

CAREER HEALTH

10 Easy Time Management Tips

By Barbara Myers

Many people mistakenly believe that time management is about squeezing more tasks and activities into a day.

Time management is actually about getting the important things done. It's also about learning to do things efficiently so you can ultimately accomplish more. Here's how:

1. Focus. On a sticky note, write the important things in your life you need to focus on today. At home, attach it to your refrigerator. At work, stick it on your computer monitor. As projects come and go, you'll need to modify the list.

2. Write it down. If your head is full of clutter, you won't get as much done. "Scatterbrain Syndrome" is caused by too much data floating around in your head. Cure it by writing in a spiral notebook everything you need to do. If you're working on a task and something else pops into your head, write it down in the notebook.

3. Keep a daily to-do list. Write down the 12 most important things you need to accomplish tomorrow.

4. Make a daily schedule. You'll be more efficient. Look at tomorrow's appointments and meetings. Mark those beginning to end times in your calendar. Then review your to-do list and schedule time for your to-do's. Remember, only schedule 70% of your day. The other 30% will be filled with interruptions and emergencies.

5. Delegate. This is the most underused time management tool today. Look at your to-do list after you write it and ask yourself what you can delegate. Consider hiring college students for small

tasks. Barter activities with neighbors and co-workers. Teach your kids life skills and enlist their help on a daily basis.

6. Multi-task the details. While it's important to focus on projects, it's also efficient to take care of simple tasks simultaneously. Cook dinner while returning phone calls. File while watching TV. Check your e-mail while listening to voice mail messages.

7. Group like activities. Keep a running list of errands and take care of all of them once a week. Return phone calls during a certain time period. Do all your computer work within a certain time period. It takes time to switch tasks so you'll save time by doing like activities together.

8. Organize your surroundings. The Wall Street Journal once reported that the average executive loses up to an hour per day looking for misplaced papers. You'll save time if you don't have to step over and look through clutter.

9. Analyze everything you do for the next week. Try to find a quicker, more efficient way to do things. Briefly work with a friend or co-worker to come up with ideas.

10. Read it better. Learn to skim information. Highlight important text for easier retrieval. Carry reading material with you wherever you go. Consider taking a speed reading course.

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A Prescription for Worry Warts

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As I write I'm reminded of a piece of advice that was passed along to me by my now 91-year-old grandmother, Bopp, who once shared the following: "Honey, there's no sense in making mountains out of mole hills, as all it does is exhaust the mole."

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Helping people make smart choices about their money

7301 Jefferson NE
Suite D
Albuquerque, NM 87109

Phone (505) 345-6611
Toll free (866) 551-6611
Fax (505) 345-6633

smargulin@cfiemail.com
www.trustSteven.com

Income tax planning and preparation provided through Steven P. Margulin CPA PC.

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"Life is not a brief candle. It is a splendid torch that I want to make burn as brightly as possible before handing on to future generations."

-George Bernard Shaw



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8380 Miramar Mall, Suite 200 · San Diego, CA 92121

VALUES - BASED QUALITY OF LIFE™ Newsletter

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PHYSICAL HEALTH

A Prescription for Worry Warts

By Susanne Gaddis

My first prescription for fixing your worry problem is to get all of those worries out of your head and onto a sheet of paper. By conducting an inventory of your worries, you'll be well on your way to stopping these worry warts from growing. So, find a place free of distractions, roll up your sleeves and begin listing your worries on a sheet of paper.

As you delve into this project, you may find yourself amazed at how long your list grows. To help you organize your list, categorize your worries under specific headers. Worries over work, family, friends, finance, household, spirituality, and yes, even worry about worrying can take a toll on our mind and body. Once your list is complete, take each section and rank order your worries in order of largest to smallest. Then next to each worry, indicate whether or not you can take action. If action can't be taken, shelve the worry until you can take action. If action can be taken, next to the individual worry indicate in one or more clear sentences your plan of attack and a reasonable timeline in which you will complete these actions.

Now you are in a position to treat your "worries list" like an emergency room triage. As you probably know, a triage determines which patient's needs are the greatest, who is seen first based on the seriousness of the condition. By sorting out your worries in this way, you can begin to tackle them one by one. Making a list of worries also allows you an opportunity to look at your worries objectively - as individual items that can be treated or tended to at a later time.

When I think about worry, I'm often reminded of Earl

Nightingale's memorable story that compares worry to "a dense fog that can cloud our vision, knock our perspective out of kilter, and slow us down." According to his 1969 classic, This is Earl Nightingale, we need to condense our worries to a size that they truly deserve.

The statistics on worry echo Nightingale's advice, as several recent studies indicate that over 85% of all that we worry about never happens. These include worries over our past which can never be changed, worries over which we have no control, irrational concerns or fears, and future worries. Curiously enough, often as I share these statistics with individuals who attend my workshops, I inevitably will have one or two individuals who ask, "but what about the 15%!" My response? Whether 15 percent or 1 percent, worrying never affects the final outcome. Think about it. Have you ever worried a problem away? As we all know, the answer is NO!

As a healthcare provider, I know that you are keenly aware of excessive negative impact that worry can have on our bodies. Chemicals released during extended periods of worry wreck havoc on our physical being, with symptoms ranging from headaches to high blood pressure. Chronic worriers are prone to heart conditions and as a general rule are not too much fun to be around. Thus worriers often experience feelings of loneliness as isolation as individuals flee from their forecasts of doom and gloom.

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RELATIONSHIP HEALTH

Do You Want to Have More Friends?

By Royane Real

How many close friends do you have?

One? Two? Five? Do you think you have enough close friends, or do you wish you had more?

A few weeks ago I read in the newspaper that the average American person has only two close friends or relatives they can confide in. And in most cases, the persons they confided in were usually members of their immediate family.

When I read this I was shocked, because I didn't think that having only two people to confide in was enough. And it turns out that just two decades ago, the average American person had at least three people they could confide in. So, it seems the number of close friends the average person has is decreasing.

Although it might be hard to prove, researchers believed that a hundred years ago, most Americans would have had many more close friends than they do now. So, the number of close friendships is dwindling, even as American society seems to be getting richer and richer in the material sense.

Now, if you don't happen to live in the United States, you might think, "What does that have to do with me?"

Many of the same factors that are making it harder for Americans to have really close friends that they can confide in are also affecting people in other parts of the world as well.

All over the world, more and more people have to move to big cities to try to find work. Often they have to leave behind the close-knit communities where their families lived for generations.

Once they are in big cities, they find that cities can be very exciting places to live,

but cities are also filled with lots of lonely people crammed close together. Too often, the people crammed into these cities are not connecting with each other. They're too busy, and they don't have time to get to know a lot of strangers to find out who they like and who they don't like.

Many people today all over the world are having to work longer hours just to pay the bills and stay alive. Lots of times they spend hours commuting, and when they come home they are too tired to do much

"True friendship multiplies the good in life and divides its evils. Strive to have friends, for life without friends is like life on a desert island...to find one real friend in a lifetime is good fortune, to keep him is a blessing."

-Baltasar Gracian

more than eat supper and watch television.

The sort of free time our grandparents had to visit with each other on the front porch and relax has often disappeared. In many places, the sense of community has disappeared because too many buildings have been knocked down and replaced by impersonal high rises, and too many long-time residents have moved away to be replaced by strangers.

Even our technology that is supposed to help us connect with each other can also keep us apart. Television can show us what is happening to people around the globe, but when we keep our eyes glued to the television set, we end up not knowing the people who live down the street. If we watch too much television, or spend too much time playing video games, we might end up

not really knowing the people who live in our own household!

So, loneliness is becoming ever more common as we get more advanced.

Recently, I experienced a big crisis in my life when one of my close family members became very sick. I could not have gotten through this crisis without the emotional and practical support of a lot of people.

If I only had one or two other people I could count on, I would not have survived this crisis with my sanity in one piece. I needed a lot of comfort and reassurance, and if I only had one or two people, that would not have been enough.

So, if you're one of those people who only has one or two close friends, this is a reminder that when you are in a time of crisis, you might wish you had more. The time to start making those extra friends is now.

Instead of complaining about the fact that society has become too busy and too impersonal, we can each take steps to ensure that we slow down and examine whether we are getting the human contact we want.

And if we are not getting enough human contact, we must each make the individual commitment to try to change things for the better in our own life, and for those around us. We must give before we can receive.

Reach out, talk to more people, show that you care about them, and thank them when they care about you.

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INNER HEALTH

Gain Confidence & Boost Self Esteem in 5 Simple Steps

By Peter Murphy

We all want to become more confident and feel good about ourselves so we can live our very best life. Here are some ways to gain confidence and raise self-esteem:

1. Do something that requires a decision and a follow-through.

Have you been putting off writing that letter to aunt Martha? Is there a friend you've been meaning to call? Do you need to wash the car, tidy the garden or clean the house? You'll gain confidence by setting goals (even small ones) and following through on them.

2. Enjoy something you do well.

Do you have any hobbies or sports that you enjoy playing? Some things like going swimming, painting or writing can hold your attention and get you into a state of 'flow'. While you are in the flow you forget about everything else.

Afterwards, you'll feel competent and capable. It's a great way to boost your self-esteem. If you don't have any particular hobbies or pastimes that you enjoy make an effort to try something you've always wanted to try.

Picture yourself doing it, and then give it a try! It doesn't have to be something big - it can be as simple as joining a walking club.

You'll find that you are more centered and happier if you do something that puts you in that flow at least once a week.

3. Shift the focus.

It's been shown that low self-esteem develops hand-in-hand with individuals who put too much focus on themselves. You can gain confidence by doing something that focuses on someone else or even something else.

You'll find that when you are in a situation where you are meeting new people, you immediately become less nervous when you focus on the person you are meeting.

"The real secret to total gorgeousness is to believe in yourself, have self confidence, and try to be secure in your decisions and thoughts."

-Kirsten Dunst

At the end of the day, you've interacted with others and will notice that you feel much lighter.

4. Relax, already!

Learning to become more relaxed is a great life enhancer. People who are more relaxed have fewer problems with their memories and are more likely to take the bumps in the road of life in stride.

The practice of meditation has gained popularity for this reason. You might want to look into Tai Chi, which involves physical relaxation techniques.

Whatever method you decide on, take relaxation seriously. The benefits are just too great to ignore. If you've never considered relaxation important, think of it this way: if you can attend to something that results in feeling good, how can you not gain confidence in your personal abilities?

5. Make a list of everything you've ever accomplished.

Think small. An accomplishment is an accomplishment! Some things you could put on your list: passed my driver's test and got my license, scored a goal when I played hockey, managed to save enough money to go on a trip and so on.

These are just a few ideas you can use to gain confidence and boost your self-esteem. Use these ideas as a base point and add these things permanently in your life.

Keep in mind, people are not born with good self-esteem, most of us have to work at it. It develops from your thinking and the things you do daily to make yourself feel good.

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