

While leading a full life is a worthy aspiration, there's a point at which you risk spreading yourself too thin. Are you in touch with that feeling? Thought so. And aside from being frazzled, there are other consequences to taking on too much. "You may want to do it all, but when you're overextended, you won't do any of it to the best of your ability," says clinical psychiatrist Janet Taylor. "If you have too much to think about, your focus and productivity will go down, as well as your peace of mind." And ironically, you end up having zero time to enjoy the things you're working so hard to get.

The trick to calming the chaos? Learning how to streamline your crazy, busy life. "Simplifying isn't about giving up the things you enjoy," says Joan Borysenko, PhD, author of *Inner Peace for Busy Women*. "Rather, it's about getting rid of all the unimportant stuff that tends to soak up your attention and your time so you'll be able to do more of what you like." Start with our brilliant suggestions:

1

Clear Off Horizontal Surfaces

"A less-crowded space will have an instant impact on your state of mind," says Peter Walsh, organizing guru on TLC's *Clean Sweep*. You'll feel less crazed and hurried.



2 Bag Some Beauty Booty

Instead of having to pack (and unpack) a bag each time you head off to the gym, spend the night at your guy's place, or get away for a weekend trip, keep a tote filled with all of your beauty basics: a toothbrush, toothpaste, face cleanser, body lotion, mascara, lip gloss, concealer, and a brush.

3 Decorate Your Desk

"When you don't like your work space, you won't want to go there," says Debbie Gilster, vice president of the National Association of Professional Organizers. So beautify the area with a cool mouse pad, colored binders for your paperwork, or a vase of your fave flowers.

4 Delegate Plan Making

No doubt your social agenda is jam-packed, but if you're the one who's always planning for your posse, give yourself a break. "Women tend to create a lot of stress for themselves by trying to organize everyone's agenda—not to mention their own—which can be overwhelming," says stress-management expert Debbie Mandel, author of *Turn On Your Inner Light*. Instead of volunteering to play group leader all the time, chill out and let one of your buds be the cruise director.

5 Prevent Going Postal

If you're sick and tired of being bombarded by an avalanche of junk mail you don't care about every time you open your letterbox, not to mention the piles of paper that you have to toss, send a postcard with your name, signature, and address to Mail Preference Service, PO Box 643, Carmel, NY 15012-0643, or go to www.metrokc.gov/nwpc. While you're at it, put an end to those annoying telemarketing phone



Suck It Up

Feeling a wee bit overwhelmed? The easiest life-simplifying trick is free. Just breathe deeply from your belly, not your diaphragm. When you're anxious, your breathing is inhibited, so this mini-relaxation technique will mitigate your stress response and have a calming effect.

SOURCE: THE ANXIETY BOOK, BY JONATHAN DAVIDSON, MD