

What Housework Can Teach You About Weight Loss

Housework is not my favorite thing to do. Well actually, I do enjoy it once I get going; it's that "getting going" part that's hard!

Recently, I saw several parallels in how you manage your house versus how you manage your weight.

During a recent houseclean, I noticed something about our house that I've never thought about before: Our "backrooms" (bedrooms, master bathroom and closets) can get a lot messier than the front rooms (foyer, living room, dining room and kitchen).

I wondered, "Why is that?"

It did not take long for the answer to come.

The front rooms are what the guests see, so I am more motivated to clean them often. The guests don't see the stuff in the back.

But the truth is, the backrooms contribute to our quality of life as much as (or more than) the front rooms!

Here is how I used to live: I used to be in such a hurry most of the time that I would throw clothes on the floor and never put things back where they belonged. I'd have papers strewn on the dining room table.

I'd tell myself, "I'll get to it later."

But "later" only came when the mess was so bad that I couldn't ignore it. It was only then that I felt compelled to do something about it.

Does that sound familiar?

Now the mess did not happen overnight. Rather, it happened as I ignored the small daily messes, which multiplied until they grew big!

The Lord showed me an important lesson in this: "Your private world will eventually show itself publicly."

This statement goes along with a Biblical principle too: "He who is faithful in what is least is faithful also in much. And he who is dishonest in the least is dishonest also in much" (Luke 16:10).

Clutter and mess tends to spread. So if my backrooms are messy, then my mind starts to see that as "normal."

It isn't long before the front rooms start getting messy too to match the new normal.

So it makes sense to focus on getting the backrooms straight first (your private world), which makes it easier to take care of the front rooms (your public world).

Let me share with you 3 other lessons I learned to make housework easier and how you can apply that to your weight loss journey.

Not only will it make the process more enjoyable, but you will love the results!

Lesson No. 1: Get an emotional "Why." Whenever you are reaching for a goal, you must have a reason that matters to you—a reason that touches your heart to change.

For me, a clean, neat, comfortable home contributes to my peace of mind. It just makes me feel better to see things neat and put in order. So I'm willing to put forth the daily effort to keep it that way.

I imagine a guest coming over unexpectedly. I don't want to feel embarrassed about the state of my house nor have to run around and throw things in the closet to give the appearance of neatness (yes, I have done that)!

Here is how this relates to weight loss: Ultimately, it doesn't matter if your doctor or anyone else thinks that you should lose weight. It only matters if you think it will be good for you. Your reason must matter more to you than keeping the old daily habits that led to your weight gain.

If keeping your old, daily habits matter more to you than your "why," then any change you try to make will not last long.

That is where the battle is: how well you manage your day-to-day life.

Lesson No. 2: Live beyond yourself. Your reason may start with you, but it shouldn't end with you! Live your life in service to the Savior. Strive to make a difference in other people's lives.

For me, the state of our household doesn't just affect me; it affects how my husband lives too. I want Mike to live good!

As a single woman years ago, I saw a sign in a mammographer's office. It showed a picture of the technician with her husband and the sign read, "I want you to love your life more because of me."

I thought that was the sweetest sentiment I've ever read! I vowed then that I wanted my future husband to love his life more because of me.

So keeping a clean, comfortable home now is a small way for me to show that I love him. Isn't that a better way of thinking about housework, rather than as a chore that you dread?

When it comes to weight loss, who will you impact because you've chosen to get healthier? Who could be influenced

through your positive example?

One of the changes we've made with the Take Back Your Temple program is to donate a portion of the program proceeds to a Christian charity that helps end childhood hunger worldwide and tells the children about Jesus.

It's one way that we can live beyond ourselves—changing our lives while changing a child's life.

Lesson No. 3: Attend to small things. Earlier, I mentioned how I used to ignore small messes around the house, telling myself, "I'll get to it later."

When the mess become too big to ignore, I went for "The Grand Gesture." I would spend practically all day cleaning up the house. Grand gestures are so exciting!

The house looked so good when I was finished. I just knew that it would stay clean because it looked so good that particular day.

I thought the fact that it looked good would be motivation enough to keep it that way.

But no. We don't live in a museum! Life happens. Clean houses don't stay clean without effort, do they?

Our daily routine resumed the next day. My same old patterns came back. Once again, I ignored the little daily messes. My same "I'll get to it later" attitude never changed. You can guess what happened!

That beautiful, clean house I'd worked so hard for during my "Grand Gesture" day got messy again.

To change permanently, I needed a new attitude.

I needed to stop ignoring the little daily messes.

I read about a lady who said her attitude was to keep her

house “guest ready.” She said that her secret was to stay in motion.

She allowed adequate time to get ready for work. She gave herself enough time to prepare for appointments so that she wasn’t always running around, making small messes due to hurry and lack of planning.

She took time to put things back to where they belonged. And if something did not have a place, then she took time to make one for it.

She walked around the house and paid attention to the state of things. If clothes were on the floor, she put them in the hamper. To her, it was just extra physical exercise.

In other words, her attitude was “Small Steps” daily rather than a “Grand Gesture” occasionally!

The traditional diet mentality is more like a “Grand Gesture.” The attitude is “I’ll follow this diet until I lose the weight, then I’ll go back to eating the way I did before the diet.”

But just as my house ended up messy again with that attitude, so will excess weight come back! So use the small steps approach to keep your house in order and that same process will help you get your weight in order.

In summary, it’s the backroom stuff that often gets neglected when it comes to life.

Eating healthy, exercise, having quiet time with Jesus, studying and applying God’s word, becoming more disciplined—all that stuff is “backroom” stuff that other people don’t see immediately.

But eventually it does affect the front rooms. Diligence is daily.

So strive to become diligent in your private world, and your public world will show the results! {eoa}

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