

“God made time, but man made haste.” —Irish Proverb

time, and then see if it is still worth it.”

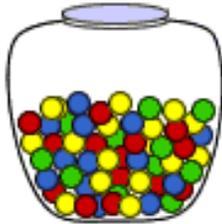
You are a “Limited” Resource

The best illustration of the value of time is that of the young man who loved to relax in his basement and listen to his ham radio. As he tuned in he came across a senior ham operator who was talking about something he called “thousand marbles theory.”

The senior operator explained that his marble theory helped him set his priorities in life. “One day, I sat down and did a little arithmetic. Since the average person lives about 75 years and there are 52 weeks in a year I came up with the total of 3,900 Sundays in a lifetime. Since I already had lived through over 2,800 of them I only had 1,000 left to enjoy. So I went to the toy

store and purchased 1,000 marbles. I took them home and put them in a large, clear, plastic container and every Sunday I take one out and throw it away. I found that by watching the marbles diminish, I focused more on the important things of life.

There is nothing like watching your time here on earth run out to help get your priorities straight. This morning I took out the last marble and if I live to next Sunday I have been extra fortunate.”



The young man got up and said to his wife “I’m taking you and the kids for a great family day and by the way I want to stop at the local toy shop and buy some marbles.”²

Make it a priority to be a steward of not just your time but your life. Take tender loving care of your minutes in 2016.

References:

¹ Concepts from John Maxwell, *The Leadership Handbook 26 Critical Lessons*, Nelson Books, 2008, pp. 114-120.

² Jeffrey Davis, “A Thousand Marbles,” Andrews McMeel, 2001. [An adapted short story]

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The STEWPOT

A POTPOURRI OF PRACTICAL IDEAS
to help you become a better steward

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TENDER LOVING CARE OF LIFE

By Gordon Botting, DrPH, CHES, CFC

Renowned business leader Peter Drucker said, “Nothing else distinguishes effective executives as much as their tender loving care of time.” What is true for executives when it comes to time is valid for all of us. Time is an equal opportunity employer. Every person gets the same twenty-four hours a day, but do not get the same yield or result from their care of that time.

Let’s clear this point up. First, there is no such a thing as “time management.” This phrase is an oxymoron. Like a taximeter, time keeps on running whether the vehicle is moving or standing still. Secondly, no amount of ingenuity

can save even seconds from one day to be spent on the next. No one, regardless of IQ, technical ability, or scientific talent is capable of creating new seconds

or minutes. Thirdly, time cannot be managed, period! So what *can* you do?

Simple—manage yourself! Actually,

what separates the successful from the unsuccessful is effective use of time. The successful understands that it is not resources, wealth, or assets, but time that is the most precious commodity on our planet. Successful people scrutinize where their time has vanished and continually ask themselves this probing question, “Am I



Become a Steward of Life and Time

Stewardship is a total lifestyle. It involves our health, time, talents, environment, relationships, spirituality, and finances.

“Time is like money; the less we have of it to spare, the further we make it go.” —Josh Billings

getting the most out of my time?”

One of the best ways to think of time is to see our days like identical suitcases. Although they are of the same size, some people can pack more into them than others because they know exactly what to cram into their daily “time” cases. The earlier we learn to know what to press into our “time” case the better our use of the next twenty-four hours.¹

Here are a few recommendations I have found helpful:

3 “Rs”

The educational system was designed to require all students to at least be efficient in these three Rs: *Reading, Writing, and Arithmetic*. The 3 “Rs” for time management could be, “Rest, Result, and Response.” The things we need to accomplish are often broken down into these three categories. Rest denotes taking time to reflect, contemplate, and think about what needs to be



accomplished. Result may symbolize sales for a retailer, lessons well prepared for a student, or completed sermons for a preacher. Response represents our time to answer emails or text messages, visiting a friend in the hospital, or completing a long-term project.

Do It Now

Researchers tell us that one minute in purposeful planning will save up to 10 minutes of wasted, unmanaged time. Whenever possible, complete a task as it comes to you. An example would be answering emails immediately or dealing with letters and bills as you receive them. It saves time and clears your desk for more important planning items. Richard Tangye put this concept into perspective when he said, “During a very busy life I have often been asked, ‘how did you manage to do it all?’ The answer was simple: Because I did everything *promptly*.”

Multitasking

Choose three of the following ideas that use the concepts of multitasking:

1. Purchase CD books for long commutes
2. Pray while doing your thirty-minute physical exercise
3. Do stretching exercises or trim your nails while watching television
4. Write down items, places you need to go, and things you need to do on your way home



just broken up with a girlfriend or having trouble with a class assignment. However, they promised to give 120 percent the next day. The coach would remind them that they couldn’t make up for that 20 percent the next day—they only had 100 percent to give each day. Therefore, regardless of circumstance, they are expected to give 100 percent at each practice.

John Aughey was correct when he stated, “Lost time is never found again.”

Finances vs. Time

In his book, *What to Do between Birth and Death: the Art of Growing Up*, the author Charles Spezzano pens these important words, “You don’t really pay for things with money; you pay for them with time. In five years, I’ll have put away enough money to buy that vacation house we want. Then I’ll slow down. That means the house will cost you five years—one twelfth of your adult life. Translate the dollar value of the house, car, anything else into

Paul Meyer put it succinctly, “Most time is wasted, not in hours, but in minutes. A bucket with a small leak in the bottom gets as empty as does a bucket that is deliberately kicked over.”

Unrecovered Time

A well-known basketball coach relates how players would sometimes turn up for practice and only give 80 percent effort, telling him reasons like having