I’m so disorganized. Help!

The tutorial demonstrates an old-fashioned, but effective, method of taking notes in preparation for writing a paper.

1. Create an outline for your paper.
2. Get index cards.
3. Each source (book, article, or website) that you use will have its own source card. In the upper left hand corner of the source card write the number of the source (Source 1, Source 2, Source 3). Cite the source in proper APA, MLA, Chicago/Turabian, or SBL format on the card.
4. Then you have note cards that correspond to each source card. So let’s say that you did your Source 1 card. As you read through your first source, take notes on the index cards. Each index card should have only one idea, paraphrase, or quotation. In the upper left hand corner of each card, write the source number the cards are coming from (in this case, Source 1). In the top middle of the card, write down which point in your outline the note fits in. In the upper right hand corner of the card, write the page number(s) that the idea, paraphrase, or quotation comes from. Then write your notes on the rest of the card.
5. Repeat steps 3 & 4 as you read through all of your sources.
6. Using your source cards, create your bibliography or reference list.
7. Arrange your note cards in order of your outline, and begin writing your paper. Insert in-text citations or endnotes/footnotes where needed.