

# Overwhelmed? Take The Next Step

By Carol A. Poore, Ph.D., MBA

With deadlines and daily responsibilities swirling, we *all* can feel overwhelmed from time to time.

Feeling overwhelmed often includes exhaustion and a paralyzing fear of not knowing where to start – and what do to *first*.

I researched the topic and found several excellent articles (shared below) about how simply “Taking the Next Step” can help you become present in the moment, allowing you to take one, small step to take charge of getting things done.

Author [Paula Jones](#) notes, “the best response to feeling overwhelmed is to take a deep breath and break the problem down into small pieces. Instead of focusing on the next eighteen years and tackling an entire childhood in one thought, focus on the next day or two. “

Author [Jay Austin](#) says, “Trust me on this: you need to step back. If you don’t, then you’ll continue to feel like you’re flailing everywhere. You won’t have direction, and you won’t know what to do next. Take a 20-minute coffee break, grab a laptop or a notebook, and find a quiet place to think.”



Then, he urges people to make a list of all of the tasks, or things that need to get done, and then prioritize these. Figure out if any can be outsourced, delegated, or eliminated. Then, take the most important next step for one of the priority tasks.

Author [Jory MacKay](#) summarizes it like this: “Feeling overwhelmed with work is one of the worst things that can happen to us. Instead of feeling empowered by doing meaningful work, we end up drowning in our to-do list. But there is a way out. Just remember to take a step back, recognize what’s triggering your stress, and work steadily and systematically through what’s truly important.”

**After distilling more than 20 recent articles, here are my top keys for Taking The Next Step:**

**First**, commit to being present and “in the moment.” The clock’s not in charge – you are! Turn off all noise sources, put away your phone, and take a deep, cleansing breath as you focus on being in the here and now.

**Second**, simply list the most important things you need to get done TODAY, and by the end of THIS WEEK.

**Third**, look at your TODAY list and take the NEXT STEP to complete your most important priority for TODAY. Perhaps it’s making that one phone call, writing a business proposal, folding towels and putting them away, or going to the gym for a bit of self-nurturing. Whatever is most meaningful for the moment – DO it.

**Why is The Next Step so important? It can:**

- Provide a jolt of clarity in the midst of brain fog.
- Help you overcome inertia.
- Bring satisfaction of a small “win.”
- Lead to the next step, and the next... until you conquer your feeling of being overwhelmed as you get things DONE!



**Terrific reference articles:**

<https://blog.rescuetime.com/feeling-overwhelmed/>

<https://goodmenproject.com/featured-content/3-steps-take-im-feeling-overwhelmed-jaau/>

<http://healthyspirituality.org/overwhelmed-simply-take-the-next-right-step/>

<https://blog.sivanaspirit.com/one-small-step-at-a-time/>

<https://iqdoodle.com/feeling-overwhelmed/>

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