Overwhelm Buster

I'm going to let you in on a secret… although if you know me at all, then this isn't really a secret.

I get overwhelmed.

Seriously overwhelmed.

I know I'm not alone in this feeling.

The feeling like we have to do it all at the same time, that we have to have all our ducks in a row.

Like we should have the perfect website, be consistent daily on social media, be running webinars, writing books, making big sales, and still manage to run the house and look after the kids.

What is Overwhelm?

According to Merriam Webster, overwhelm has several meanings, including:

"c : to overpower in thought or feeling. Overwhelmed with grief, overwhelmed by terror, A sense of inadequacy overwhelmed me. overwhelmed with guilt"

Simply put, in this sense, it is the strong feeling of too much.

So how do we solve the feeling of overwhelm?

I don't have all the answers, that's for sure. I regularly feel like there is too much on my plate… but here are some of the steps I take.

Start by asking why you feel overwhelmed

Do you have too many things to do? Things you really have to do?

Or do you simply have too many things you feel like you SHOULD do?

Brain dump everything that is on your mind at the moment. All those things that you feel like you need to do. Business, personal, the lot. Get it all out of your head and put it on paper (if this isn't a big enough space, grab yourself a big sheet of paper and do it there instead)
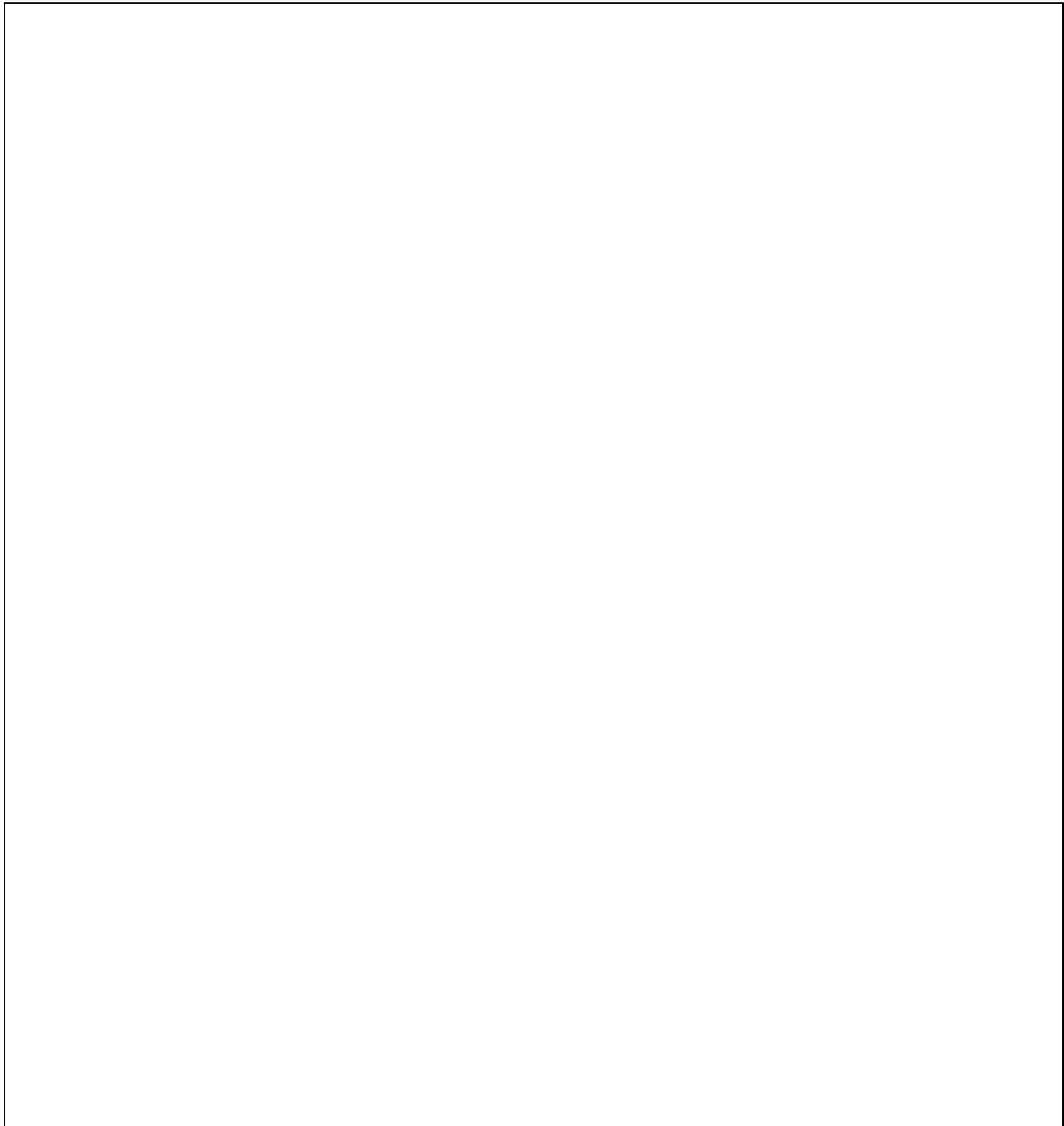
Reflect on your current to-do list.

When I stop and think, there is a big difference between the number of things I HAVE to do right now, and the things that I feel like I SHOULD have sorted out.

I should have a better sales funnel…

I should run more webinars and be more visible…

I should improve my systems…

But at the end of the day, I don't have to do any of those things right now. And adding them all to my to-do list right now simply increases my feeling of overwhelm. (So I put all of those things on a different list, a "one day" or "someday" list)

So, honestly, how much of that previous brain dump do you **have** to do right now? And how much is simply there because you feel like you should be doing it?
Write down the list again, removing anything that doesn't really need to be done right now, but would be nice to have, or a one day task.

Reduce your to-do list

This might sound easier said than done, but it is possible, I promise.

First, you should have removed all of those **should** items. If you haven't been ruthless enough, go back and remove some now.

Next, look at the list and focus on what really needs to be done today, or this week.

How much of it is as urgent as you say it is? If it doesn't really need to be done right now, move it to that "someday" list again (but put a specific date next to it if it has one or needs one)

Finally, look at reducing the number of things that YOU need to do.

Can you delegate or outsource?

I get it, you can't always pay someone else to do it for you, but there are other ways.

Maybe you can trade services with someone?

Maybe you can ask a friend or family member to help out?

Be honest and ruthless here. We (well "I") hate asking for help, I always feel like I should be able to do it all myself. But I know that if I push myself to overwhelm or burnout then I am no help to anyone. And I know that people who know me, like me and love me what to help me. So push yourself to delegate and outsource. Be brave. Ask for help.

Which things from your original list can you assign to someone else?

Focus on fewer things.

Even once your list has been reduced, there is still a large chance that you can't do it all at the same time.

It is time to strip your list right back, and simply focus.

Last week, I had just 4 items on my to-do list. One task a day, and Friday left to catch up.

Sure, there were plenty of other things to do.

School pick ups, loads of washing, answering emails... all those normal things.

But other than the normal weekly tasks, I added just 4 small steps.

You can't focus on every big project or task at the same time. It just isn't possible.
From your to do list, which big task are you going to focus on next?

Take it one step at a time

Looking at the whole picture can help with planning, but it can also be really overwhelming.

Seeing "write a book" or "launch a course" on your to-do list simply feels like standing at the foot of a mountain and looking upwards.

But you don't need to know how to scale the whole mountain to take the first step forward.

So for any major projects on your to-do list... simply work out what the next small step is.

For the project you selected above, break the task down into tiny little steps (and for bonus points, go and put the first couple of steps into your diary so that they get done)

Be kind to yourself.

You don't have to do it all right now

You don't have to have all your ducks in a row

No ones life is really like their Instagram feed

It's OK not to do everything today

It's OK to let some things slip

And yes, I'm telling myself this!