

I Do Not Have Time

Background

The biggest problem that everyone faces today is not enough time in the day to do all things I want to do. Life is too hectic (busy) that I cannot even get one thing done right. A while back Time magazine had done an article about the age of “time famine”. The sad thing about this kind of famine is that we have a stressful life. If we really examine in depth, all our present day problems rise from stress. Due to stress, we have high blood pressure, we do not get enough sleep due to worrying, and we do not have time to eat right, time to exercise which leads to other issues, etc.

Reasons

There are many reasons for “not enough time”. The main ones are two, namely, 1)Materialistic Lifestyle and 2) Not grasping our priorities and goals in life.

Materialistic Lifestyle

We live in the information age that is a direct result from the industrial age. In this age, it seems it is impossible to imagine our lives without machines (including gadgets). Information travels so fast and our human mind has become so hungry for information that we feel that if we do not keep up we will be outdated and somewhere we will not be able to function. As a consequence we sacrifice sleep, rest, relationships, exercise, and healthy habits. Information has taken over our lives.

Our excessive dependence on machines has brought upon us its own load. Each piece of new equipment or book or anything you acquire (or buy), comes with its own demand on our time. For example, we buy a new iPhone or a Blu-ray player, but they all require time to read its manual and understand its working. Or let's say we buy a new book. We will have to spend time to read book.

Last night I was at a dinner party where families had brought their young children also. It was interesting to see how most of the children were playing electronic games on their parent's cellular phones. The younger children were coming to their parents and asking to download some new game that they heard about from the other children. When the parent refused, they said, “but it is only 99 cents to download.” What are we teaching everyone from a young age? What is important in life? Life is only fun and games and we should be able to get what we want, things are really cheap and cost should not interfere with my fun.

All such events as a result of our materialistic lifestyle brings upon immense demand on our own time that we just get buried under load of these self-brought dependence.

Not grasping our priorities and goals in life

Sometimes, we wonder that even after spending so much time on certain things, we did not achieve anything. Why? One of the primary reasons for our "time pressure" is we fail to understand what our priorities and goals are in our life. If we understand these in depth, then we will realize that we have wasted so much time in other things or events that were not important to our life at all. For example, I have my final tomorrow and a friend calls me and tells me that on

ESPN one of my favorite team is playing tonight. If my priority is not clear to me, I would be deeply tempted to see the game and not worry about my finals.

Another result of combination of this reason and the previous one is that we have become so materialistic that we always think about short term gains and pleasure. We never even try to understand importance of long term gain and inner peace in our lives.

If we look back we waste a lot of time in achieving short term goals that do not take us anywhere or in events or things that are not of prime importance to us in life. The net effect of such things is that it puts immense pressure on things are of high priority in our lives.

For instance we all understand that we are growing, we are going through school and eventually we will graduate with higher education. We will have to find a job and start supporting ourselves. We also know there will be an interview process before we are hired. What kinds of things about us, do you think companies will be interested in? Do you think they care about all the movies we have seen, all the computer games we have played, and the time spent on all the texting? Or do you think they will care about our grades, our inter-personal skills, and our ability to be focused and solve problems? We should ask ourselves, what our priorities should be.

Effects of Time Crunch in Human Lives

We have to wake up and starting understanding what price we are paying for our lack of discipline in time management. When we look at society today, we see so many people are self absorbed (just into themselves). If we want to have a happy life, the whole life, not just the moment, then we has to take the necessary steps, otherwise we will pay these prices:

1. Not being able to give enough time to things that are dear or important to us. For example, family. Net effect of this is tensions and disturbances in family life that can be devastating. Our family consists of our loved ones. You have to realize that no one will love you as your own family and no one will support you as your own family. You better start making time for your family so that in times of need, they are there for you. Please do not wait to find out what is going to happen when a calamity hits you, then it will be too late.
2. Not being able to be productive and efficient in our work due to lack of focus. Net effect of this may result into bad work patterns and problems related to financial income, etc. This is a serious problem that we see in society today. People have no clue on how to function in supporting themselves. What has caused all the problems we are seeing today, unemployment, mismanaged wealth, and broken families? We cannot blame others for our own state of existence.
3. Not being able to give time for personal development and health. (e.g. lack of exercise, etc.) Net effect will be impact on our body, age, etc. How are we going to manage stress that causes all other problem?
4. Not being able to give enough time for our spiritual development. There is a saying, "Prayer is not a spare wheel that you need in an emergency, but it is the steering wheel that is to be used all the time." Please understand who you are and make time for its development too.

How to solve this problem?

From references including Stephen Covey, Franklin Quest, etc., we came up with several points and solutions that can lead to effective Time Management and better control of our own life.

1. Spend some time prioritizing core values and goals in your life.

2. Evaluate how much time was spent on your core values and goals in life periodically
3. Eradicate (completely and sincerely) waste of time.
4. Do not spend unnecessary time on anything that does not contribute to a specific goal or priority in your life.
5. Understand your priorities very well and stick to them.
6. Use a top-down approach in utilizing your time. That is, start what is important and dear to you in life and then spend time accordingly; instead of a bottom-up approach where you spend time and then realize that this is not what I wanted to do.
7. Develop a good time balance in all important aspects of your life including social, economic, political, emotional and spiritual life.
8. Be in control and let not anyone including time control your life.
9. Try effective utilization of time. Piggyback few things that you have to do with others. For example, you are riding in a car and you are with some friends, then interact with them instead of watching a DVD or playing games. You are waiting in a line, then bring a book and read while waiting. You will learn that there are so many things that you can combine in your daily life and thus have time for important priorities in life.

Experiment about the stones in a jar

Demonstrate the experiment about placing stones in a glass or plastic jar. First start with placing the rice (smallest) in the jar, and then place the small pebbles followed by the large pebbles, next place the small stone and finally the large stones. Try to close the jar with its lid. Observe what happens.

Next, place all the larger stones first, then the small stones, followed by the large pebbles and then the small pebbles and lastly the rice. Try to close the jar with its lid. Observe what happens. The large stones represent all the important things in life followed by other types that decrease in importance. Teach that organizing our lives, still gives us time all that we value.