

SERIES H: Topic 2

Make All Your Time Precious

Time is an asset, and so is your intellect. If you set out to do so, you can get more for your time; and if you invest that time in making yourself more valuable, your wealth will grow.

If a day had only 20 hours in it, you'd still get the important things done, just as you do now. What if, in that world, you could get 4 more hours if you wanted them badly enough to purchase them? The time you purchased would be precious to you. You would use it carefully for those things that would make the biggest difference in your life.

Well, those conditions already exist. When you use your 4 most precious hours of the day for ordinary tasks, you make your precious time ordinary time.

> **Your potential will skyrocket if you set aside your 4 precious hours to do those things that will make the biggest improvements in your life.**
>
> **When you compress all of your other tasks into the hours that remain, it will make those hours more valuable.**

Using Your Hours in Better Ways

For the pleasure of being alive, you use some fraction of every minute for existing; that is the part you "spend." You can "spend" the rest of that minute or you can "invest" it in things that will increase your capabilities and produce lasting value for yourself or others. *Note:* The word *spend* means to use up. All you have to show for it is a memory! During all the time you invest, however, you are still living and enjoying life. For example, while you invest your time in earning a college degree, you are probably having at least as much fun as you would have spending your time. But what you learned in college will improve your circumstances for the rest of your life.

> **The abundance and stability of your future depends on the wealth you have accumulated in all forms.**

Adding Levels of Benefit

If you watch TV, you get a basic benefit. If you exercise while the program is on, you receive a second level of benefit. If you are also watching programs that are educational or informative, you get another level of benefit.

> **The time you give to a good cause isn't spent. It gives you a stake in the lives of those you help, so it too becomes an asset.**

Normal Activities Compared to Better Activities

Consuming Time	Investing Time
Snacking during commercials	Exercising during commercials
Going to a ball game	Going to a museum
Vacationing nearby	Vacationing in a foreign country
Reading tabloids	Reading *Popular Mechanics*
Doing repetitive work	Doing creative work
Spending money	Saving money
Watching a sport	Playing a sport
Watching sitcoms	News or Discovery on TV
Eating junk food	Eating good food
Playing video games	Learning online
Hanging out online	Doing homework online

Commonsense Ideas for Managing Your Time

During your most productive hours, work on the task that will make the biggest improvement in your life.

Try to use all your time to get some long-term benefit for yourself or someone else.

Settle any issue that is a threat to you, such as a traffic ticket, late homework, registration for next semester's classes, etc.

Find ways to do your required tasks in as little time as possible.

Do small tasks you can remove from your task list completely.

Keep your Plan and your task list current so they can help you stay on course and alert to what you will need, to be ready for your upcoming tasks.

Take frequent breaks and use them to keep organized, exercise, celebrate your progress or socialize.

For problems with procrastination, read *The Now Habit* by Neil Fiore (www.neilfiore.com).

Handle your most unpleasant task (like delivering bad news to your boss or a customer) early in the morning so the task doesn't make you anxious all day.

Instead of doing things for which you get paid once, do things you can get paid for thousands of times. Collect or sell copies of books, paintings, songs or inventions; or manufacture or market products other people have created. Earn interest.

If you are going to risk your time or money, do it while you are young so you have time to recover if something goes wrong.

If you are running a long-distance race, climbing the steepest part at the beginning makes the rest of the race downhill. If you put it off until the last minute, you will have to do it when your energy level is low.

The same strategy applies to your life. If you have children early, they will consume the time your career requires and what would have been your "nest egg." If you get your education, house and investments before you have kids, those things can be growing in value while you spend quality time with your kids.



ASK YOURSELF

Of all the things you did this week, which one produced the most lasting benefits?