Info Sheet – Time Management

The term time management is actually incorrect. You can’t manage time, you can only manage yourself in relation to time. So from now on lets call it self management.

If you are having challenges with self management there are three levels of force that could be holding you back.

1. Technical Errors

2. External Realities

3. Psychological Obstacles

Each of these three can cause problems.

**LEVEL 1 TECHNICAL ERRORS**

Tasks have no home

* You haven’t set a specific time aside in which to do them.

You’ve set aside the wrong time

* If you’ve set aside time to do something but find yourself still not getting to it, it’s possible you have set aside the wrong time eg you are morning person or night person.

You’ve miscalculated how long tasks take

* Sometimes we are unrealistic about what we can accomplish in a day. You will end up frustrated.

You’re the wrong person for the job

* Too many of us make the mistake of thinking that we have to do it all, that asking for help is a sign of weakness. Delegate.

The task is overly complex

* If a particular chore is to complex and cumbersome, chances are you will avoid it all together. If you want success you will need to simplify the task.

You can’t remember what you have to do

* If you don’t have a singularly reliable to-do list or planner, chances are you won’t complete some of your important tasks because you simply won’t remember.

Your space is disorganised

* Even if you are an excellent time manager, a disorganised physical environment will steal a huge amount of time and energy from your day.

**LEVEL 2 EXTERNAL REALITIES**

You have an unrealistic workload

* This can be imposed due to technological errors or psychological factors but some times life has overloaded you. You will need to delegate.

A health problem limits your energy

* Lethargy, sleepy no energy. These issues need to be addressed either by a doctor or balancing our life more.

You are in Transition

* It is difficult how to best spend your time. Your old system doesn’t fit any more and you don’t have a new system in place. This could be a life change therefore you need to re identify your goals and create a new basic frame work.

You are in an interruption - rich environment

* This is a challenge especially in serviced based industries eg doctors, sales people. You need to acknowledge it and plan for it. You need to create an oasis of time for your self that is totally under your control.

You have a disorganised partner

* To avoid anger and frustration here you will need to negotiate. A good way of doing this is to set a common goal and then explain the ways in which you are personally investing your time and working to accomplish your goal. This will eliminate defensive feelings and put you both on the same side of the fence.

**LEVEL 3 PSYCHOLOGICAL OBSTACLES**

You have unclear goals and priorities

* Without clearly defined goals, you have no basis for making decisions on how and where to spend your time, or on how to prioritise and sift through the many choices that confront you on a daily basis.

You are a conquistador of chaos

* If you constantly pack you schedule beyond the scope of reality, you always leave things to the last minute and your life feels like one calamity after another chances are you are a conquistador of chaos. You love it you feel good about conquering. You are a crisis manager. You feel a certain comfort in crisis. This can go back in childhood. You need to feel good about that ability with out testing it on a daily basis.

You have a fear of downtime

* For some people, downtime is very anxiety provoking. The idea of taking a day of fills them with dread. This can lead to burnout. This can be a way of escaping the larger problems in life eg unhappiness in marriage. This needs to be confronted but in the meantime you can give your self permission to keep a busy schedule. But not work but an activity that is meaningful to you. Vacations with activity not just the beach but exercise, movies, sightseeing etc. Its fine to be busy but you need to have balance.

You need to be a caretaker

* Helping others can make your life rich and rewarding. It can get out of balance and there fore make you resentful and unappreciated and overwhelmed. Quite often we are the blame. Sometimes we get so caught up in our own need to be appreciated and feel valuable that we don’t let other people help us. You empower people when you allow them to contribute.

You have a fear of failure

* You know what your goals are, but are not getting to the things that are important to you. This could be a fear of failure. It can be frightening to go after your dreams, and find out you are incapable of achieving them. What is the worst that can happen? Then think of failure as opportunities to learn, grow and move faster to your goals.

You have a fear of success

* Being successful cam make you stand apart from your family, friends and peers. You feel that you are growing away from them. Somewhere along the way you have a belief that you don’t deserve success. If you have a fear of success spend time with people you consider successful.

You have a fear of disrupting the status quo

* Sometimes you don’t pursue your goals because you fear the reactions of people around you – your boss may not like it, your kids may balk—because they are used to things the way they are.

You have a fear of completion

* You keep starting projects, bouncing back and forth between all of them; yet have a hard time finishing all of them. They never enjoy a feeling of accomplishment and the result is a loss of energy and self esteem. You love creating but you also need to be the editor so swap hats and let the editor take over. Spend time with people who love getting things done.

 You have a need for perfection

* You feel compelled to do everything at the same level of excellence. Good time managers keep things in perspective. They set priorities if you set high standards for every task then you will not finish anything. The need for perfection often comes out of the need for approval. This could have been drummed in your head. For your own sake you need to adjust your standards based on the specific task at hand. Some are worth your finest effort and some just need to be done.

You have a fear of losing creativity

* Many creative or right brained people fear that imposing structure in their lives will squelch their creativity or their free spirited personality. As a result there personal or business lives are chaotic and can cause them stress. You need to learn to trust that you can put structure in your schedule and still here the call of the muse. You don’t have to plan every hour but you can map out a general rhythm to you day.

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Becoming aware of what is holding you back can make a monumental difference in your effort to gain control over your time. If you know the why you have a real head start in creating long lasting change. The next step is to explore your personal relationship with time.