

Five Biggest Time Challenges & Tips to Overcome Them



You've heard it before. The playing field is level. We each have 24-hours in a day. That's a big number, isn't it? In addition, we have 365 rounds each year. That's 8,760 hours per year to make our own concoction of work, fun and relaxation. With all this time, why do we feel unproductive, overwhelmed, stressed-out, and time poor? Here are common time challenges and some strategies for overcoming them.

1. Overscheduling – Life is not dull. There are so many meetings, extracurricular activities, and social events in addition to the regular responsibilities that you feel perpetually frazzled and busy. There is never any relaxation time, other than when you sleep.

Tip: This might be the time to introduce "no" into your vocabulary. What can be removed from the schedule to give you some downtime?

2. Ambitious List Making – Massive doesn't even begin to describe to length of your lists. You are overwhelmed by your ideas, projects and to dos. How and when will you accomplish everything?

Tip: Adjust your expectations. As items are checked off, new ones will appear. Don't let that de-motivate you. Instead of focusing on completing the entire list, shift your perspective. Work your list by selecting the two or three items that you will get done that day. Reframe what completion looks like.

3. Lack of Planning – You prefer to just go with the flow and not plan your time. This isn't working for you. The day ends and you haven't accomplished what you wanted to. Consider the good enough method of planning.

Tip: Don't plan every minute. Instead, create large time blocks in your schedule that are devoted to certain types of activities like returning phone calls and emails, doing errands, spending time with family, and "me time." Yes...block out time for just you! Review the loose plan before the end of each day. Adjust as needed.

4. Not Focusing – Distractions . . . Let me count the ways. There are children, pets, phone calls, TV, email, texting,



Internet searches, Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube. Don't get me started about Pinterest (my personal new favorite social media addiction, oops I mean site!) The supply of distractions is endless.

Tip: Two words: Establish boundaries. Whether the distractions are digital or human, it's essential to set parameters. Remember those time blocks I mentioned above? Incorporate into those time blocks some "tech-less time" or whichever distraction needs the boundary. Experiment with effectively using parameters to maintain your focus.

5. Under Appreciating – You're doing a lot. You're moving through the days at lightening speed. You're done and on to the next thing before pausing to acknowledge what you've accomplished. This exacerbates your frenzied feelings.

Tip: Gratitude is powerful. It shifts our thoughts to a positive place. Allow yourself to slow down long enough to reflect and appreciate. That can include acknowledging our accomplishments, being grateful for our loved ones, or enjoying the sweet scent of spring.

What is your biggest time challenge? Is it one of these or something completely different? I'd love to hear from you. Come join the conversation.

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