How information overloaded are you?

Answer yes or not to each question.

1. When you open your email client, does it make you feel anxious about the work that you don't have time to do?
2. Do you open your email in the morning before making a prioritized to do list and several hours later forget what it was in the first place you wanted to accomplish today?
3. Do you frequently forget information you need to know?
4. Do you ever wish the web or social media would just go away?
5. Do you have email messages sitting in your inbox more than 6 months old that are "pending" further action or unread?
6. Do you sometimes wish you could read or type faster?
7. Do you experience frustration at the amount of electronic information you need to process daily?
8. Do you sit at your computer for longer than an hour at a time without getting up to take a break?
9. Do you constantly check (even in the bathroom) your email, Twitter or other online service because you are afraid that if you don't, you will become so far behind that you will never catch up?
10. Is the only time you're off line is when you are sleeping?
11. Do you feel that you often cannot concentrate?
12. Are you subscribed to so many blogs that you can't read them and it makes you feel bad?
13. Do you feel that you have to read word for word all information that comes into your email box or RSS reader or Twitter?
14. Are you always seeking out additional information from the Internet or friends online to support a decision or complete a project but never processing it all?
15. Do you get anxious if you are away from the Internet for too long?
16. Do you open up multiple tabs in your browser and then forget what you were going to do?
17. Is your email, google docs or hard drive filled with "virtual piles" of information or "drafts" that haven't been processed?
18. Are you afraid to delete email or old files because you're afraid you might just need it someday?
19. Are you unable to locate electronic documents, blog posts, email messages or other online information that you need in the moment without wasting time playing "find the file"?
20. Do you find yourself easily distracted by online resources that allow you to avoid other, pending work?

Count up the number of questions you answered yes.

0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20
GREAT INFORMATION COPING SKILLS	YOU HAVE SOME GOOD SKILLS AND A FEW BAD HABITS	YOU NEED HELP	IT MAY BE TOO LATE
What's your secret? Please share some tips	Analyze what's working and not working and fix it.	You need to change your mindset and acquire some more information skills.	Turn off the damn computer now! You need total immersion.

Reflection Questions

- How do you make value judgments on the information that comes to you via your email box or RSS reader?
- How effective are your personal information filing systems and sharing methods for electronic information? What works, what doesn't? Why?
- What are some coping strategies that you use to deal with the stress of information overload?
- How could the use of technology help you avoid information overload, not cause it?

Tips

- You don't have read every word of every blog in the universe to successfully build a community
- Don't live at the post office
- Don't check your email, twitter, or write blog posts from the bathroom
- Know when to turn the damn computer off and take a walk
- You'll never be "caught up" and that's okay

Resources

Beth's Blog – Information Coping Skills Posts
http://beth.typepad.com/beths_blog/information_coping_skills/

Laura Whitehead, Little Laura
I'm An Information Addict
http://laura.popokatea.co.uk/2008/10/08/information-overload-my-name-is-laura-and-i-confess-im-an-addict/

InBox Zero
http://www.43folders.com/2006/03/13/inbox-zero

Linda Stone, RIP Return Every Email
http://radar.oreilly.com/2008/06/rip-returned-every-email.html

Lots more tips and resources at the wiki
http://informationcoping.wikispaces.com