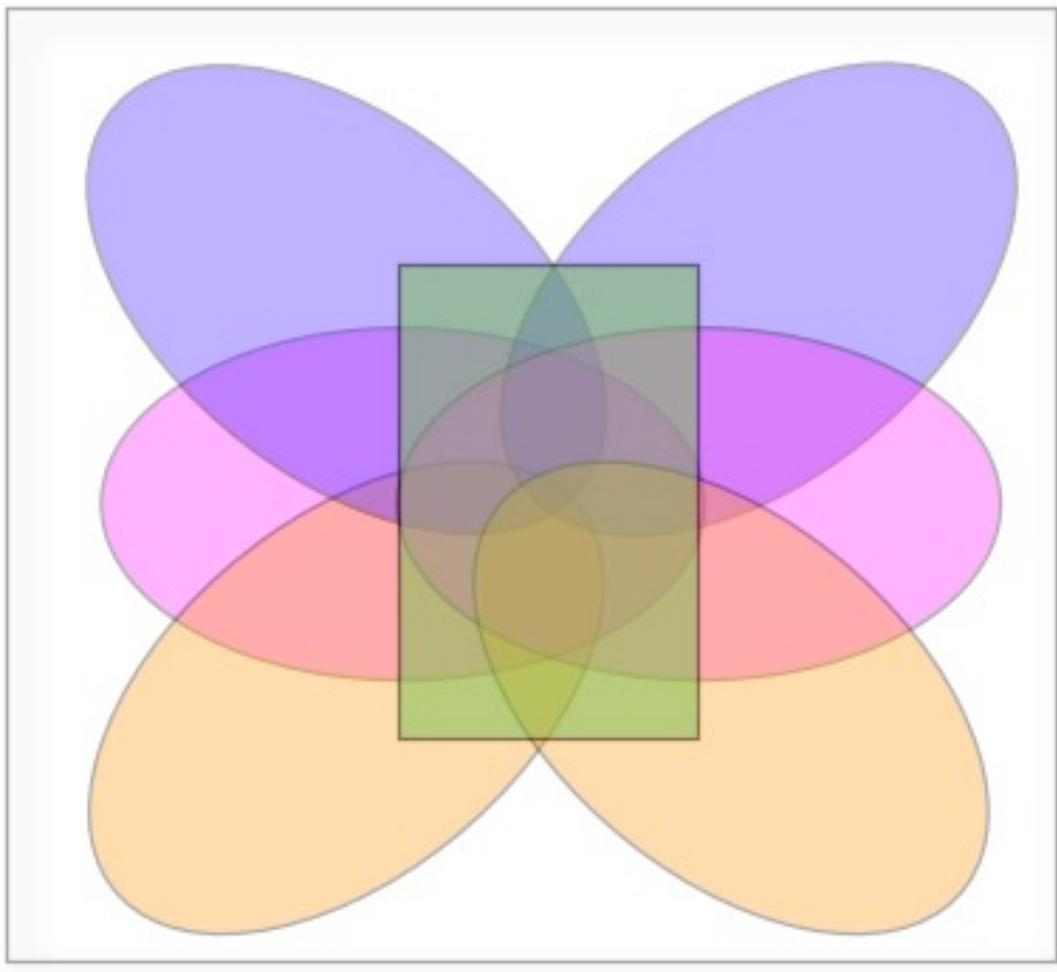

Getting D.O.N.E.

Floating through major transformation with complete focus and direction

Anna Beatrice Scott, Ph.D.

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Confronting the Problem

Creating a new project from old data or pivoting a business/project requires a structured improvisational approach

TIME



All transitions take their own sweet time, but you must deliver in the now, right now.

Congratulations on deciding to finally get it done, ship, file, turn it in, or put it down. Whatever your motivation, you are now about to create a very clear way to successfully fulfill your vision for your project and most importantly, yourself. Let's get it D.O.N.E.

Metaphor & Art in Project Management

The Butterfly chart has been around for a while as a type of organizational chart that allows businesses to decide which of any two choices is the best one given how they do or do not maintain the structural integrity of the business. This is a unusual use of such an incredible metaphor. The butterfly is often the metaphor of transformation; its stages of development remind us humans of the incredible work involved in making something of beauty. It is in this spirit that I have placed an emphasis on cyclical time as it intersects the 24 hour time clock in driving a project to fruition.

Cycle Time

Every natural system has a logical phase through which it runs before it can be said to have reached its stasis point/null point at which time it commences again if the system is still operational. Humans are a great example of a series of interlocking systems working in concert through their respective cycles to maintain life. Sleeping, eating, digesting, breathing are a few of the gross autonomic processes that we notice **only** when they do not function.

The body has over 11 systems that operate without any conscious effort on our part. Each of those systems are comprised of subsystems and interact/inform each other through automated, cyclical function. Their rhythm creates the symphony that undergirds our daily lives. For that reason, it is very important to take into account your personal cycles when planning a large project.

One of the most common errors in planning a major overhaul, transformation or undertaking is neglecting to chart time for human needs. Getting DONE requires that the personal is tracked and cared for just as much as the structural and temporal. Only when one seriously considers the impact of the project on all phases of one's life can one move with determination towards a conclusion. Beginning in any other way will almost always lead to the project being abandoned or reworked unnecessarily.

Clock Time

There must be a deadline.

OCTENATE's Butterfly Chart Process is designed to deliver a completed project at a specific date, typically in a sprint. The shape of the butterfly is as follows: the deadline is the body; the wings are composed of three vectors on either side. The left wing is typically 40 days of focused production, while the right wing is 30 days of deployment and enjoyment. Sprint towards the goal, but do not forget who you will be when you grow up!

If there is no deadline, assign one, typically 4 - 6 weeks is more than enough time to get anything done well enough to push it out the door. Having the deadline will facilitate collaborating with others. The deadline gives focus to the importance of the goal for people around you. Your community will get behind your effort and support you in anyway they can as long as they can see clear progress, on a clear goal, with a clear delivery date.

Set a deadline and stick to it.

Time Warp



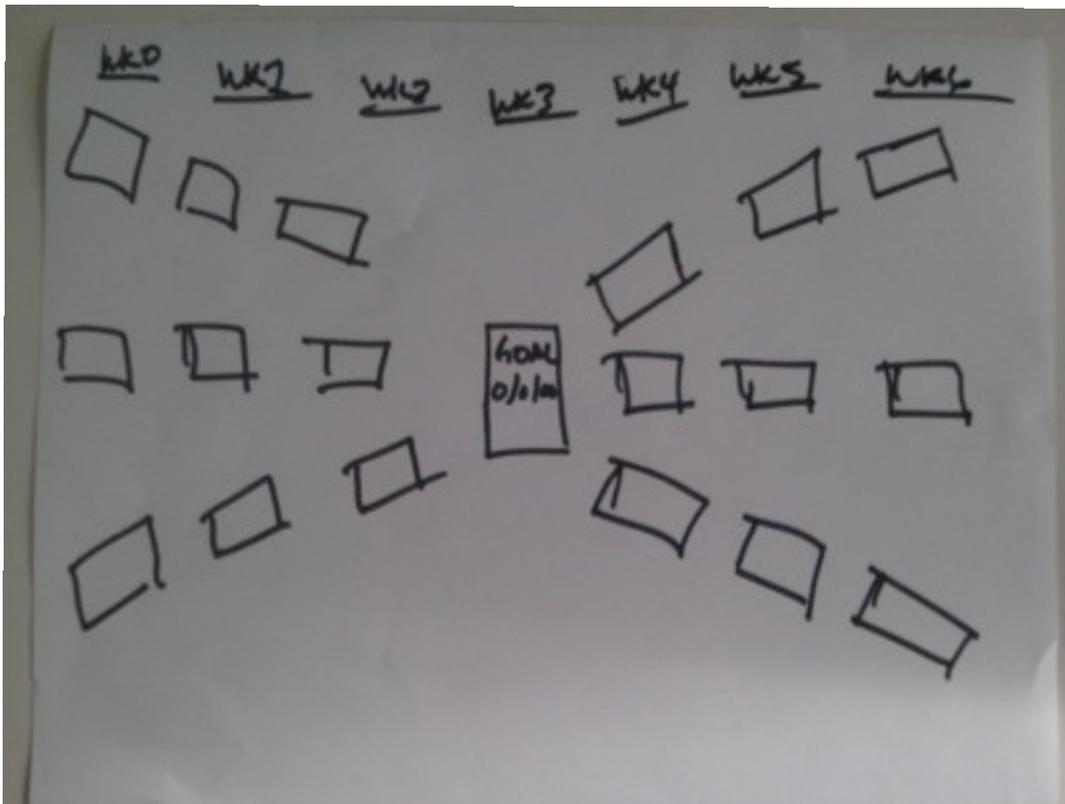
Cyclical time and 24 hour clock time fight for your attention. It is not unusual to “have your rhythm thrown off” by the demands of a job or project because of the windows of time at which the rest of the team is available. Timing issues are also caused by limited access to specific tools or people that are instrumental in getting the job done.

International projects disrupt sleep patterns so that team members can meet. Rushed jobs cause people to skip lunch or even the bathroom. The FEDEX guy’s schedule determines the pace of your work. Work out schedules typically get rearranged to negotiate the monster-can’t-fail project. Limited resources, like money, can also drive poor decision making, putting the personal and cyclical needs out of mind to confront the “pain points” highlighted by the 24hour clock.

Rigidly approaching the tasks required to complete your project without regard to your personal cycles will create chaos in other aspects of your life and/or business. Yes, your business has its own cycles that potentially do not line up with the requirements of the new product/client/project! Taking time to devise a action plan will no doubt help your discover what type of timing is at the heart of your business and project.

The Butterfly Process is a structured improvisation. You know all the high points you must hit in order to feel as if progress is being made. You are clear where and when the tools are. You know by which date everything must be completed. You have a clear trajectory for what will happen after you complete the goal. Therefore, you can remove or add in steps on a weekly or hourly basis, based on your micro-steps, or scales.

While you may do this on a computer, this is an art therapy project meant to calm you down and give you an easily accessible, tangible reference point for your goal. 3 x 5 note cards will give you the flexibility to quickly and easily—and affordably—adjust your micro-steps while maintaining a clear visual of your goal and its impact on your bigger picture.



Implementation

Conceptualizing your chart

COMPONENTS

What you will need:

- Clear objective
- 1 11x14 piece of paper
- 1 8 1/2x11 or A4 piece of paper
- 3 - 5 packages of white 3x5 cards
- 1 package multicolor 3x5 cards
- multicolored fine tip pens
- tape/thumbtacks/cork board (optional)



Close-up view of wing of Citrus Swallowtail butterfly. Photo by Muhammad Mahdi Karim

Once you have the required tools, the next thing of utmost importance is a clear, clean work space. Typically, people confronted with having to move heaven and earth through the Butterfly Process either have cluttered workspace, or no dedicated workspace. In either event, workspace has been a great, useful excuse for not completing the task. Never fear: as long as you have a temporarily clear space in an uncluttered room, you're good to go.

Space for Bandwidth

You could spend an inordinate amount of time trying to organize as you clean. Unless there are vital notes, tools, or objects in the clutter, get a box, and dump everything in it; close the box. Write on it: “My once cluttered mind, packed on (put the date).” Now put that box away, dust off your work surfaces, and your wall.

You will feel slightly dizzy from this. This is reckless abandonment of, um, stuff. Yes it is. Barring mail that will cause extreme consequences for you should you ignore it, the stuff in the box will not be missed. Were it important, you would have already given it a proper place. If you feel its presence anyway, you will put it as a task as part of your progression towards your goal, but I do not recommend this. It is better to hire a professional organizer to get you set up, if you have the time and resources.

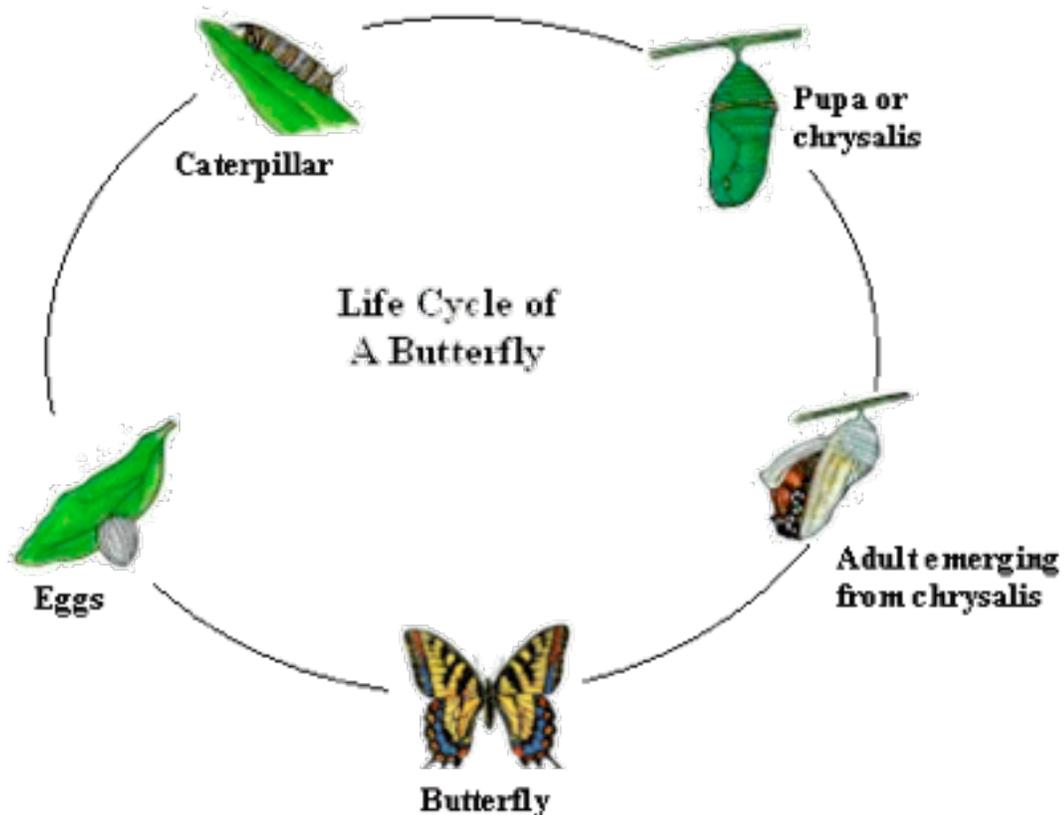
No safe space for the cards to sit out or go up? Locate a coffee shop, library, or conference room in a shared workspace. Your coffee haunt will be more than happy to support your work as long as you spend more than \$5 over a 6 hour period! Shared office space is also a great solution for having a clear, temporary workspace. Look for the term “co-working” in your local area. To get an idea of what to expect, research NextSpace, Hub or Regis. Add rubber bands and card file box to your shopping list.

Other considerations

You may have children, a significant other, a pet, a prized potted plant collection or garden. What will become of the living things for which you are responsible? Do you have an intense work out regimen? Who will do the laundry? Maybe you have very particular food needs that require a lot of preparation from shopping to cooking. Who will do that for you? Are you living with a health challenge? How will you stay on top of your healing regimen? Do you live in a small space or open floor plan that looks chaotic when anything is “out of place?” Who will clean it up? Basically, you are going into your cocoon. Reduce the amount of effort required of you for daily maintenance. Write down all the tasks. If they must occur on a specific day and time, be sure to note that.

Is the project beholden to external rules and regulations? Are you completing a dissertation or developing a proposal for a specific industry? Are you working on piece of a much larger document/project/initiative? If so, you will need to meet very specific guidelines, timetables,

grammar usage and review criteria. Do you know what those are? Download all documents that explain the requirements, making note of any dates. If there are tasks in the protocol that will obviously require time of someone else, calculate the time required. If it is not clear, ask around your organization for the historic norm.

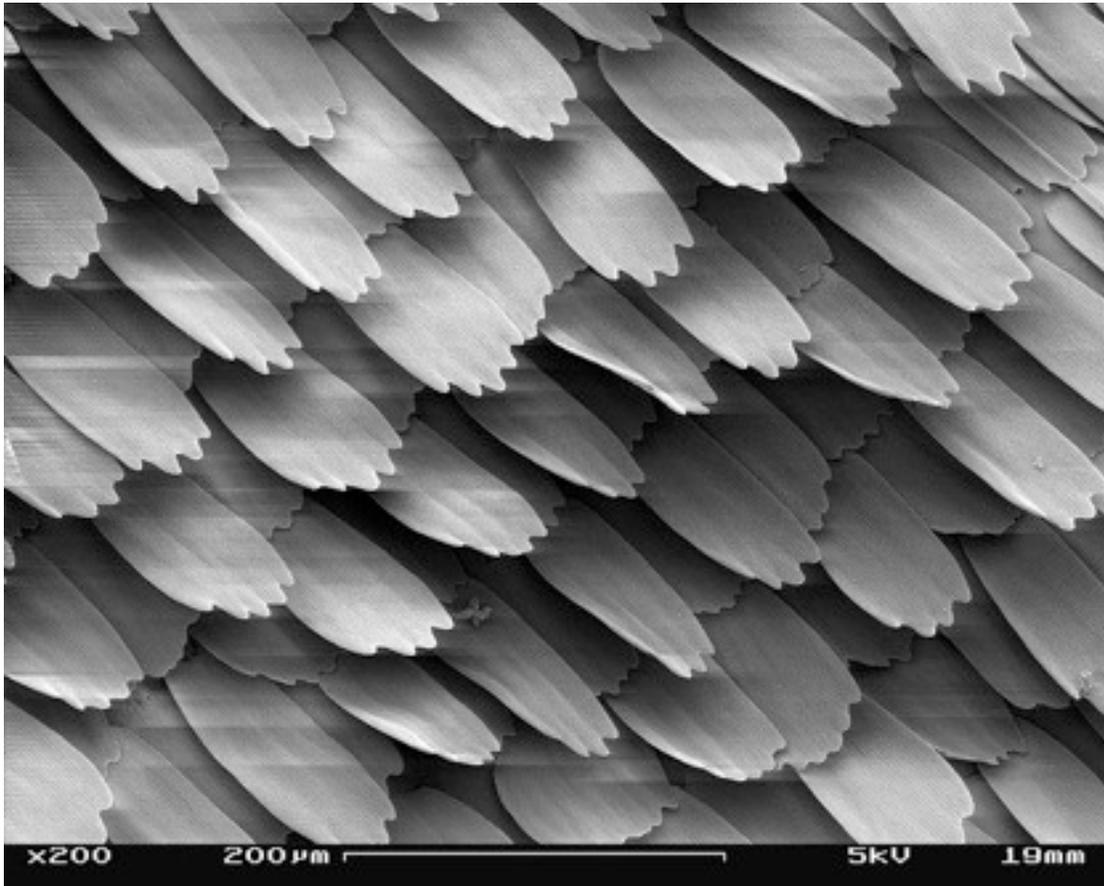


The life cycle follows a particular cycle over a given amount of time. Now a caterpillar, you have spent an inordinate amount of time "eating" the required information necessary to execute. In order to reach butterfly stage, however, it will take going within, assimilating, reorganizing, then emerging with the new product at the agreed to deadline. If the project/transformation is good (and it will be), you will have the opportunity to extend its life forward in time by seeding new possibilities and understanding. Thus, you will feed another person's project. Cycle over time....

Construction

Assembling your trajectories

CHARTING



SEM image of a peacock butterfly wing, slant view.

On the 8 1/2x11 sheet of paper, write your deadline in large block letters. counting backwards from that date, determine how many weeks you have before you “drop dead.” The week in which you begin this entire process is Week 0. Today, were you to start as soon as you finished reading this, will be Week Zero. Now let’s move to the white cards.

On the blank side of the white card, write “Week _” for each week. This is the top of your chart and will serve as your guide across all three lines. All tasks for each week on each line must line up under the given week for which it is marked...until you need to move it ;->

Task Line

On these white cards you will write down the tasks you expect to complete in each week. Since the cards are small, you will be limited in overloading yourself. These are tasks that push forward the /inviting/writing/drafting/drawing/speaking etc. The cards should not be general, such as, “write 12 pages.” A better use would be, “in chapter 3, add idea that connects concept __ to concept ___” In this way, you train yourself to complete the inherent cycle of the idea rather than meet a forced, external outcome other than the deadline.

Fill in each card as best you can. If you hit a block, turn it into an outline instead. Once you are clearer on all the pieces it will take to have the project “done,” than begin the weekly task chart.

Life Line

Under the weekly line on a color of your choosing, you will write down the weekly tasks that are required to keep your home running and yourself sane. In completing this line, you will hopefully recognize how insane you have been in your weekly run line above. Go back and tweak that top line of cards accordingly.

Once you have all the tasks out, ask yourself, who could help me with this? Is there someone who has offered to help you get this project done and you could not figure out how to take them up on the offer? Now is the time to shamelessly ask for help. It is as simple as recognizing that your village has been in your corner since you started and would love to do more than cheer you on. Assign tasks to trustworthy people on a weekly basis. It is best to have one person keep the task for the duration of the project.

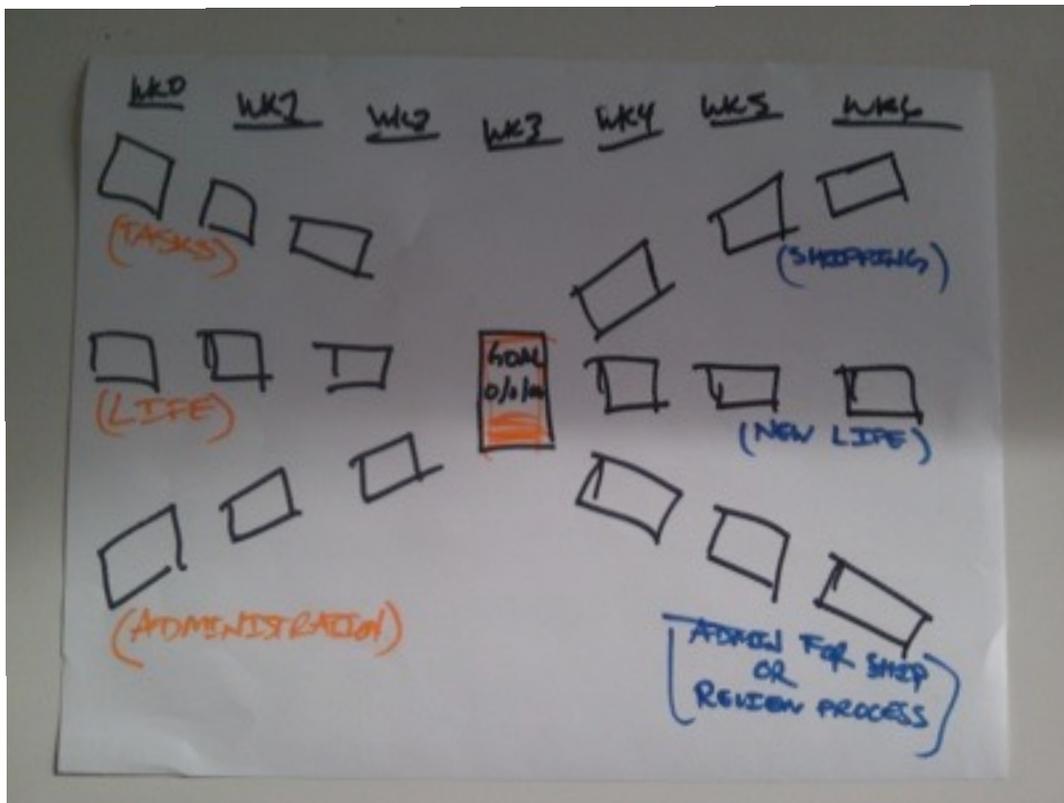
Regulator/Administrative Line

Not so much externalities as rules of the game, this line is your administrator. On a weekly basis, write in any compliance protocols/deadlines. For example, if you must have a peer review a certain section of a document by a certain date before you can continue, be certain to write that in the week in which the date falls. No cracks, no slips.

Convergence

These lines meet at the deadline page, then erupt from the other side. On the right, these lines take on a new significance: now that I am done, what do I want to be when I grow up? What do I want to happen next? Yes, you are going to think about that RIGHT NOW. Follow the logic outwards: you will now countdown to the new outcome that will be written on the largest blank sheet. This is where you take off from the branch; fly off into new adventures and lay your idea eggs for future beauty and truth.

So once this project is done, what are the new steps you need to take on a weekly basis to reap its benefits? How will your life line change? What will you be able to do at home now that you are finished? Are there new administrative needs for this new phase of your life? Card it out for the same length of time you will take to get the project done. I recommend planing a party for the “launch” of this new you. Your flight date is your new week zero.



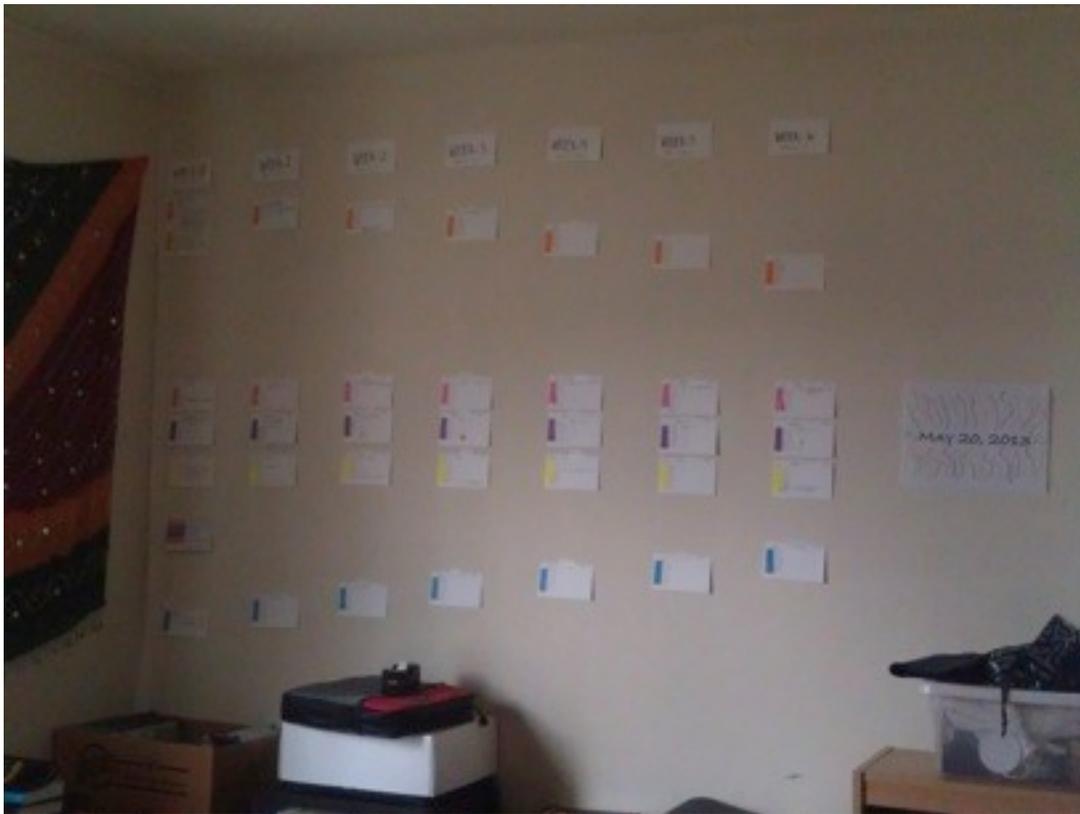
This schematic shows the six weeks straight across, without the countdown reboot.

Application

Learning how to float

PLACEMENT AS THERAPY

How you lay the cards out is just as important as what is on each card.



Your chart can be taped directly to a wall, or you can invest in cork board.

Tasking out

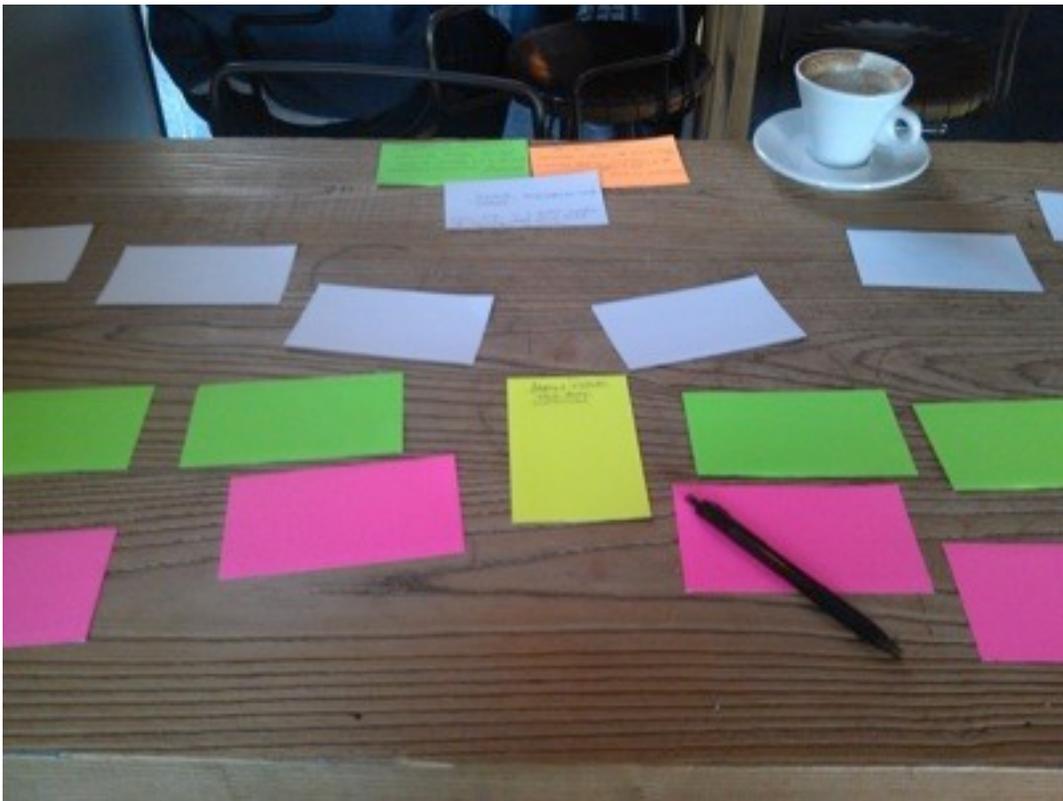
The Weekly Task Line steps down. The Life Line moves straight across. The Regulator Line steps up. The deadline is in the center. All cards are considered active when in landscape position, or horizontal. Once you have completed the tasks and passed the week, the cards are positioned vertically. In the example above, the client used all white cards and colored page tabs.

This allowed her to plan significantly on the life line as you can see. She had not only a line for her home, but also one for her child and another for her “state of mind.”

On the right (not pictured), the Task line steps up, the Life line continues straight across, and the Regulator line steps down. The weeks count down instead of up, towards a celebration goal, written on a huge piece of paper.

Building ideas

Here’s an example of using the Butterfly to jumpstart your ideas. If you know your goal or message but have no idea where to start, begin by placing your crux of the matter (or one clear goal) in the middle. Next, the three thoughts that lead to that defining idea go above it as



“antennae.” Layout blank cards as if you had a complete butterfly chart. Then begin to work: given the goal you have (and the ideas shaping it), what would be the step before that would make the most sense?

After an hour, this speech took flight!



The top line are things to say at the podium. The middle line of green cards is items and sounds for the slides. The pink cards are where to be on the stage when saying a specific thing. The yellow card, body, is the crisis of the thesis. The cards move from left to right. After the crisis/ goal of the talk, then the audience is invited to imagine something new. If you look carefully, the cards are numbered. This allows the butterfly to be portable.

D.O.N.E.

Definitely Over, Now Escape or...

EVOLVING

You crossed the Rubicon. You walked the coals. You moved heaven and earth. Now you are new. You get a natural do-over, because every admission to the DONE Club is a free pass into Started It Land. And once there, you can choose to keep starting anything that you already put in motion while you sprinted to the finish line. These are usually projects that diverge wildly from the initial scope/goal/target. This is where your opportunity to dazzle yourself is the greatest.

You can take control of the terms of your DONE Club membership. It's Definitely Over, but Now Evolve.

This is a cyclical process, not a mad dash to a finish line. And you are taking your **entire** life into the husk and rewiring it accordingly. If you want to come out looking snazzy and brilliant, **chart** the impact of the project on **all** aspects of your life. Doing so will allow you to move with determination towards shipping because you will know what happens **after** you enter the DONE Club. Beginning in any other way will almost always lead to an exhausting fight with your Lizard, Shadow, Inner Critic, or whatever colorful name you've given to your private emotional hijacker. Change is inevitable, almost haphazard. Transformation is guided. Evolution is natural, but it is your choice: fight to the finish, or float into the next phase.



I hope you have found this helpful! If you are interested in using the process but know you work much better when accountable to a live person, please contact OCTENATE and we'll be happy to assist you in getting D.O.N.E!

Happy Floating!