**Getting Things Done**

**An Introduction**

This is my first blog post about a system of life and time management that I stumbled across a few years back. I had been an advocate of the Stephen Covey approach which helped me identify my mission in life, live it through my roles by creating specific goals for each role and then schedule activities in my week to help live out each goal. That approach is contained in two key books by Stephen Covey (you can order then through Amazon.com or your local book store): The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People and First Things First.

Getting Things Done (or GTD as it is widely called) is an approach to action management that was created by David Allen – the author of three book on the subject: Getting Things Done, Read for Anything and Making It All Work.

This approach has helped me go beyond the top down approach advocated by Stephen Covey (ie. you start with your mission, identify your roles, then your goals and finally schedule your activities). While there is still merit in this approach, David Allen has introduced a bottom up approach – it is all about handling commitments and demands on your time and energy as they arise. It leads to higher levels – as he ends up talking about not just next actions and projects but also responsibilities, objectives, vision and values.

My website contains a two part presentation that I recently shared with the 60 leaders at our local church. Take a look at the Productivity page on the Youth Ministry Resourcer website and the first four downloads on the page will give you the presentation and handouts for each session. It is explores both the top-down (Covey) and bottom-up (Allen) approaches that I have just described.

David Allen has a website with plenty of free items as well as a newsletter that you can subscribe to. Take a look at: http://www.davidco.com/

**My Paper System**

David Allen in Getting Things Done, or Making It All Work does not dictate what system you need to use to apply his principles. That is left up to the individual.

My system is largely paper-based – I spent some years with a digital system and then opted to go back towards a paper based approach as it integrated into my use of a notebook and journalling.

Please download a document containing my system (My GTD System) so you can follow along as I describe each page:

1. Weekly Planner

This is an adaptation of what I have used for years from my exposure to Stephen Covey. I still like to keep my Mission, Roles and Goals in front of me – even though I also work with the 6 Horizons of Focus that David Allen teaches. The “Weekly Priorities section” are the big rocks that I need to pay attention to in the week ahead. You will see that for each day I have a “Day Tasks” section at the bottom of the page – this is not my main task list (that comes later) but just a note about things that HAVE to be completed on specific days in the coming weeks – it is more of a “note to self on a specific day” reminder list than a genuine to do list. I am rather strict in only putting appointments on the weekly planner. There are some tasks that get scheduled but you will see that GTD encourages you to batch complete tasks so many of those are done when the context is right and time and energy are suitable to the task.

2. Projects List

This is a listing of each of the projects I have on my plate right now – I have two pages at present with things like: (1) Write Book Chapter for Zondervan; (2) Develop Youth Pastor Training Track, (3) Plan Supernatural Series for Sundays at Youth. Each project is then given a next action to be completed – sometimes I identify the next 2 to 4 actions steps, but often it is just the next one that needs to be completed to bring the project one step close to completion.

3. Next Actions List

This is the heart of the GTD system. The emphasis is on action management and you continually ask what the next task is on a commitment that you have agreed to, or an idea that come into your mind, and you enter that in your action management system which is kinda like a task list on steroids – the secret is to come up with a next action (something special and concrete you can do) and then allocate a context to it. So you only think about the action when you are in the right context – you no longer look through long lists of tasks to find something you can actually do (ie. you do find yourself at the shop wondering what you were supposed to buy because you just look at your @errands list and see it written there). I have the following contexts (and you will see that this system manages my whole life and not just work or church related stuff):

@Calls (phone calls I need to make).

@Computer (this is stuff I need to do when I sit in front of my computer – some people split this into online/offline but I am seldom not connected to the internet so they are merged).

@Office (this is pretty much for things I need to follow up on when I am at church – things to give to people, stuff to get, etc).

@Calendar (this is for stuff that I need to get scheduled in my diary – meetings to set, events to attend, etc).

@Meetings (this is a list of meetings that I have schedule or things I want to bounce off people – this is working alongside a later page I will describe – my Agenda list).

@Home (this is a list of things that need to be done once I am around the home. They could relate to work or church, but they can only be done at home).

@Errands (this is a list of all the things that I need to get when I am out and about, or buy, post to collect, etc.

@Waiting For (this is a list of things that I can’t do anything about until I get a respond or something back from someone else. This makes sure I don’t forget about things that are suspended).

Another context that GTD recommends is an @Someday/Maybe list – and I had it on this page, but it has moved to its own page. See later.

4. Agendas List

This is a list of all the people that I connect with regularly – my wife and kids are even on this page, including all my staff, key church leaders, people I am mentoring, the 5 youth pastors in surrounding churches that I meet with and a few other guys who are mentoring me – this is a place to make a note of issues that I need to raise with them or things I need to get for them when I next see them. I am very structured in when I see people and plan these into my diary a few weeks ahead at time. Some are weekly appointments, other bi-weekly, some monthly and others ad hoc. So the name is in the left column and notes in the right column down the page.

5. Ideas and Insights List

This page gives me a place to capture sayings and quotes that I don’t want to forget. I type these up each week in some time set aside in my diary to do this – usually on a Monday morning.

6. Prayer Journal

This started a while back as one of my contexts on my Next Actions list page but is has now become a page on it’s own. It is helping me to be more proactive with actually prayer for things that I commit to pray for.

7. Someday/Maybe List

I mentioned this earlier – but it is anything that comes up that I am not ready to make a project right now. It might be dreams, ideas, things to do one day – but they all get capture and lurk there until I review them and decide to either delete them as wild ideas or turn them into projects.

8. My Responsibilities

This is quite a new list I am working on. It is a list of all the things that I feel responsible for – in my different roles and things that I need to do daily, weekly and monthly. It gets a bit nitty gritty orientated, but again it means that I don’t have to try to remember things – my system reminds me about them. Many of these things get scheduled in my diary and reminders are set there for me. Here is my list at present:

\* Home: Wash the Dishes; Take out the Rubbish Bins; Help Around the Home; Maintain the Property; Handle Medical Aid

\* Consultancy: Revise Material Regularly, Create CDs, Submit Invoices

\* Personal: Eat Healthy, Walk, Run, Play Squash

\* Community: Get to Know Neighbours, Help with Vigilance, Respond to Crises

\* Pastor: Pray, Read the Word, Provide Spiritual Direction

\* Youth Pastor: Oversee the Vision, Empower staff, Liaise with Elders, Oversee Adult Leaders, Lead a Connect Group

\* Student: Keep Reading, Summarise Books, Listen to Podcasts

\* Mentor: Set Meetings, Identify Issues to Work On, Follow Up on Issues, Create Accountability Structures, Share Resource

\* Daily: Devotions, Help at Home, Connect with Kids, Listen to Podcasts, Read

\* Weekly: Set Weekly Goals, Visit Blogs, Type up Notes, Set Mentor Meetings, Listen to Sermon Podcasts, Charge Headset

\* Monthly : Set Monthly Goals, Pay Accounts, Review and Revise Budget,

\* Yearly: Set Annual Goals, Tax Return, Clear Out Files (3 Jan, 1 July)

9. My Weekly Review

The secret to GTD is the Weekly Review. You must look through the whole system each week and see if anything is falling through the cracks – cross things off – to be honest I am so thorough in the week that my weekly review is not difficult, although I have the following list that I am now using and it is adding a lot of value:

\* Review Planner: Mission, Roles, Goals

\* Process Paper: Inbox to Zero, Receipts

\* Process Notes: Ideas, Podcasts

\* Review Calendar: Last Week, Next Week

\* Mind Dump: Thoughts, Walk around, Family, People, House

\* Review Lists: Projects, Next Actions, Agendas, Someday/Maybe, Waiting For, Prayer, Ideas

\* Review Email: Waiting For, Action, Read

\* Review Habits: Time management, People management, Work/rest balance, Devotions,

\* Review Learning: Books, Podcasts, Articles

\* Review Entertainment: Movies to watch, TV series to watch, books to read

\* Review Diet: How am I eating? What are I over/under doing?

\* Review Character: Fruit of the Spirit, Integrity, Keeping Commitments

\* Review System: Are there areas for Improvement?

\* Preview Week: Down Time, Family Time, Weekly To Do List

\* Enjoy Reward: Have a Cuppachino

You will see that the document contains my review items and there is a column in the left to check when I have done each step.

Next, we will look at the support items that work alongside these printed pages.

**My Email System**

My email system is also set up using a GTD approach so you won’t see email as a task anywhere on my task list – it is a self-contained system that has the following features:

1. I presently use Windows Mail on my computer to download and process my email. I do have a GMail account, but I have not yet transitioned to processing all my email online. That maybe an areas that I move into during the next year.

2. I do not use my inbox as a filing tray – any email that arrives in my inbox is processed and moved to one of my action folders. I don’t leave post in my physical postbox in the mall – I collect mail each week and process it. So why should I act any differently with my electronic mail? Here are the action folder that I manage:

A. Action – these are email that require action within a day or two.

B. Read – these are emails that contain content that I need to read some time.

C. Someday – these are emails that I might like to follow up on at some time in the future.

D. Waiting For – these are emails that act as reminders about things I am waiting for from others.

E. Projects – these are email linked to projects – each current project has it’s own email folder.

F. Reference – these are email that I may need to refer to sometime in the future (I have categories are mostly based around my roles in life (Husband; Father; Pastor; Mentor; Student; Computer.

3. I get my inbox to zero every day – each day I make sure every email I have received is processed – that does not always mean I reply, although often it does – but I either delete it, file it, mark it to read, or send it to an action folder or a waiting for folder.

4. I have a well structured reference folder system so stuff is filed where I want it and easily accessible. GTD suggests using the search facility more than trying to figure out where to file things but I am still too ordered to go with a free flowing system.

5. I schedule time to process email each day – one slot in the morning and one in the afternoon – I am trying not to keep checking email compulsively throughout the day. Okay, so that is the theory or goal!

6. I reply to every email I receive. One of my pet peeves is people don’t reply to an email they obviously receive. It might just be a short note – but it is a reply! My GTD-style email action management system helps with this commitment because emails are not moved into my Reference section until they have been handled appropriately.

7. I track my social networking (Facebook) and Twitter posting through email. I have them both set to send me email updates about people who choose to follow me on Twitter, posts that are related to me on Facebook, etc.

8. I use a freeware program called Digsby to track my Twitter account (to read who I am following and make tweets) and also to track my various email accounts. It saves me having to check each account online. It sits in the Notifications area of the Taskbar in my Windows computers.

**My Computer System**

I have adapted my computer to reflect what I have learnt from the GTD system:

1. My Desktop

I have created an interesting computer desktop layout that helps me get organised with files and stuff that I have downloaded, articles I need to print (I create short cuts and place them on the desktop in the print section and then just bang them off when I am near a computer), files to transfer to my desktop, presentations to run, files for projects that I am working on, articles to update as new blog posts are posted, stuff to watch or listen to, etc. I have uploaded two screen grabs as examples: Older and Newer.

2. My Filing System

My main data is stored in My Documents - where I have GTD related folders such as:

A. Action (for items that require a next action from my part)

B. Listen (for audio files that I need to listen to)

C. Watch (for video files that I need to watch)

D. Projects (each project I am working on has it’s own folder)

E. Read (for documents I need to read before filing)

F. Share (for items I need to pass on to people)

G. Transfer (for items I need to transfer to another PC)

H. Update (for items that I am continuously updating and don’t want to hunt for all the time);

I. Waiting For (for items I can’t finalise until I get something from someone else)

J. Print (for items that need to be printed and then read or processed)

K. Reference folders - then there is my main set of reference folders, including (Church, Computer, Consulting, GTD, igniteYOUTH, Power (were all my presentations are stored), Personal, Resource (this is my main folder with resource material in sub-folders), Sermons and Software (where all my utilities are stored for reuse or for sharing with others).

3. My Search System

David Allen suggests that you have a simple A-Z filing system and use the power of the processor to find what you are looking for. I find my work is too interconnected for that approach and use a comprehensive filing system instead but I do use the power of Google Desktop to find what I am looking for on my computer. It is like having Google search your hard drive and IMMEDIATELY help you find what you are looking for. A double tap of the Ctrl key brings up a search box and after typing some key words you can either click on the file you want or open up the search results in a browser. You can download it from: http://desktop.google.com/

**My Blog Reading**

I have automated my blog visiting and reading by using Google Reader which brings new posts from about 30 different blogs to me which I process through about three times a week. It is so much easier than visiting each site individually. I have a list of all the blogs that I follow (if you are interested in taking a look – many are focussed on Productivity) at my website: http://www.ymresourcer.com – look at the bottom of the Links page.

**Further Reading**

In case this has all just whet your appetite and while waiting for your Kalahari.net or Amazon.com orders of David Allen’s books to arrive you are desperate to read more, well there is help at hand! Buy I do want to stress that there is no substitute to reading both the key books: Getting Things Done and Making It All Work.

Visit The Youth Ministry Resourcer website and check out the Productivity page. There is a summary of the Getting Things Done book that I have written. There are links to numerous articles written by David Allen or others; including the GTD workflow diagrams which really help you to visualise the whole process. There is also an audio interview with David Allen about his newest book, Making It All Work, to download and listen to on the Links page under the Time Management sub-section.

**Next Actions vs Projects**

Everyone has their own idea about the most critical part of GTD and the GTD guys themselves will probably agree that it is the Weekly Review. Hard to argue with that – because the time each week when you get to make sure you are CLEAN, CURRENT and CREATIVE is a powerful time of getting on top of all your commitments.

But in my journey it was not the weekly review that took me beyond dabbling with GTD, but setting up a Project List. Somehow I managed to implement the whole GTD system and never actually got the distinction between Next Actions and Projects. I had all my lists set up and knew about the Project list but did not see it for what it really is. Let me describe each of these lists in detail:

1. The Next Actions List. A Next Action is a specific task or action that I need to take on any commitment that comes my way. I’m meeting with someone and I promise to send them an article to read – what do I do with that commitment? If I don’t record it somewhere in an action management system that I can trust I find that my mind keeps reminding me all the time that I have to do it – and mostly I am reminded when I can’t do anything about it – like when I am having dinner or when I am out shopping. When I should be using my mind to think about things (ie. how I can improve something or create something new), and than of things – it will keep reminding me because it suspects that I am about to drop the ball. GTD helps out in this regard but getting us to keep a Next Actions list – a list of everything we need to do! And no, this is not the same as a To Do list that we have traditionally been told to keep – with 1-2-3 or A-B-C prioritisation system. The problem there is that we keep on looking through long lists of things – most of which we can’t do because we are not in the right CONTEXT to do it. And that is where GTD helps out: our Next Actions are groups in Contexts – like @Work or @Phone or @Errands, etc. I have described this more fully in my second GTD post – check that out for more details.

2. The Project List. Now, here is why in my experience the Project List was the big kicker and what actually helped me plug a huge hole in my system. My life is not just a series of unrelated actions. I lead a ministry, I lead a team, I have responsibilities at home, etc. I am actually a project manager – and there is no way that I could manage all my projects successfully if my sole focus was on the miriad of little actions that I need to take. Plus, when I am finished one next action and I cross it off my list, how do I know what is the next thing that needs to be done? That is where the Project list comes in! A project is any commitment that requires more than one next action to complete. Planning an event is not a next action but a project which consists of a series of interrelated next actions. And the project list enables us to define and track all the items that need to be done for the each project we are moving towards completion.

A good project list will ensure that you describe what the project looks like when it is completed (this is similar to Stephen Covey’s Begin With The End in Mind principle). Then it makes us think about the next couple of steps that will move the project towards completion. I don’t always set out to list every step towards completion – I define the next 2 or 3 steps and start working on those next actions (and I make sure EVERY Next Action starts with a Verb – ie. Call for a Quote). Then I transfer those next actions from my Project List – where the whole project will be tracked – to my Next Actions list and start completing them. When I do my weekly review (or in my case mid-weekly too) I go back to the Project List and define or find more items that need to be tacked and keep transferring them to my Next Actions list. When the project is completed I can delete it from my list and move on to the next project.

When I got my mind around this distinction between Next Actions and Projects I really found that GTD started to work for me! In fact, in a future blog I will describe who these two steps are actually the first of 6 steps or Horizon’s of focus – that is a critical part of understanding how the whole system works!

**Horizons of Focus**

Getting Things Done is based around getting clarity about 6 levels of our life. The analogy of a plane on a run way is used. There are runway items – those are our current Actions; then the plane lifts off and move to 10,000 feet where the focus is on current Projects, then we lift to 20,000 fee and consider our areas of Responsibility, then we move to 30,000 feet and we focus on our Goals, then we move to 40,000 feet and we define our Vision, and finally at 50,000 we have the big picture view of our lives – or our purpose and our principles.

David Allen in Making it All Work describes the 6 levels like this:

Runway: Action – Current activities and action steps

10,000 feet: Projects – Tasks expected to take 12 months or less to complete

20,000 feet: Areas of Responsibility – Dfferent “hats” you wear in your life and what’s expected of you in each.

30,000 feet: Goals – Targets for yourself to complete within the next 1 – 3 years.

40,000 feet: Vision – The life you see for yourself within the next 5 – 10 years.

50,000 feet: Purpose & Principles – What you want your life to mean and how you want to be seen by others.

Here is another description of the 6 levels (starting at the top and working down):

50,000 ft is the ‘big picture’ view. Why do you exist? The primary purpose for anything provides the core definition of what its ‘word’ really is. It is the ultimate job description. In other words, your agreements at 50,000 ft. are the description of your life’s purpose. Once your 50,000 ft agreements are clear, you then start determining your agreements at the lower Horizons of Focus:

40,000 ft: Vision. What it will look, sound, feel like with successful implementation of your long term visions. This is a picture of where you want to be 3 to 5 years from now.

30,000 ft: Goals and Objectives. What do you need to accomplish within the next 1 to 2 years to make your vision happen?

20,000 ft: Areas of Focus and Responsibility. Important spheres of work and life to be maintained at standards to “keep engine running”. eg. What is the standard Health you’d like to maintain? How about your standard for your education, family life, spirituality etc. so that you can achieve your 30,000 ft and 40,000 ft goal.

10,000 ft: Projects or Outcomes you want to achieve that require more than one action and which can be completed within a year.

Runway Actions: Next physical, visible actions to take on any project or other outcome.

Trent Hamm who runs The Simple Dollar website posted the following description of the 6 horizons based on David Allen’s book, Making it All Work:

Getting Perspective

Allen looks at six different key elements of getting perspective over one’s situation. Allen’s basic argument here is that perspective helps you clearly distinguish the important from the unimportant and makes the elements of control you have over your time that much more effective.

Getting Perspective on the Runway: Next Actions

Allen starts off at the most basic place: what is your next action? In other words, if you’re sitting there ready to do something, what exactly are you going to do? Some of the time, this choice is very easy – you’ll merely engage whatever fire needs to be put out at the moment – but at other times, the choice is profound. Will you work on that PowerPoint presentation or play catch with your son in the yard? The choice becomes much less clear very quickly, and that’s why it pays to have a higher level of perspective.

Getting Perspective at Ten Thousand Feet: Projects

From the immediate action, Allen steps back a bit to look at projects, which he defines as collections of discrete actions that produce an outcome and can be completed within a year (although usually less). For example, my garden might be a project, or teaching my son how to write his letters. Usually, the projects you have on the table all have an immediate action to offer, but how important is that immediate action? It really depends on the relative importance of the project. Do I define it as more important to work on my son’s Qs or to get those tomatoes in the ground? Personally, I view the writing project as more important and would help my son before heading outside – however, perspective is important here, too. If my son wants to go outside and play in the yard, or if he’s taking a nap, that’s the perfect time for me to grab the trowel and head out back.

Getting Perspective at Twenty Thousand Feet: Areas of Focus and Responsibility

What aspects of my life need regular maintenance? That’s the question at this level – what are your areas of focus? More importantly, what areas take clear priority over the other ones – can you establish a hierarchy? I have several, with my writing and my family clearly on top of the pile. I also see the value of reflecting on this carefully, because if you truly understand the areas of responsibility in life and understand how they rank and relate to one another, it becomes much easier to just automatically prioritize smaller projects and tasks.

Getting Perspective at Thirty Thousand Feet: Goals and Objectives

Beyond your areas of responsibility are your wider goals. What do you want to achieve with your life, particularly in the next two to five years? What will you have accomplished? In many ways, I feel like I accomplished very little for the first twenty seven years of my life. I feel as though I began accomplishing things in the last three years – having children, launching The Simple Dollar, writing a book that’s already begun to turn up in unexpected places. What’s my eventual goal, the one that will probably cover the next few years of my life? I want to push some interesting changes in how people are able to access personal finance education for all ages (something you’ll be hearing about in the future but is already in the works). What Allen is driving at here is how exactly are you going to make your mark on the world? If you don’t know, it’s time to start thinking about it.

Getting Perspective at Forty Thousand Feet: Vision

So what’s beyond your life goals? Allen next moves onto what kind of life those goals, if successful, lead to. Let’s say I achieve every major goal I have set out for the next few years. Where will I be? What will come next? How much further can I reach? Do the goals I have in place for the next two to five years put me in a place that I actually want to be? If so, which of those goals are the most effective at putting me in a good place for the long haul?

Getting Perspective at Fifty Thousand Feet: Purpose and Principles

From there, we zoom out to your whole life. What principles do you live by? What is the purpose of your life? What do you hope to accomplish with your life, and are you actually setting long-term goals to get there? What do you want written as your epitaph?

Read the full Review of Making It All Work at the Simple Dollar website: <http://www.thesimpledollar.com/2009/01/04/review-making-it-all-work/>

**Processing Notes**

At some point I realised that I was taking copious notes in team meetings, at conferences, in church and other places and they were not being integrated into my system. I read a few articles about how GTD applies to note taking and began to develop an approach that worked for me.

1. Using a Notebook – I spent some time in an anti-paper-electronic-zone but found that I was missing using a pen and went back to using a quality journal and gel pen that I keep with me at all times. For every team leadership event that is coming I will start a page and use it to jot down notes for the agenda items that will be covered. Then during the meeting, I will start a new page in which I will take brief notes – particularly about things that need to be followed up or commitments people have made to take action after the meetings.

2. Creating Helpful Symbols – I want to be able to glance at the page when I look back later and not have to read the whole thing – so I have developed some symbols that help me. I use a small checkbox and put letters next to it to indicate what category of action item it is. Here are some of the categories I currently use:

NA – This is for next actions that still need to be more clearly defined.

WF – This if for items that I am waiting for from people.

E – This is for errands – ie. things that I need to buy or get.

C – This is for phone calls that I need to make.

A – This is for agenda items – in GTD an agenda is something you speak to someone about.

These are written in the margins – either top/bottom or left/right margins so I can see them at a glance.

3. Other Symbols to Use - I have read about people using symbols beyond what I have mentioned here – i.e: (a) If an item is particularly important or insightful, put a star next to it. (b) If an item requires further research or resolution, put a question mark next to it. (c) If an item requires follow-up, put a ballot box (open square) next to it. When the item is completed, I check it off. (d) If you assign a follow-up item to someone, put an open circle next to it (similar to the ballot box but a circle rather than a square) and indicate who is responsible – when the item is completed, check it off.

4. Processing the Next Actions - I then need to work through my note book and transfer these next actions to my Next Actions page – otherwise they stay hidden away in my notebook. It is important to schedule time to review your notes – ideally it should be done during your Weekly Review.

5. Completing the Next Actions - When I have attended to the item I will put a tick in the text box – both in my Next Actions list and also in my Notebook – so that when I look back at a previous meeting I don’t have to try and figure out whether or not I have completed the next actions.

**My Weekly Review**

The GTD guys say that if you are not doing a weekly review you are doing dong GTD. That is true – you cannot downplay the importance of a regular weekly time (for me it takes about an hour) where you get Clean, Clear and Current. Here are the things that I do in my Weekly Review:

1. Review Planner: I look through my Mission, Roles and Goals (the three key features of my weekly planner) and ensure that I am living my mission.

2. Process Paper: I make sure that my physical inboxes are empty. I process all my receipts and file them and any other items that need to be kept in my filing system.

3. Process Notes: I work through my paper journal and review any notes that I have taken in the past week, looking for items that need to be followed up on.

4. Review Calendar: I look back at the last week and identify calendar items that need to be moved forward to the coming week. I also fill in my weekly planner for the coming week at this time – I create calendar items for my goals for each role and also transfer items from my electronic calendar to my paper calendar at this point.

5. Mind Dump: I spend some time dumping anything that is on my mind – any thoughts that have not yet being captured and transferred to my system, I walk around and see if anything is out of place in my world, I think about each person in my family and whether there is anything that I need to follow up with them or do for them, I do the same for people in my work environment and I look at anything that needs to be done in the home – this is not the time to do it all, but to make a note of it and create next actions.

6. Review Lists: This is the critical part – I go through my Projects list and check off any completed items, create new items and check off completed projects. I go through my Next Actions list and check off anything that is completed, I look through my Agendas List and see if there is anything that I need to raise with people that is not listed, I look at my Someday/Maybe list and see whether there is an items that needs to move into my Project or Next Actions list, I look at my Waiting For list and see what I am waiting for from others and whether I need to do anything about it, and I look at my Prayer list and make sure it is up to date.

7. Review Email: I look through my email to see what action needs to be taken, I look at the Waiting For items and see what is lurking in my to Read folder. I keep my email up to date on a daily basis so it is never a major feature in my Weekly Review!

8. Preview Week: I briefly look ahead at my week to ensure I have enough down time and family time scheduled and I identify what are my weekly priorities and things I have to get done in the week.

9. Review Habits: I think through my effectiveness in handing my time and projects and I evaluate my work and rest balance and the state of my daily devotions.

10. Review Learning: I go through books that I am reading and check on progress and flag books that I need to be reading, I also burn a new CD of podcasts to listen to in my car and I look through the articles in my Read folder on my laptop.

11. Review Entertainment: I think through the movies, books, and TV shows that I want to consume in the coming week. I also look out for areas of imbalance where I am consuming too much in any of these areas.

12. Review Diet: I briefly think through whether my current diet is ensurng that I get enough fibre, vegetables and fruit, not overdoing my sugar intake and getting the vitamins I need to stay sharp and focussed.

13. Review Character: I spend some time checking on the fruit of the Spirit in my life (including love, patience, kindness, joy, etc), I evaluate my practise of spiritual gifts, and I evaluate whether I am being Christlike in my speech, attitudes and behaviours.

14. Review System: I spend a bit of time looking at the big picture of my GTD system – to check that I have all the lists that I need and I make a note of areas that I need to improve in.

15. Enjoy Reward: This is the best part – I make myself a cup cuppachino as a reward.