

## TimeWise™ Tips

*“Learn to use ten minutes intelligently. It will pay you huge dividends.”*

*William A. Irwin*

1. **Be response-able...** able to respond to what is important. Being really organized is about being READY. It's about feeling in command so that you are prepared to handle all of the opportunities, distractions and surprises life throws your way.
2. **Neaten up.**
  - a. **Clear the clutter.** Don't let all your “stuff” distract, delay, and sabotage you. Create clutter free zones where you can relax, reflect, recharge. Create time daily to keep it from piling up again.
  - b. **Everything in its place.** Get organized once and for all. Don't waste time looking for lost keys, glasses, important papers, needed phone numbers, etc.
  - c. **Consider the facts:** Most studies show that we lose an average of one to two hours per day searching for missing items in messy drawers, closets, and piles. The Wall Street Journal reports that the average executive loses 6 weeks each year searching for missing information in disorganized desks and files.
3. **Structure** is not a dirty word and does not stifle creativity. Consider the possibility that it may actually liberate you to be more creative.
4. **Have a plan.** Tasks that matter need to have a scheduled time rather than be just left to chance.
5. **Prioritize.** Devote a part of your day planner to lists titled:
  - a. Today / Immediate
  - b. Soon
  - c. Someday
  - d. Rainy Day
  - e. Wish List (things you would like to do, see, learn, try, explore, experience)
6. **Know thyself.** Schedule tasks, appointments, projects, meetings according to your own natural energy and concentration cycles. Are you a morning person? Do you fall into the pits at 4 p.m.? Think about what you do best when and create a day plan that works for you.
7. **Handle tolerations.** Make a list of all you are tolerating, things that drain your energy and apply the 4 D's:
  - a. Just DO it!
  - b. Delegate it.
  - c. Delete or Dispose of it.
  - d. Declare it over / unnecessary / complete.
8. **It's a STICKY process.** Use STICKIES / POST-ITS for stick-to-itiveness. One of the best ways to organize tasks, projects, errands, small lists. They are easy to use and move around to save recopying.

9. **Create a RECHARGE list.** Think of all the ways you can energize yourself when things get sluggish. (Hint: Include getting a good night's sleep.)
10. **Schedule DOWN TIME.** Block out time to read, relax, recharge, meander, think/ponder/mull, nap, daydream, stretch, *b r e a t h e*, etc.
11. **Be prepared.** Always carry paper and pen and/or a recorder. You never know when inspiration might strike... or an absolute *must-do* you had forgotten about... or when you will have a few minutes to spare to brainstorm or create a list of \_\_\_\_\_.
12. **Get real.** Most people underestimate the amount of time that something takes. Calculate / estimate. Be accurate, even generous, in the amount of time you assign to tasks. Be sure to include the hidden time factors like travel time, set-up time, revising time, think time, clean up time, wind-down time, re-energizing / refreshment time, stretch time.
13. **Minimize interruptions.** Create blocks of concentration time. Use a "Do not disturb" sign. Turn off the phone and leave a message as to when you will be returning calls. Handle e-mails, voice mail, etc. at specific times. Keep a notebook or recorder handy to record ideas and thoughts that pop into your head.
14. **Don't be a martyr.** Ask for help. Say yes to help. You don't have to do everything yourself. Also, learn to delegate artfully and judiciously.
15. **Learn to say "No."** Learn to admit when you cannot take on one more thing or come to someone's rescue. We all hate to disappoint someone BUT your own health and joy may be at stake. AND the people who really matter may be left with nothing but "bones."
16. **Become an efficiency expert.** Simplify routine and repetitive tasks. For example, create a master shopping list, a master travel list (*and keep a travel bag of pre-packed toiletries*), and a master "don't leave home for the day without it" list. Buy ALL your greeting cards for the year at one time. Create a user-friendly idiot-proof filing system (or hire an expert to do it for you). Find a favorite gift for each category and call your favorite salesperson(s) to send as needed.
17. **Be aware.** Notice where your time goes and, when necessary, make space in your schedule for things like travel time, waiting time, set-up and/or clean-up time, re-visioning time, snack attacks, answering phone calls and e-mails, unavoidable interruptions.
18. **Just Do It** What is one thing that is important to you that you never seem to have time for? Make a decision to and schedule it into your life. You'll be glad you did.
19. **Become a Sherlock Holmes.** Looking at what you avoid, obsess over, or procrastinate about can give you important clues about how to manage yourself in time more effectively.
  - I never have enough time to...
  - I spend too much time on...
  - I always underestimate how long it takes to...
  - I procrastinate whenever I have to...
  - I am usually late for...
  - It's hard for me to say no to...
  - I have a hard time finishing...
20. **Be JOYFULLY flexible.** Life happens. Don't be so busy that you cannot respond to magical moments and sweet serendipities.... or last minute tickets to some special event.

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