

# Finding clarity in chaos



## On A Brighter Note

I can't find my desk. I can't find anything really, but right now I'm just trying to find my desk.

The last newspaper I worked for I had a co-worker who had a practice of dealing with paperwork the moment she saw it so she would never have to see or think about it again. It didn't matter if it was something that needed to be done that day, the next week or the next month, she would just

take care of it like it was high priority and it would be out of sight and out of mind.

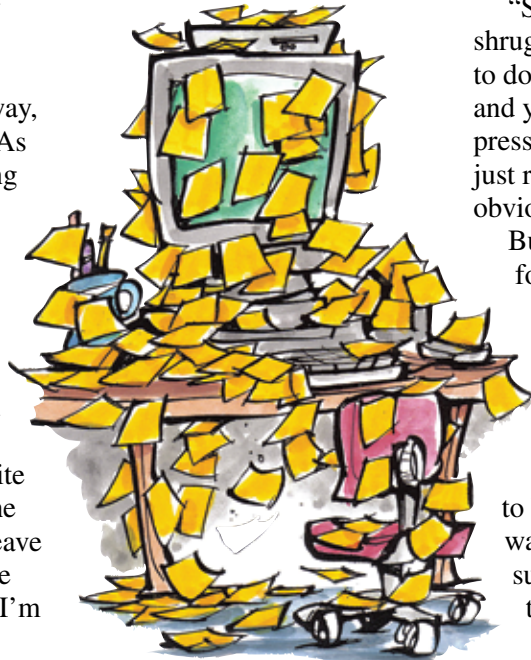
"That's why my desk is the tidiest one here" she remarked. Looking around at all the messy work stations surrounding hers, mine among the worst, she was certainly right about that.

I just couldn't wrap my head around working that way, and years later I still can't. As envious as I am about having an empty in-tray, I'd rather do what I "feel like doing" and leave the rest until later.

The problem with that is twofold. The first complication is that I forget all the other stuff I need to do unless I immediately write it down on a sticky note. The second drawback is that I leave everything to the last minute and don't tackle a job until I'm

right on deadline. For example, this column I'm writing right now. It's due in an hour.

"What can I do about my severe procrastination tendencies?" I asked my psychologist friend one day.



"What do you want to do?" he asked.

"I want to be more organized and feel less stressed." I replied.

"Would that work for you?" he asked.

"Probably not," I said.

"So why change?" he shrugged. "If your tendency is to do things right on deadline and you work well under pressure, why don't you just relax and go with it. It's obviously working for you."

But if it was truly working for me, would I feel like a deer caught in the headlights when the overwhelming amount of tasks mount up right before my eyes?

"Yes," he said. "It seems to be part of your natural way of working." His only suggestion of change was to take all my sticky notes

and compile them into one list and then prioritize so I would feel like I had a better handle on my duties. Good idea. I've done that before and it works like a charm. Thanks, Doc.

Looking around at all my notes, I can see that I'll have trouble deciphering my chicken scratch on the odd one. But just knowing I'll be doing that as soon as this column is finished is already making me feel less panicked and more in control.

I just hope that the next duties I've ranked as high priority, like this column I just wrote, can also fall under the list of things that I "feel like doing."

To view my comedy skits please visit [loriandlisa.com](http://loriandlisa.com)

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