



PLUS ONE: FAMILY

By focusing on the little things, we keep them from becoming big problems. To do that, we have to know which little things require our attention. We need to name the problem, identify the root cause, and implement small changes to solve that problem. Let's look at each of those more closely.

Name the problem. Naming a problem or obstacle that keeps us from having the family life we want is the first step to solving that problem or removing that obstacle. Say one of our goals is to be more present with our family when we're home. What prevents us from achieving that? Maybe the problem is that we're wiped out after work. Maybe we're too entranced by our phones to pay attention to our kids.

Identify the root cause. We need to figure out what is at the root of the issue, not just the surface level problem. Maybe the root cause of the wiped out from work issue is the job itself, or some specific aspect of the job. With the phone, the surface issue might be the bad habit of automatically reaching for our phones, but the underlying issue could be a misplaced fear of missing out.

Implement small changes. We don't have to overhaul our entire life to make a significant change. We just have to focus on a few key, little items. For example, changing jobs may not be feasible, but we can find small ways to make the current job easier or less stressful. If our phone is being an attention-stealer, we can start by having a 30-minute phone-free period before or after dinner (and no phones during dinner!).

We can prevent big issues by focusing on the little things. It helps to name the problem, identify the root cause, and implement small changes.

/// BEST 5 ///

THE BEST FIVE MINUTES OF THE WEEK

What is a goal you have regarding your family life?
What obstacles are preventing you from reaching that goal?

Have each family member name one problem or obstacle that they are responsible for.

After you have named the problems, help each other identify the root cause(s). Ask why questions. Example: Why didn't you do the dishes? I forgot. Why did you forget? Because I really hate doing the dishes and would rather take out the trash. Why? (etc.)

Next, work together to come up with one small change each of you can make toward a solution to the problem.

Why is it easier to find small changes for improvement when we work together as a family?