# The ToDon'tList Method

The General

Once, a psychologist was invited to the Pentagon to give a workshop to generals on management of time and resources. At the start of the workshop, he asked them to each write down in 25 words what their strategy had been so far for managing their time and resources.

All generals already hit a wall there, but one: the only female general present. This woman, who had made her way to the top through all the ranks and had also fought in the Iraq war, came up with the following strategy: "First I make a list of priorities: one, two, three, and so on. Then I cross out everything from three downwards."
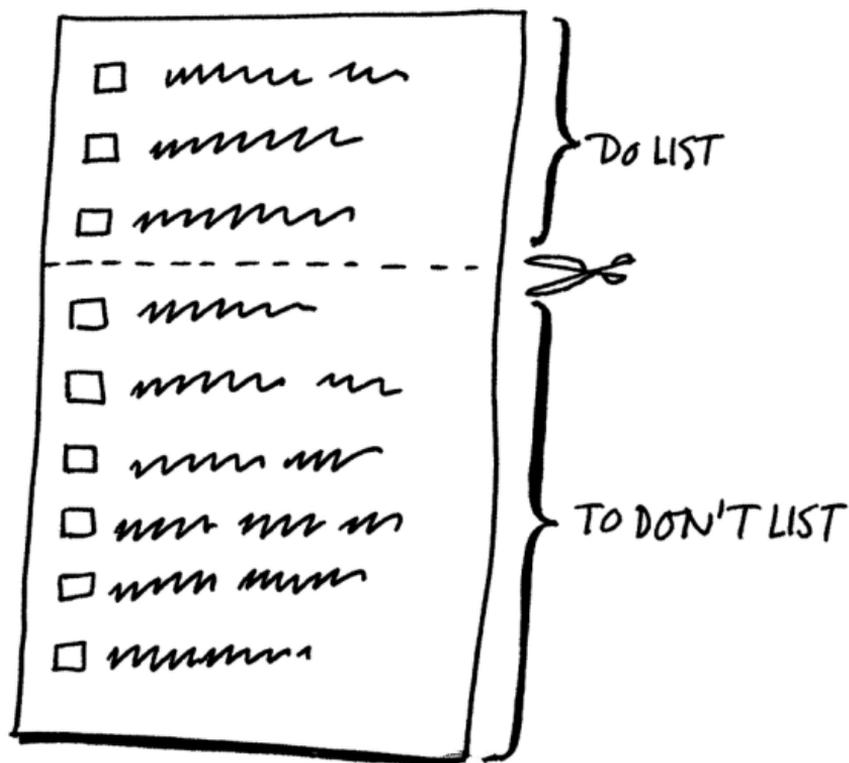
What the general had done was turn her to-dos into to-don'ts. She only chose three to-dos to complete. Anything below the line would simply not get done. This gave her more time to do those top 3 things well.

It's not about doing more. It's about making choices.

— Jean Van 't Hul

Assess which to-dos are actually necessary to finish your project. Strike through everything after the third to-do — all of that goes straight to your ToDon'tList. Those are to-dos that you won't be doing right now — and which you therefore don't have to give any further thought.

You can also take decisions on a higher level and put an entire project on the ToDon'tList — including all the to-dos that belong to it. And while you're at it, you could even decide to move that part of your (working) life from which such a project emerged onto the ToDon'tList. It will give you more time and focus.

TO DO TREE
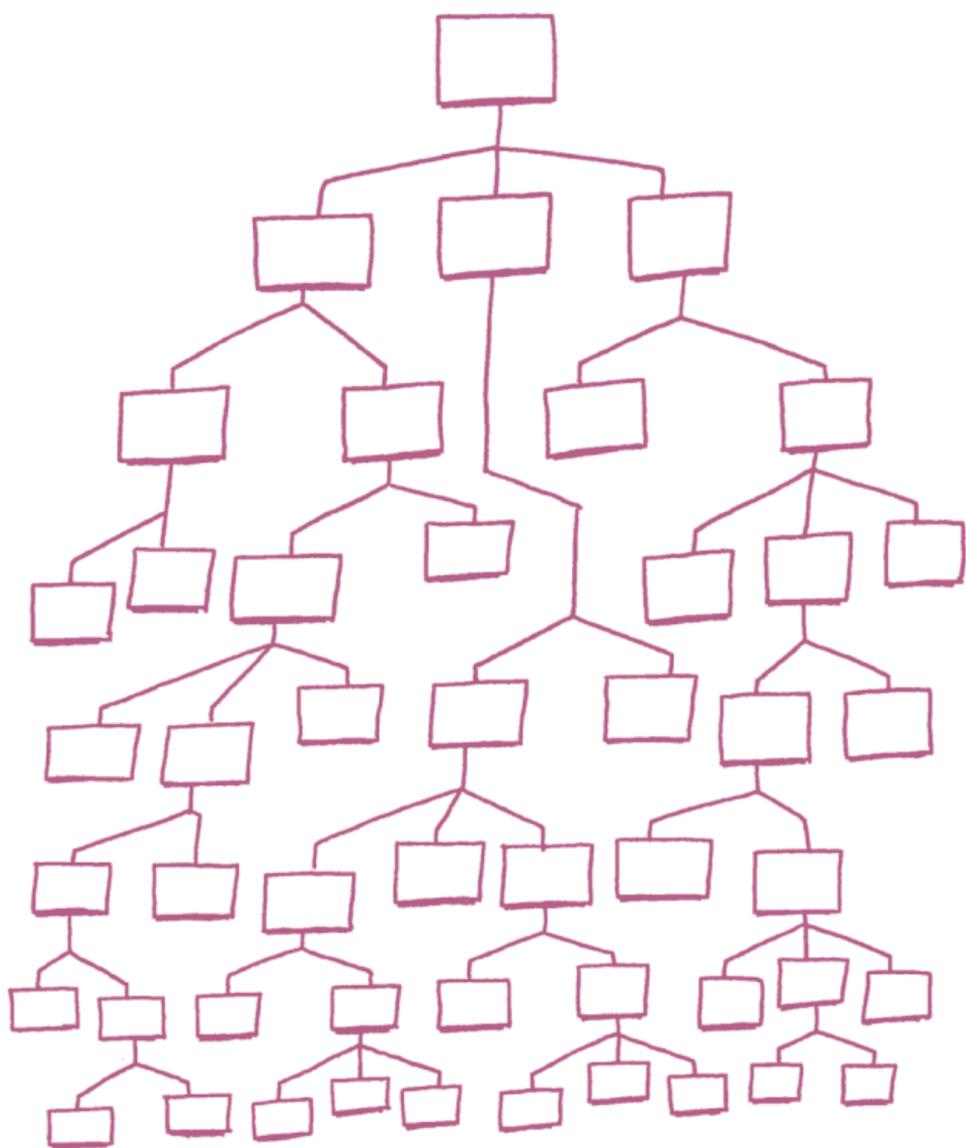
Do
List

To
Don't
List

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Set Goals

- [ ] Life
- [ ] Work
- [ ] Project
- [ ] Year
- [ ] Month
- [ ] Day

1

2

3

Set Goals

It is good to know the general direction of where you want to go, because otherwise you will never get anywhere. But don't rigidly fix your objective — you want to leave room for new experiences and insights. So make sure you have a goal, but keep an open mind about the road.

What keeps me going is goals.

— Muhammad Ali

Life / Work / Project / Year / Month / Day*
Hashtag

* Strike through what is not applicable

#_____

What's your #Hashtag?
Come up with a hashtag that summarises in 1, 2, or perhaps 3 words what you stand for as a creative — or what your studio stands for. Imagine someone posts something about your work on social media. What hashtag would you like them to add to it?

A hashtag helps you to test whether something you are about to do is in tune with your (life)goals. If an activity or project doesn't suit your hashtag, it might be sensible to move it to your ToDon'tList.

If you chase two rabbits, both will escape.

— Chinese proverb

Do
List

To
Don't
List

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Leave Out Extras

What are your
3 bare necessities?

Life / Work / Project / Year / Month / Day

1

2

3

Leave Out Extras

When we create something, we often tend to add more features to it as we go. But the more you add, the bigger and harder to manage your project gets.

Always ask yourself what the simplest version is of what you want to make or do. What is the leanest version of the product? Choose 3 things that are truly necessary to get to the essence of your life/work/project/month/year/day.

One can furnish a room very luxuriously by taking out furniture rather than putting it in.

— Francis Jourdain

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To Don't Co.

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DoList

| Done | This to-do is on your Do |

Slide right to mark as Done

Press and hold to move

ToDon'tList   +

This to-do is on your ToDon'tList

Tap + to add a to-do

Slide right to mark as Do

Slide left to Delete
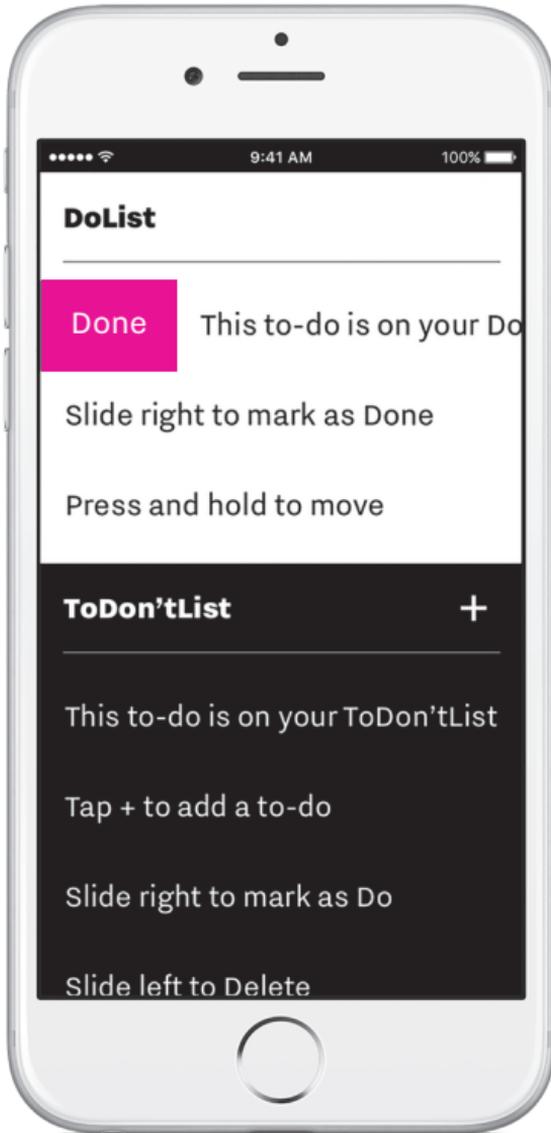
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