blogs and Web sites from one central location. Get familiar with one or two of the aforementioned tools and you could save hours each week absorbing more content than ever.

#3



Become a savvy online shopper

Shopping online has made a lot of sense for years now, but during this current recession, it makes more sense than ever. Retailers have been forced to fire many in-store employees causing reduced service, sluggish lines, and overworked employees at retail stores nationwide.

Online shopping allows you to skip the drive to and from the store, it provides the widest selection possible, and makes comparison shopping easier than ever. Becoming a savvy online shopper requires that you do two things: learn to evaluate online customer reviews and find online coupons. In general, customer reviews are unreliable on a manufacturer's Web site. For example, HP simply will not allow a negative review of its printer to last long on its corporate Web site. Sites like [Amazon](#) and [Consumer Review](#) are much more reliable places to obtain unfiltered reviews, since they are impartial to individual companies. Notably, step two, finding online coupons, is even easier. When purchasing an item online, you will often see a box for "coupon codes" or "discount codes." If you enter the correct code, you will qualify for a discount. Often, these discounts can reduce the total cost of your purchase by 25%. To find a coupon code, you need little more than the will to do it. If you [Google](#) the site you are at (e.g., Best Buy) and include the words "online coupon," (e.g., "Best Buy online coupon"), you will often find dozens of sites with active coupon codes. Simply copy, paste, and enjoy the savings.

#4



Say "no" more often

Human beings seem perfectly incapable of predicting the amount of time actually consumed by new commitments. In general, any new work project, family commitment, or fitness plan will take a lot longer to complete than you imagine. More importantly,

if your life feels busy right now, then you are in no position to accept new commitments until you eliminate or complete the old ones. Of course, it can be difficult to say "no," especially if the commitment is exciting or proposed by a person you love and admire. However, saying "yes" to a commitment that you have no time to fulfill will mean one of two things: (1) you will have to say "no" later once reality sets or (2) you will have to break one of your previous commitments to complete the new one. Given these options, saying "no" is clearly the kindest approach. You will never be able to please everyone, but you can finish what you start by saying "no" more often than you say "yes."

#5



Put your electronics in their place

One of the unfortunate realities of our Digital Age is that we are constantly being reminded of our responsibilities by buzzing cell phones, computers, and PDAs, which can make it impossible to focus and do real work. The next time you have a task that requires your undivided attention, turn all of those devices off—you can check your voicemail and answer your emails once you're done. Our mobile devices also allow work to sneak its way into our personal lives. Many executives now carry 2 cell phones, one that is kept on from 9 to 5 for work, and another that is turned on at the end of the workday for personal phone calls. A more elegant solution may be to get familiar with your phone's filtering options. Many cell phones allow you to accept calls from only certain numbers at certain times. For instance, you could set your phone to forward any call directly to voicemail after 5 p.m., unless it is from a friend or family member.

#6



Surround yourself with positivity

Some people bring negative energy with them wherever they go. If you find yourself consistently in a bad mood when you're around a certain person, maybe it's time to part ways in favor of more constructive relationships. Spend your time with friends who encourage you and coworkers who care about your success. Avoid the rest. You can also "fire" customers that are more trouble than they're worth. Politely explain that you appreciate their business, but you are not willing to suffer their negative attitude or unreasonable demands anymore. Offer them a chance to work within your boundaries; if they decline, kindly show them the door. Once you have cleared the negative people out of your life, invest more into the relationships that give you joy and purpose.

#7



Make a "not to-do" list

Anyone serious about productivity knows the value of carrying a to-do list, but for most people, a **"not-to-do" list** equally important. A not-to-do list is exactly what it sounds like—it's a list of the things you resolve not to do for the day. For instance, a good daily not-to-do list might include 1) eat a dessert, 2) watch more than an hour of TV, and 3) complain. If you made it to the end of the day without doing any of those three things, you will likely have had a happier, healthier, and more productive day.