

Your Time on Your Terms

By Jennifer Ottolino

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We never seem to have enough time in the day. There seems to be plenty of time to do things we don't like and somehow we always manage to push ourselves and our fulfillment out of the equation. Life is too short to live with regret and to work so hard at things that don't really fulfill you. So you have a choice, you can either live your life regretting all the things that you really wanted to do, or you can make the time and start living the life you really want. Yes, life is busy, so here are some strategies that will help you to get control of your time:

1. Become a problem free zone. Yes, problems happen in life, and there are ways to proactively limit your exposure to those problems. You can limit your exposure by creating strong boundaries, developing reserves, and creating systems that will prevent future problems. What are some systems that you can develop right now that will prevent you from having problems in the future?
2. Create enriching free time. So often when we do have free time we spend it on some mind numbing activity such as TV. Devote some of your free time each week doing something that really enriches your life. Do something that makes you feel fantastic and blissed out. The rest of your week will get a big boost and you will find that you are effortlessly getting things accomplished.
3. Be present. When you have committed to spend the time, are you present? Or are you thinking about the other things that you have to do? Often when we are at work we are thinking about the things we have to do at home and when we are home we are thinking about the things we have to do at work. As a result, we never focus on what we are currently doing. This drains your energy and because you are focused on feeling guilty you don't produce the results you really want which leads to problems. Focus on what you are currently doing and concentrate on putting in a 100% effort and you will see strong results with fewer mistakes.
4. Set intentions for the day. Setting intentions for the day is much different than having a to do list. Setting intentions for the day involves clearly articulating what you want from that day. Your intentions for the day could be anywhere from cleaning out your desk to looking for and seeking out abundance from the day. The key is focus, so do not set more than three intentions for the day and center your activities around those intentions. This is much lighter than a to-do list, which tends to drain your energy and can keep you from feeling accomplished.
5. Develop healthy energy sources. Your body gets energy from any source it can find regardless if it is negative or positive energy. The difference is that negative energy sources leave you feeling drained, discontented, and restless while positive energy sources leave you feeling happy, peaceful, and energized. Which one sounds better to you? Develop healthy energy sources by creating

reserves of time and money, by eating right and exercising, and doing what makes you happy. Your day and your mood will feel much different and you will go to bed with a feeling of peaceful satisfaction.

6. Say no. We often cause our own time problems because we cannot say no to requests. It is understandable that you want to help people but why are you willing to sacrifice your own well being by being over committed? If a request is going to leave you feeling resentful, angry, or taken advantage of, definitely say no. You will feel a huge sense of relief.

7. Get rid of commitments. We often make commitments that don't really add value to our goals, our vision, or our lives. If you want to create more time in your life you have to start being very selective about the activities in which you participate. Really look at your current commitments and ask yourself, is this how you want to spend your time? Does it make you feel good? Does it help you mover closer to your goals?

8. Slow down. Rushing has become a way of life for most of us. Even when we don't have to rush we still do. Have you ever asked yourself, why am I rushing? Only to discover that there was no reason at all. When you rush around you are not present in your surroundings, you are often distracted and frazzled, which will cause you to make mistakes and take up even more of your time. Become aware of this adrenaline rushed feeling and make a conscious decision to slow down. Slow your walk, slow down your speech, take a deep breath, and do what it takes to mentally and physically slow down.

9. Under promise and over deliver. We have all heard this phrase but do we actually do it? Part of our time pressure is caused by over promising when we don't have to. Give yourself more time to complete a project then you think you will need and deliver it early. Your days will not feel as frantic, you will be getting your energy from positive sources, you will do a better job, which helps create your problem free zone, and you will feel good about your accomplishments. This is a win/ win for everyone.

10. Really understand that you control your time, not the other way around. Most of us feel like we are victims to time when in reality you control your time and how you utilize it. Start utilizing it to your advantage by having it work for you.

Hopefully this has provided you with some ideas on creating more time and using time to create a more fulfilling and enriched life. Remember that you control your time, your space, your life, and that it is your responsibility to create it on your own terms.

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