

# From Tassel to Task List: Considering Structure and Strengths

My daughter, Caroline, just graduated from the University of Wisconsin-Madison this weekend. My husband graduated in '93 and I jumped on the bandwagon, so we are a family of Badgers. It was inevitable that she matriculated there when the time was right.

Growing up, she was a diligent student – followed the rules to get the grades and participated in the clubs to ensure her acceptance. Once there she spent 4 years in classes, a sorority and received her degree in Journalism with a minor in Consulting. Like many students, she will be coming home as she begins the task of looking for a position.



But it struck me that for 22 years, her life has been structured by the norms of our culture. School, sports, dinner, homework and hanging with friends. What happens with there is no structure? Why is structure important?

A well-structured day doesn't just help you "get through it"—it helps you thrive.

## Why Structure Matters

Think of your day as a blank canvas and without any form or outline, it's easy to allow emptiness. Structure provides the framework to focus, prioritize, and make meaningful progress.

Here's why it matters:

- **Momentum:** Success breeds success. Structured routines create rhythm, which builds consistency—and that leads to real results.
- **Mental Health:** When you don't have specific milestones to hit, the day can feel meaningless leading to anxiety and low motivation.
- **Energy Management:** Structure helps align your most demanding tasks with your peak energy times, making you more efficient and less drained.
- **Clarity & Focus:** A structured day prevents you from reacting to every email or request as it comes. Instead, it allows you to proactively tackle what's most important.

## Using Your Strengths to Fuel Your Day

As a Strengths-based Coach, it's important to remember that everyone has a unique set of natural talents. Knowing them can help you find purpose and structure your day.

- **Achiever: Build Checklists and Clear Milestones**  
You thrive on progress and productivity. A visible list fuels your drive and gives a sense of reward.
- **Strategic: Plan Ahead, Anticipate Obstacles**  
Start your week with a 30-minute planning session where you map out key priorities and backup plans. You'll feel more in control and confident navigating curveballs.
- **Positivity: Create Energy Anchors**  
You're most effective when you feel emotionally up, so design your day around activities that keep your energy high.
- **Woo: The Social Boost** You love being with people as you draw energy from others. Build quick social interactions into your routine.

## The Magic Happens When They Meet

When you combine a well-structured day with an understanding of your strengths, something powerful happens: you stop trying to fit into someone else's productivity model. Instead, you design a life that amplifies who you are. **Start small.** Pick one strength and one structural habit to build around it. Reflect weekly on what's working and tweak accordingly. Success doesn't come from being someone else—it comes from structuring your day to become the best version of you.



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