

Psyched Up Self-Employment

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Noreen works from home and says, “I am not as productive as I need to be. I have a long list of work priorities but find instead that I am distracted by things around the house. When I should be working, I do laundry, eat and even clean the house--something I really don't like to do!” She wants to know you to stay focused on her real work and accomplish her business goals.

Many people who work at home are challenged to separate household activities from career and work tasks. Over the years I've had my own challenges running a speaking, book sales and counselling practice from home. Here are some ideas that may help:

- Create a space that is work specific. Make sure it is pleasant and organized so you want to go there.
- Go there to start your work day as soon as possible. You will want to eat a nourishing breakfast first and perhaps exercise.
- Working in pyjamas is optional as long as you can maintain a professional telephone voice. There have to be some advantages to working from home.
- Hire someone to come in regularly to do the \$10 an hour tasks. I advertised, interviewed and hired a high school student to data input for me. Since she takes over the computer I accomplish a lot between supervising her and noticing those things that are often important but neglected. Maybe that person should be doing the laundry and cleaning the house while you focus on your work.
- Make your list of **To Dos** the night before. Decide on the most important 3 to 5 items. Do them and then if you distract yourself with laundry you won't so easily beat yourself up.
- Read Les Hewitt's book *The Power of Focus* or his wife, Fran's *The Power of Focus for Women*.

And, yet there is another angle to consider. What do you consider your *real* work--the house stuff or your career path? You say you become distracted by tasks you don't even like. Do you love and have a passion for your *real* work? Be honest with yourself. We tend to be laser focused when we're on fire with ideas, just alov'in' our work and in *the zone*. Of course, most of us have off days but saniflushing the toilet seldom takes us off target. Perhaps, just perhaps, you haven't found your *real* work, your gift to the world.

The last perspective to consider is psychological. Perhaps your avoidance is fear based. If the practical suggestions in the first paragraph don't work for you and you are sure you have identified a meaningful direction, then consider the last alternative which means doing some self observation, maybe some journaling or talking it over with friends. As Richard Bach said, *The more I want to get something done, the less I call it work.*

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