



# Get your house in order

By Julie Parker

**W**hat do you think of when I say, “get your house in order”? It may mean getting your financial affairs in order. Or it may mean finding some solutions to some ongoing problems you might have.

Another meaning to “get your house in order” is to improve or correct the way you do things. And this is a meaning that I find powerful.

Many people are faced with the question at some point in life: “how can I be happier?” They know they don’t feel as happy, satisfied... passionate as they would like to be. But, when asked by therapists and friends “specifically, what do you want?” they are at a loss. What they truly desire seems so long ignored that they can’t even see it anymore.

For those people, might I suggest that it is time to “get your house in order”?

I have developed a process that can be helpful in creating a happier life. It’s called “getting your house in order” and it goes like this. It can be used for home or for your practice or elsewhere.

Allocate about an hour of your time and find a quiet space. Equip yourself with a pad and pen.

You are going on a tour of your “house”.

At the top of each page, write the name of each room in your house. There will be “front porch”, “living room”, “kitchen”, “master bedroom”, “kid’s bedroom”, etc.

Using a whole page for each room of your house, draw a table with four rows and four columns (Figure 1).

Starting on your first page, consider the following questions when contemplating the space you hold in that particular room of your house. Enter your answers under the column “Current Reality”.

- *What is your mood when you are in this room?*
  - *What are you doing when in this room?*
  - *What are you thinking when in this room?*
  - *What are you feeling when in this room?*
- To give you an example, someone who is unhappy with aspects of their life may have answers similar to the following:

## Living room

- **What is your mood when you are in this room?** *Tired.*
- **What are you doing when in this room?** *Watching television.*
- **What are you thinking when in this room?** *Nothing much. Maybe that I should be using my time better.*
- **What are you feeling when in this room?** *A little disappointed.*

## Kitchen

- **What is your mood when you are in this room?** *Frustrated as making meals is a constant chore.*
- **What are you doing when in this room?** *Cooking meals, eating.*
- **What are you thinking when in this room?** *What to eat/prepare/shop for.*
- **What are you feeling when in this room?** *Impatient and a little resentful.*

## Backyard

- **What is your mood when you are in this room?** *Okay... neither a positive or a negative mood.*
- **What are you doing when in this room?** *Taking garbage out, weeding.*
- **What are you thinking when in this room?** *I wish I had more time to spend out here and make it nicer and better maintained.*
- **What are you feeling when in this room?** *Guilty for neglecting this space.*

Once you’ve moved through each room and area of your house and made comments about the space you hold in each of them, consider what a happy, successful and optimistic space you could hold instead. Close your eyes and imagine a happier reality for yourself and what environment you need to create to foster those feelings of happiness. Enter these comments on the second column titled “Happy Reality”. For example, this could be:

## Living room

- **What is your mood when you are in this room?** *Excited to spend time doing anything I choose.*
- **What are you doing when in this room?** *Reading, having friends over, watching programs on television that are educational, enlightening or inspiring.*
- **What are you thinking when in this room?** *All sorts of things. Books, conversations with friends and insightful television push me to think differently and broaden my perspective and awareness. Life is interesting!*
- **What are you feeling when in this room?** *Elated.*

## Kitchen

- **What is your mood when you are in this room?** *Happy - I love delicious food!*
- **What are you doing when in this room?** *Trying different ways of cooking, having family meals.*
- **What are you thinking when in this room?** *How can I make meals more delicious? How can I make new, adventurous meals?*
- **What are you feeling when in this room?** *Enjoying family time and finding out how others’ days went.*

Living room		CURRENT REALITY	HAPPY REALITY	SHIFT (NEW ACTIONS)
MOOD	Tired			
DOING	Watching television			
THINKING	Nothing much. Maybe I should be using my time better			
FEELING	A little disappointed			

### Backyard

- **What is your mood when you are in this room?** *Calm, happy, soulful.*
- **What are you doing when in this room?** *Breathing in fresh air. Admiring the plants, flowers and weather.*
- **What are you thinking when in this room?** *Thinking about each area of the backyard of the memories of building and maintaining the space and garden.*
- **What are you feeling when in this room?** *Gratitude to have this beautiful space to come and replenish my spirit.*

The third column is where you identify specifically what actions you can take to shift from *Current Reality* to *Happy Reality*. Continuing with our example, this could be:

### Living room

1. Set my current favourite book beside the chair I will read in.
2. Scroll through and select a couple of documentaries that I want to watch this week on streaming.
3. Invite my sibling over for morning tea with the intention of connecting.

### Kitchen

1. Establish the routine of eating at the table with my family for dinner.
2. On Sunday, just for enjoyment, select a cake to bake to eat as a treat throughout the week.
3. Eat slowly and savour the flavours and enjoyment of eating.

### Backyard

1. Start a herb garden.
2. Set aside 20-minutes every day to sit in the backyard and enjoy the aromas, the sound of the birds and look at the garden.
3. Get rid of any trash and garbage that is staring at me to manage.

Using this “getting your house in order” process is helpful because it helps you identify the small, routine actions that you can take that will quickly achieve happier results.

You won’t have to wait for weeks or months to start seeing progress. Progress is achieved instantly.

You might also find that identifying larger, long-term goals easier once you get your house in order. As you start

achieving happiness in several aspects of your life, your mindset will start to shift to one that is more powerful and open to seeing that which you were blinded to in the past.

This process can be used for your workplace as well. Consider the space you currently hold when you enter your dental practice, your surgery to see patients, your staff meetings and the connections you make with your co-workers.

A happy life is up to us.

We quickly discover that no one else arrives to do this for us.

So, if you feel as though you could be living a happier life but don’t know where to start, then maybe it is time to get your house in order.

### About the author

*Julie Parker Practice Success provides dental teams with coaching and training so they can work together and achieve successful outcomes for their dental practice. For more information, please contact Julie on 0407-657-729 or julie@julieparkerpracticesuccess.com.au*