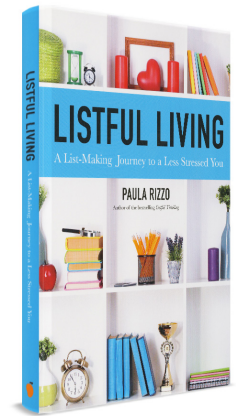


Listful Living

A List-Making Journey to a Less-Stressed You

by **Paula Rizzo**



Contents

Prioritize Your Life

Page 2

Look, Listen, And Learn

Page 2

Design Your Ideal Day

Page 3

How Will You Spend Your Time?

Page 4

Produce Your Self-Care Calendar

Page 4

THE SUMMARY IN BRIEF

If you're overbooked, stressed, and feeling hopeless about it, this book is for you. Life really is what you make it, and you must make it work for you. The only way to do that is to set boundaries. Slowing down is "prioritizing on steroids." Rest is the new hustle.

Listful Living: A List-Making Journey to a Less-Stressed You is intended to guide you to become a calmer, more balanced, and less stressed version of yourself through list making. By showing you how to look at where you are now, where you want to be, and how to meld the two, it walks you through what needs to happen to make sure you have systems in place to be less stressed for good.

Author Paula Rizzo, now an entrepreneurial media trainer, strategist, speaker, and author, was a very busy television producer. Then a burst appendix that went untreated for two days led to being off work for six weeks. This experience re-shaped how she views everything. She now lives her life with more intention and more mindfulness about the decisions she makes and where she spends her time. List-making helps her do it.

IN THIS SUMMARY, YOU WILL LEARN:

- How to design the low-stress life you'd like to have.
- How to reduce your stress through list-making.
- The most important list you can make.
- Practical ways to prioritize your time.

Prioritize Your Life

Before you can dive into this work, you need to get a baseline and know where you are right now. What matters to you? What are you tolerating? What's working? What's not?

What are your top priorities in life? Sleep? Money? Nutrition? Travel? Work? Meditation? Family? List your top ten priorities in order, most to least important. What's number one? Don't feel like you have to get the "right" answer. Draw a pie chart illustrating how much time you're currently giving your top five priorities. Be honest—don't judge yourself.

List the activities and commitments you said "yes" to this year in each area of your life. Then list those you said "no" to.

Your Productivity Style

Determine what productivity style works for you. If you're not a morning person, don't try to become one. It will make you cranky and resentful. Once you understand your productivity style, you can arrange your work schedule accordingly.

Set a timer for five minutes and freely write down any words or phrases that come to your mind regarding your productivity today. Then set a timer for fifteen minutes and free write about why you feel this way. Be very specific. What is working or not working when it comes to your productivity and stress levels?

Look, Listen, And Learn

Knowing the environment that will optimize your productivity and make you feel less stressed will help you cross tasks from your to-do list with ease. Use your senses to determine the optimal environment for you. Chart what you see, hear, smell, and touch in your work environment. Be honest about how every aspect makes you feel.

The Golden Hour Of Productivity

Answer these questions in writing to determine when you are most productive: How productive do you feel in the morning, afternoon, and evening? What time do you start to feel sluggish during the day? What kind of work do you like to do in each part of the day? Look at your answers—what's your most productive time of day?

Pick a task that you've been avoiding from your to-do list and write it down. Then set a timer for twenty-five minutes. If you get distracted, you must stop the clock. Try your

hardest to focus on only that one task for the time allotted. Take note of when your mind wanders and write it down. If twenty-five minutes doesn't work for you, try twenty or fifteen. Record how you feel about this exercise.

There's probably a big difference between how long a task will actually take you and how long you think it will take you. Find out how long specific tasks take you by timing yourself. Before you begin, write down your prediction and when you're done with the task, write down the actual time. You might be surprised!

Burnout Syndrome Is Real

"Burnout syndrome," an official medical diagnosis, results from chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. Characteristics include feelings of energy depletion or exhaustion, increased mental distance from one's job or feelings of negativism or cynicism related to one's job, and reduced professional efficacy.

But stress isn't all bad; it only becomes a problem when you don't give your body a chance to recover from a challenging situation.

Visualize a scene from the last two months when you felt your stress levels were through the roof. Describe it using your five senses in ten minutes of writing freely. How did it feel? What made it so stressful for you? Jot down a few words or phrases that come to mind.

Make four lists: stress on the body, stress on the mind, stress on your habits, and stress on your performance. Write down your symptoms in each category.

Is there a recurring theme in the stressful moments of your life? Write out what commonalities you see in the situations you've listed, considering who was there, what you were doing, where you were, when it occurred, and why it occurred.

What is your de-stress style? Self-care is kind things you do for yourself. The benefits are immense: it will lead to an improved mood, boost productivity, and send your optimism soaring. Small, deliberate actions can feed your mind, body, and soul. List your current self-care activities, including how often you do them and how they make you feel.

Your Blue-Sky Intentions—Where Are You Going?

This part of the book is about where you're going. Don't worry about how you'll get there. Instead, focus on how you'd like your life to feel and look. Let your creativity roam!

Design Your Ideal Day

Write about how you'd like to feel when you wake up in the morning—how you want to feel, not what you are feeling right now. List words to describe specifically how you'd like to start your day.

What would you like your evenings to look like in the future? Write out all the words that describe that moment as you would like it to be, with all the details.

Now, chart out your dream scenarios. This can be a work schedule or a home itinerary. Fill in when you'll do work, when you'll play, when you'll take breaks, etc. Arrange your scenarios by time of day—morning, afternoon, and evening—day of the week, and weeks in a month.

Choose Your Friends Wisely

Notice how you feel when you're around certain people, rather than how you think you should feel. List the people who make you feel the calmest and most stressed out at work, at home, and in your community.

Who would you like to see more of? List those in your personal life you'd like to see and how often. Then list the people you'd like to check in with to grow your business or career.

A Matter of Health

Staying healthy should be at the top of your list, but it takes work. In a perfect world, what activities or appointments will keep you healthy? How often would you do them and check in on your health matters?

Determine How Your Time Is Best Spent

Your “yes” list! This bucket list might be the most important list you write. It's the list of the things you want to make time for in your life. Categorize your list (work, home, finances, books, etc.)

Then create a “no-thank-you” list of the activities you'd like to cut out of your life altogether or do less of. Perhaps these are things that used to bring you joy but don't any longer. Be honest.

Now list out the things you absolutely love doing that get you charged up. Label each one to indicate how often you want to do them.

Renew with self-care. Self-care is kindness that you aim toward yourself. It doesn't have to be a big, grand thing. Self-care isn't a selfish act. It's an act of nurturing your

body, mind, or soul. What would feel good to you? An extra five minutes in bed in the morning? Getting a massage? The possibilities are endless. List them.

Hobbies you love to do can enhance your self-care routine. What are some hobbies or skills you've always wanted to learn that would make you feel invigorated? List them.

Gratitude List

Off the top of your head, list three things that you're grateful for today. Focus on things that seem ordinary. Taking time out of your day to write down what you're grateful for will retrain your brain. Evolution has conditioned us to be highly biased toward negative information because it could be a threat to our well-being. So, we must make an effort to focus on what we're grateful for.

If a daily gratitude list seems like a chore, pause when you realize that something has just happened that you're grateful for in the moment. Awareness is the name of the game. Keep this up and it will condition your brain to look for those moments. Then write it down—anywhere. Build this gratitude habit.

Your Passport To Stress-Free Living

This section of the book fits the puzzle pieces together so you can design the life you want with as little stress as possible. You have complete control here. Simple changes can make a big difference.

To begin, compare your “yes” list with your list of what you want on your “yes” list going forward. List out what you'd need to do to make sure the things that stressed you out from the first list don't end up on your plate again.

What Is Your #1 Priority Right Now?

Write down here what your biggest priority is right now. This is the lens that you'll look through for every decision you make going forward. It may seem dramatic, but it's freeing to know your priority. If it doesn't align with a task, then you say no to that task as much as you can.

Say “no” to things you don't want to do and that won't serve you in any way, and practice ways to do so out loud.

How Will You Spend Your Time?

At work. You can decide to only do certain things at specific times and/or on specific days of the week. This takes the guesswork out of scheduling. Too many options lead to

indecision and procrastination. Make a chart of the days of the week and fill in your ideal work week. Take into account your productivity style.

Then do the same for months. Are there recurring meetings, events, or conferences that you want to make sure to make time for? Write down what your ideal weeks of a month look like.

At home. The next exercise is to fill in your ideal home week. When do you want to cook dinner at home versus go out? When do you want to entertain friends? Who do you want to see and how often?

When do you feel like your most productive self? Before lunch? After it? List out what times of the day you'll do certain tasks.

You have to factor in some time to recharge your soul, rest, and recuperate. What helps you to relax and refresh? Fill in a chart or calendar with what you'd like to do on a weekly and monthly basis to recharge.

Map Out Your Vacation Time

How many vacations would you like to take this year, and with whom? List out the locations you'd like to visit, who you'd like to go with, and for how long. Be realistic.

Pick one of those trips and write out what needs to happen for you to plan it. Then pick one thing on this list that you can do this week to get closer to having this trip happen. Put time in your calendar to do this task right now.

Social Hour

List your priority people, how often you'll see them, what

you'll do, and potential dates. Then pick one of the people and write out what needs to happen for you to plan out your time together. Pick one thing on the list that you can do this week to plan to see this priority person. And put time in your calendar to do this task right now.

Produce Your Self-Care Calendar

This is all about you! It's your time. Look back to your self-care lists and schedule time for yourself. When you see a self-care activity on your calendar, it's key to treat it like you would any other appointment and respect it.

Keep The Momentum Going

This is where the rubber meets the road. It's time to get serious about not only implementing the strategies you've laid out but also keeping the momentum going. Make a list of strategies to help you do so.

Celebrate!

Take a moment to look back at what you've done, because it's a big deal. Write down a prize you'll give yourself for finishing the book. Put it on your calendar so you can claim your reward!



Paula Rizzo is an Emmy-award winning television producer, best-selling author and a media trainer and strategist. She coaches experts and executives to perform better on camera and produce their own videos. She's the founder of ListProducer.com and the co-creator of Lights Camera Expert - an online course geared towards helping entrepreneurs, authors and experts get media attention.

Listful Living: A List-Making Journey to a Less-Stressed You by Paula Rizzo ©2019 Paula Rizzo. Summarized by permission of the publisher, Mango Publishing Group. 208 pages, ISBN 978-1642500479 Summary copyright ©2020 by Soundview Book Summaries®