

Time Management

by

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When America was discovered it was called the New World. If we are the New World, then what is the Old World? The immediate response is Europe. But there are civilizations much older than Europe and the Middle East. The oldest civilizations are those of the Far East. There is a lot we can learn from these Oriental civilizations – a lot about living and time management.

This commentary will digress from the normal discussions on time management. Many of us have attended, or read, or hear about time management. Thus there is no reason to bore you with repeated discussion on "time diaries," "to do lists," "prioritizing tasks," etc. Instead there are more important aspects of time management than these.

In learning a martial art, students are taught that the goal of the art is to develop oneself to contribute value to the society. Please keep this in mind.

There are many books that offer answers to how we should live our lives. But, there is one book that raises questions about the kind of lives we lead. It is the old fashion "phone book." These books often have listings for drug and alcohol abuse problems, civil liberties disputes, abused women, children and elderly, rape crisis, aids, psychological counseling, and many more national social and economic problems.

While researchers identify so-called causes for these problems, one common theme is present in all of them. All of these problems initially create stress, which generally produces ineffective behavior if not dealt with immediately.

Stress, is the number one robber of time. A person under stress is in a state of inactivity. Generally nothing of importance gets done. It's much like the body going into shock. The mind withdraws in an attempt to cope with some problem. Following are some of the most stress producing issues facing us today.

Hate, Bigotry and Anger

Gossip feeds the acids of hatred and anger. Hate and bigotry rob us of the time that we can spend learning about others. Finding out about new cultures, different customs and religion can be exciting and enjoyable. When we spend time nursing hatred, bigotry or anger, we cannot do things that can contribute to

our lives or society. Our insides are eaten away and our souls are eroded. If we take the time instead to learn and understand others our lives would be more fully enriched.

Complex Society

We live in a complex society. Our technological growth is by leaps and bounds. With this growth we tend to make our own lives more complex. We go out and buy the gadgets that we never needed before but now can't live without. We are bombarded with daily messages on television, radio and in the newspapers to buy, buy, buy. It's no wonder that our lives become harried and we sometimes find ourselves spinning in circles. Stop the merry go round, and get off. Simplicity is really the key. Look at times when you go on vacation, away from the hustle and bustle of everyday life. You have a chance to think, to look inward, to discover, to enjoy. Simplify your life. Get rid of things that have little or no meaning. Rediscover life!

Disposition

Wake up in the morning and think some happy thought. If you start out the day without a sunny disposition you will mope through the day and do nothing of any significance. You won't want to work, you will piddle through papers, hold insignificant conversations. In essence waste away your day, not to mention your time.

Workmanship

Do things right the first time. If you have to do it a second or third time, your frustrations grow and you take more and more time to make the corrections. Think also of your employees. Don't have them redo work because you cannot get it right the first time. Their frustrations will cost you time, money and loyalty.

Promises

Promises made and not kept are also time wasters. Don't promise what you can't deliver. "I'll have your parts in two weeks," "Dinner will be at 6:00," "The doctor will see you in five minutes." Avoid a lot of grief and inconvenience for the people you deal with. Promise only what you can deliver. This builds loyalty and dedication.

Misunderstandings

Misunderstandings rob you of time. A misunderstanding left unresolved leads to strain, tension, or open hostility. Make sure that what you say or write is understood clearly. As more and more people drop out of high school and those

who in college aren't challenged to communicate in clear, concise language we will be faced with misunderstandings that could cost us dearly. Don't cover the facts with a lot of lacy language. As David Belasco, the great American theatrical producer, once said, "if you can't write your idea on the back of my calling card, you don't have a clear idea." Misunderstandings are not clear ideas which frustrate people into wasting time.

Complacency

Complacency wastes time. It does not foster imagination, creativity, or growth and development. Complacency leads a person along a road that soon becomes a rut. Get out of that rut. Do something different. Get up a half hour early and watch the sun rise as you walk a mile. Find a new way to drive to work. Teach someone something new. Leap out of the rut and savor life. Remember, we only pass this way once.

Potential

The greatest waste of our natural resources is the number of people who never achieve their potential. If you think you can't, you won't. If you think you can, you will. And if you do, it will get done. Search things that "can't be done" and do them. Get out of that slow lane and shift into the fast lane. Set your sights high and soar. Remember, it's not when you do it, but what you do.

Coping with Stress

While stress can have some positive impact on your physical and mental well-being, it can also lead to poor time management if not dealt with appropriately. There are four medically proven ways of dealing with stress.

- Physical activity
- Meditation
- Sleep
- Social support network

While these four ways are useful, they miss the foundation for dealing with stress in the first place.

The Most Elusive Gift

Long term time management can only be as effective as that most elusive and precious gift of all. It's a gift you cannot buy, you won't find it in a boutique window, it doesn't come in a box with a pretty ribbon around it. You can only find

it within yourself. It is based on your belief and faith in, and acceptance of, the Almighty.

“Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God.”

Philippians 4:6