

Avoid Overwhelm at Tax Time

by Bonnie Mincu, Thrive with ADD Coach

Often the hardest part of dealing with taxes, accounting or administration is getting started. Those dull, but necessary, aspects of business and life can seem un-motivating and easy to put off. Now April 15 is looming, and pulling together all those records seems like an overwhelming chore.

The Coach's Tip: Chunk it Down!

Every task or project can be broken down into small steps. **Start by writing down the steps involved in the task of your own tax preparation.** For example, preparing taxes on the long form might involve:

1. Gathering receipts and records
2. Separating expenses into categories
(Typical business expense categories are Travel, Entertainment, Materials & Supplies, Phone, Rent, and Professional Services)
3. Listing revenues and expenses in each category
4. Reaching totals for each category
5. Sending totals to your accountant

Create an Intentional Strategy

Assign a specific date and time on your calendar to complete each step. Be realistic, and don't assign yourself too much at one time. **Pay attention to your own rhythms** and inclinations, and schedule yourself **periodic breaks.** You may find that checking in with a coach or buddy after completing each step helps you to stay on track.

When the project is done, **set up a system to do it more easily in the future.** For taxes, you might create a series of folders for each expense category where you can easily file receipts every week. Don't get caught up in organizational solutions that work for others but that don't suit your style. If you've historically bought software programs that you've never used, then doing your taxes on computer may not be the best solution for you.

Sometimes it makes more sense to delegate tasks to others, even though you're capable of doing them yourself. If filing is something you've put off for months, you might do best to hire a professional organizer to get through those piles in a hurry, and help put you on the right track.

There's no need to beat yourself up over administrative matters that you've left undone. Tackling **a little at a time** in a systematic way will pull you out of "overwhelm." Then you'll feel in control once again.