

The Myth About Effective Time Management

By Machen P. MacDonald. CPCC, CCSC
Coachmach@yahoo.com

The biggest myth about time management is the concept itself. To manage is to control the movement, behavior or direction of something. There are hundreds of systems, both high tech and low tech that claim to be able to help us manage our time and thereby create more of it for the things we really want to do. Don't get me wrong, I am an advocate of many of these systems and models and a diligent practitioner like the rest of you.

The idea that you, I or anybody can manage time is ludicrous. Trying to manage time is like managing gravity. It is a mighty big endeavor to control the movement, behavior or direction of gravity. Have you ever tried to manage an avalanche? That is a force just like time that can not be managed. Both will remain on their continuum regardless of what we do or don't do.

We cannot manage this force called time. We can however, manage ourselves in relation to time and thereby create power.

We have heard the cliches "time marches on", and "you can make more money but you can't make more time." Those are difficult to dispute.

What we are buying are systems, strategies and promises that claim they will give us more time in our lives. We rationalize that if we only had more time we would be able to accomplish more.

We each have the same 1440 minutes in a 24 hour day. That time, measured in minutes, is going to keep ticking away regardless of how you or I "manage" it. You simply can't make more time; unless you know something I don't. ☺ If it was possible to make more time then someone would have done it by now and would be selling it. We would all be buying it in all shapes, colors and sizes.

I don't think it is more time that people are after. I think what we are really after is the ability to experience more of what makes us feel good and less of what makes us feel bad during our time.

The real question is how did we get the illusion of time tangled up with what we want and don't want for ourselves? If you agree with Einstein that time is an illusion and the only thing that is real is NOW, then it is ourselves we must manage and not the time. It comes down to our power to choose. Choosing what we do or how we want to be in the NOW dictates how we feel. It is about us managing ourselves in relation to time.

7 helpful tips to managing yourself in relation to time:

1. Understand there will always be more to do than you can do. That's a good thing. If you got it all done what would you ever do? This allows you to get off your own back and experience less overwhelm in relation to time.
2. Become aware of what is important to you. Spend and invest your NOWs doing and being what is important to you. Hint: It probably revolves around the special people in your life. This allows you more satisfaction and connection in relation to time.
3. Notice if you are "investing" or "spending" your time. This allows you to be more effective in relation to time.

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4. Schedule only 60-70% of your working hours. The rest of your work day will be sure to fill in as it always has. This allows you less stress in relation to time.
5. Real power comes from focusing not from multi-tasking. You actually get more done in less time when you focus. This allows you more productivity in relation to time.
6. Say "No" to people and things that drain your energy and "Yes" to people and things that give you energy. This allows you more enjoyment in relation to time.
7. When faced with tough decisions and challenges, try solving them by coming from a perspective where "time" is not part of the equation and see what solutions you come up with. I.e., remove the perceived deadlines while brainstorming. This can really free up your thinking and allow you to be more brilliant in relation to time.

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