



Time Management 2.0

Four powerful new principles to improve the way you manage time

by Elizabeth J. Agnew, MS

Have you noticed that the old concept of time management is no longer working?

This old concept was the first iteration of time management that answered the question:

How can I fit it all in?

Spreadsheets, daily planners, and Blackberrys were the solution.

It centered on how to fit everything you want to do into a 24-hour period. It was the culture wave that brought the pervasive habit of perpetually being in “activity mode”, running from work to the gym to dinner to a meeting.

What I’m seeing now with my clients is that these tools alone are **not enough** to manage time effectively. Time management is no longer about **getting more done**. There’s a limit to what each of us can do, and there’s no amount of caffeine that will change that. And so the question has changed accordingly.

In order to be sustainably effective, “time management” must answer a different question.

Am I spending my time in a way that exactly matches what I value?

This sounds simple, but take a look at the last week. It’s incredibly easy to fall into a habit of giving our time to people and projects that aren’t aligned with what matters to us.

The following four principles can help you manage your time so that you spend it wisely.

1. Brutal Honesty

Face the music. You know yourself better than anyone else and you know if you mean it when you commit to something. Be honest with yourself and don’t tell yourself you’ll do something when you won’t. If you schedule time to work on a project, mean it. Applying a filter of ‘brutal honesty’ means you take yourself and your desires seriously.

2. Ruthless Editing

This means saying “no” to opportunities that come into your world that don’t align with what you want. You may need to reevaluate your priorities, take an inventory of where your time is going, and cut out the parts that don’t fit. And to keep doing this over the coming months and years. Adopt a lifestyle where you are always aware of how you’re using your time. I call this “ruthless” because you’re 100% committed to your values above everything else.

3. Energy Efficiency

Does what you’re doing with your time match your energy level? Follow your own circadian rhythm when scheduling tasks. This will help you focus when you need to focus, and multitask when you

feel like being scattered. You can't schedule your time efficiently if you're not using your energy efficiently.

4. Persistent Patience

If you're going to focus, that means doing only one thing at a time. In order to wait on all the other things you want to do, you need to be patient. This principle also helps you be where you are in the moment by letting go of the other demands for the time being. Applying patience is committing to exactly what you're doing right now.

Make a list of your values and priorities. What's most important to you? You know what you want. Dare to go get it by spending your time doing exactly what you value most.



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