

No one who 'Wunderlists' is lost

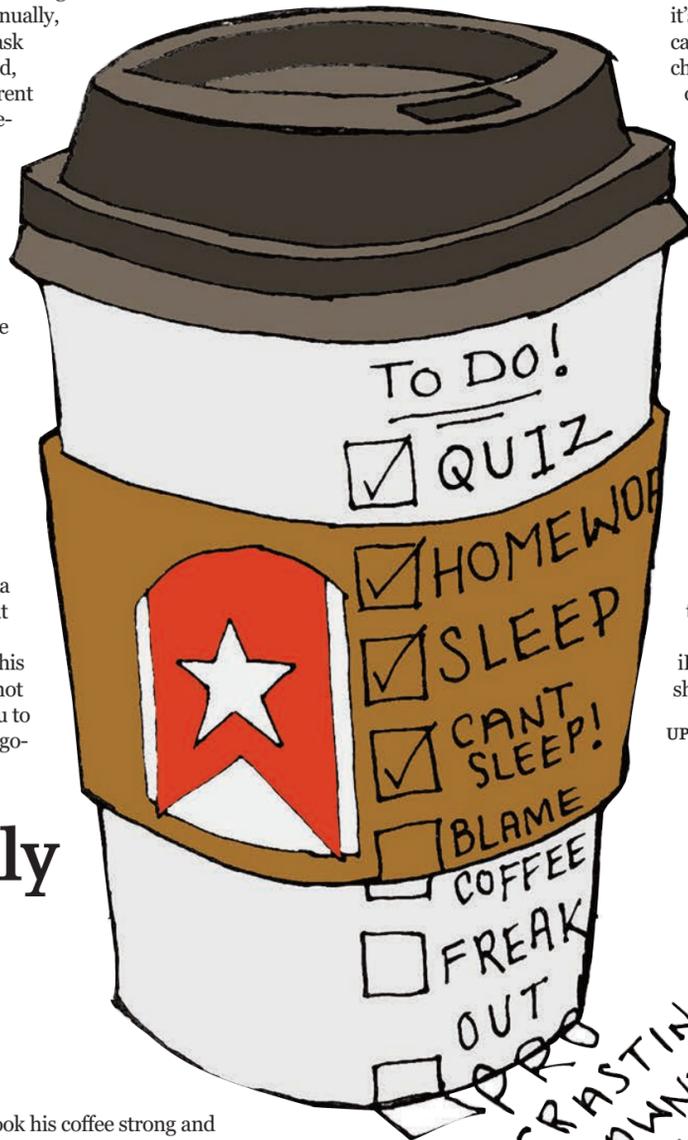
My days are powered by two things: espresso and a to-do list. I have a type-A personality. I want things in order, color coded, alphabetized, numbered, you name it. If it has to do with standardization, I want everything to do with it. I'm the type of person who, if my backpack was stolen, would be more concerned about the loss of my planner full of dates and appointments, than I would be of my \$1,800 laptop that I'll have to replace. If I drop my phone and it breaks, I'm perpetually anxious until I get a new one, not so I could talk and text, but so I would have access to my to-do list again. For as long as I can remember, I kept a running to-do list that I categorized (by colored heart emojis) ranging from school, work, personal (things I needed to purchase, home things, etc.), things I

needed to remember for the future, and a list of things I needed to do for the future that didn't need to be done immediately. I'm organized beyond what is good for me, I realize, but I do indeed get things done. Up until recently, I used the notes app on my phone to organize my to-do list as best as I could. I categorized everything manually, deleted each task once completed, and used different emojis to represent various facets of my life. I thought this was brilliant until a friend told me about a free to-do list app called Wunderlist. I don't know that I've ever been so obsessed and head-over-heels for an app. I feel like a fool in love, but I'm totally unashamed. This to-do list app not only allows you to make and categorize to-do lists, you can set a due date and reminder for each task on your list. When you do this, the app makes a list called "Today" and "Week," where all the tasks that you need to complete for that day or during the specified week are pulled into these lists. But it gets better. Sometimes I have a few hours in the middle of the day and 12 things on my to-do list that I need to get done at some point, but with no secure deadline. Wunderlist has a feature where you can "star" a task. When you do this, it is highlighted and pulled not only to the top of the list it's under, but also goes into a new list called "Starred." I use my Starred list to check off random things that I have random time allotted for. To make matters even cooler, you can sync your to-do list to all of your devices. Your anxiety can follow you. It's great. Last, but certainly not least, Wunderlist has a feature where you can share a to-do list. This is incredible for group projects or planning an event with someone. My employer puts her to-do list for me in the app and shares it. When I finish tasks, I can check them off, so not only do I know they're finished, she's up-to-date with what I've completed. I won't deny that I feel cheated considering I went years of my life without the simplicity this app has to offer and the anxiety it would have freed me of, but that aside, I am proud to be a Wunderlist convert. Forget the handwritten to-do's, or the iPhone notes app. I think everyone should make the switch. It's wonderful.

Commentary



Shelby Strickland
UP managing editor



UP illustration by Cormac Kelly

Cherished family addiction ... er ... tradition

For as far back as I can remember, coffee has been a main staple in our household. When my mother would write out the grocery list, the magic bean was listed in the top five with bread, butter, sugar and tea. During my childhood, "Wake up and smell the coffee," was taken in the literal sense, the strong aroma in the air meant it was time to rise with the day. I always thought that the way someone drank coffee said a lot about a person. My mother would take her coffee with milk and sugar, and go about to work with a pep in her step—clearly the side effects of combined sugar and caffeine after bustling all five of her children to the school bus.

My father took his coffee strong and black. I think it matched his personality quite well. He clearly did not have a pep in his step, and no one dared to bother him before noon. As an adult now, I relate to him more than I thought I would. My first memory of beginning my day with coffee was when I was living with my brother, Zacheria. I woke up to the smell of sizzling bacon and got out of bed. When I went into the kitchen, my brother's back was turned to me while he was flipping the thin slices on the stove, and somehow, he heard my footsteps in the carpet and said, "Breakfast is almost ready, but I didn't make the coffee." And quietly, I just walked over to the counter and began making coffee for us both. Somehow it became my job. It became important in our family. Over breakfast, we would sit down with our plates of bacon and mugs of coffee and quietly watch the news, just sitting in each other's company until caffeine worked its magic.

For the next couple of years, I would dilute the taste of coffee with loads of sugar and creamers. I was not partial to the taste of coffee at all. Once I began college at Lamar University as a full-time student, taking on a full-time job, raising my son, living on my own and paying all my bills, I realized that I was exhausted. My taste for sweet coffee became less important and my tolerance level went up by four cups. It also became a part of who I am, and it didn't just stop with me. I spread the addiction to my sisters, or so I like to believe. Now that we are in our mid to late 20s, coffee talks have become a morning tradition. For almost a year, I had all my three sisters living right next to me. Every morning I would hear a pounding on my window or door and have three evil incarnate individuals glaring at me from the other side of the glass. Reluctantly, I would open the door and allow the Sanderson sisters into my home and flock down upon my coffee corner like it was a shrine. We all have different personalities, and the shades of the coffee we share attest to our differences. I am the world's biggest procrastinator and stress keeps me awake at night, so I take my coffee with just a splash of Pumpkin Spice cream — the darker the better. My twin, Carolyn, adds two spoons of sugar and vanilla creamer into her cup. She only likes her one cup of coffee to do the trick-of-tricks — Hocus Pocus I need my coffee to focus. My little sister, Krystina, creates her coffee with cream and sugar. She is the rea-

son we have to brew multiple pots. Our baby sister, Holly, is new to coffee talks and takes her coffee with mostly sugar and milk — her taste for coffee is at a minimum level. My sisters and I sip lightly on our mugs as we talk about family matters, television shows, religion or work. On rare occasions, we might even talk about a new man that we are seeing, pass around his photo and make explicit comments that's just for laughs among sisters. This is by far the happiest I am in my life. The closeness that we share is bonding over coffee. The phrase, "Lets meet up for coffee," is now known by all who know us as a serious invitation that, "We need coffee now," and that we request your company. And paying for the company of a friend who is willing and fully committed to binge-drinking coffee, and talking about anything and everything is worth the money. For my family, "The best part of waking up..." is literally in our cups.

Commentary



Sierra Kondos
UP staff writer

UPeditorial

Stress just a temporary state

At a certain point in the semester, life starts to overwhelm us. Keeping up with all of our schoolwork, plus everything else going on in our lives, can start to feel like a race with an unattainable

finish line. With just over a month left in the semester, this is the time when stress starts to set in. It's a feeling we become all too familiar with — the pressure, the tension, the sensa-

tion like we might explode at any time. We chug energy drinks, stay up all night, binge on fast food and skate by on just a few hours of sleep. Even though we know that there is an end to the se-

mester, we still let it get to us, as though there's no relief in sight. We need to remember that there is. The semester only lasts 15 weeks. Come Dec. 13, we'll all

be able to breathe a little. We'll savor those moments, and laugh at how ridiculously stressed out we've been for the last several weeks. Bottom line? Things will get better.

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