



This Newsletter is just to let you know the Committee is aware that because of Covid and we are not able to meet, this is our way to keep in touch.

Welcome all,

We have again experienced periods of 'lockdown' and I have heard so many say that they have used the time to do 'things' that have been on their lists, lists that have existed quite often for long periods of time. I am no different and have undertaken tasks that I have intended to do for 'years' but always could justify deferring in preference to something else that was more pressing, relevant, easier or desirable so I decided to do a little research relating to our practice of making 'lists'.

"Human beings love lists, because they create a sense of order in a chaotic world," according to author Shaun. He has amassed a collection of lists by the famous, the infamous and the anonymous, from Johnny Cash's to-do list ("1 Not Smoke, 2 Kiss June, 3 Not Kiss Anyone Else") to the list of parts Galileo needed to build his telescope in 1609 and a list of reasons not to work written by the slaves in the Valley of the Kings in ancient Egypt.

Lists are wonderful precisely because they create the happy illusion of order. They suggest that life is a process which we can control. Every New Year people write or verbalise lists based on concepts of what they want to do, hope to do, try to keep doing in the year to come or challenges/tasks of what they want to do. Writing lists – sometimes numbered with the thought that the one above needs to be completed before undertaking the next a type of motivation or self discipline – feels like the first step to making things happen. Even if on paper – at that moment hopes exist. There is a perception that there is power in naming things, but interestingly often even with all the conceptual planning and best intentions the biggest and best things happen entirely by accident.

'Writing things down supports what is most fragile in our memories,' says psychoanalyst François Leguil. 'We spend our time forgetting what we ought to be doing, and what we've already done. Lists provide support, backing up these things we've been unable to memorise.'

Our unconscious has no trouble in getting rid of what is weighing us down by erasing it from our thoughts. As Freud demonstrated so clearly in [The Psychopathology Of Everyday Life](#) (Penguin), if we forget, it's because we don't want to remember. For some of us, lists enable us to overcome the occasional lapse in memory. And they keep us on the straight and narrow.

But does list-making satisfy us, or is it a form of punishment? 'Each crossed-out task is the visible proof that we've done our duty,' says Leguil. It's also a sign that we are capable of organising ourselves, and of rationalising our daily lives. We stick to our lists in the hope that our day will go the way we planned, without worrying gaps left to chance. We try to convince ourselves that we have control over our world.

'Tolerance of uncertainty is very hard to live with,' says psychiatrist Stéphanie Hahusseau. 'We live in a hyper-controlled society, with objectives to fulfil. Culturally we are unaccustomed to letting ourselves be carried along, to participate in whatever is happening in the here and now, without any particular expectations.'

But of course, nothing ever happens as we expect. Ask those list-makers around you how many manage to cross off every item on time, every time? None – or very few. Why is that? We imagine that by writing down our obligations we'll make them unavoidable; we credit the written word with magical powers. 'We're fickle by nature,' says Leguil. 'We are caught between conflicting pressures, between the imperatives contained in our list and the pleasure of screwing the paper up into a ball and chucking it in the bin.'

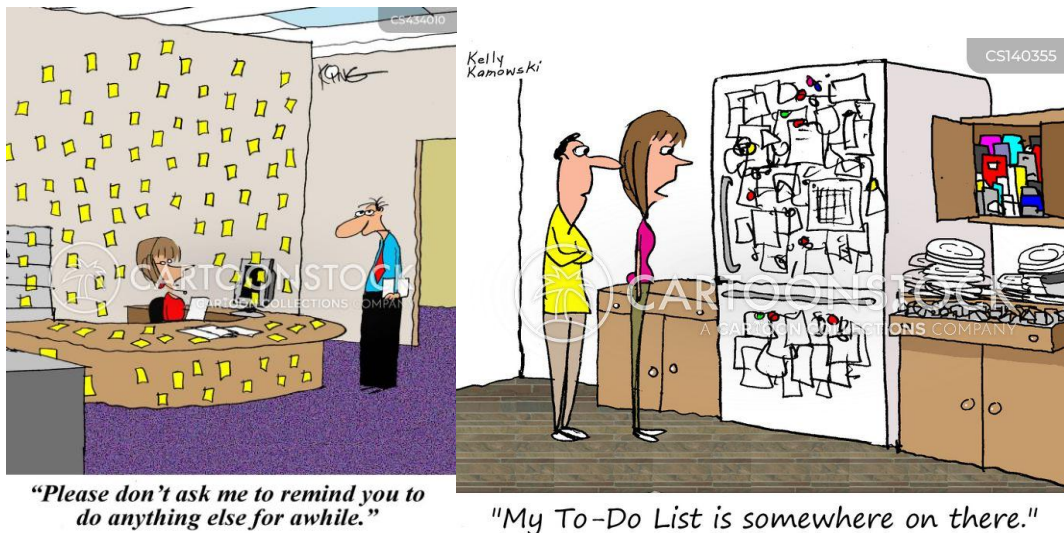
The pleasure of breaking the rules can be hard to resist. Another reason we don't follow our lists is because we procrastinate, often putting off until tomorrow the things we need to do today. According to psychotherapist Dr Bruno Koeltz, there are three reasons for this failure. First: the simple fact that pleasurable activities are more seductive than important but boring tasks. Then there's performance anxiety: are we up to the tasks we've set ourselves?

Perfectionism is mixed with a need to protect our self-image. By not undertaking a task, we avoid the possibility that we're not up to it, and we're not confronted with our failings.

Finally, Koeltz talks about 'passive aggressive reactions'. Since we feel constrained, we put on the brakes, because deep down we rebel against orders, even our own. But according to Hahusseau, if we don't follow our lists, it's often because our plans are too vague or ambitious. 'Break down the task,' she advises. 'Rather than write "clean up the bedroom", write "clear out the chest of drawers".' Koeltz notes that our lists are often badly structured, too wide-ranging and poorly organised. 'Before asking ourselves why we're not getting there, we might ask instead if everything we've written down really needs to be done and, if so, by when,' he says. 'This is why I often advise my patients to make three categories of list: first, the imperatives that can't be put off; second, the "If I have the time" items; and third, a "When I've got nothing else left to do" list. And we could feel better about ourselves by writing down at the end of the day every-thing we've achieved that wasn't on the list.'

In any event, we should remember one of the chief characteristics of the list: it obeys the principle of infinity and eternal renewal. What would happen if we had nothing left to do?

Cheers Kathy



"Please don't ask me to remind you to do anything else for awhile."

"My To-Do List is somewhere on there."

12. If you see another machine near you, get out of the way. 13. No 1920 Regulations For Operation Of Aircraft

Date: Thu, 26 Feb 1998 17:22:22 -0500

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA WAR OFFICE Dept. of the Army Regulations For Operation Of Aircraft Commencing January 1920

1. Don't take the machine into the air unless you are satisfied it will fly.
2. Never leave the ground with the motor leaking.
3. In taking off, look at the ground and the air.
4. Never get out of the machine with the motor running until the pilot relieving you can reach the motor controls.
5. Pilots should carry hankies in a handy place to wipe off goggles.
6. Riding on the steps, wings, or rail of the machine is prohibited.
7. In case the engine fails on takeoff, land straight ahead regardless of obstacles.
8. No machine must taxi faster than a man can walk.
9. Do not trust altitude instruments.
10. Before you begin a landing glide, see that no machines are under you.
11. If flying against the wind and you wish to fly with the wind, don't make a sharp turn near the ground. You may crash.
12. Motors have been known to stop during a long glide. If pilot wishes to use motor for landing, he should open the throttle.
13. Pilots will not wear spurs while flying.
14. Do not use aeronautical gasoline in cars or motorcycles.
15. You must not take off or land closer than 50 feet to the hanger.
16. Never take a machine into the air until you are familiar with it's controls and instruments.
17. If an emergency occurs while flying, land as soon as possible.