

Step Back from Time to Time: Do Less, Not More

“Beware the mind-destroying drug of constant activity.” - Loren Eiseley

Most of us lead hectic and demanding lives, and a certain amount of busyness is crucial in order to earn a living, to be creative, and simply to survive. However, going through life as though we are on a constant express train can be wearying, and detrimental to our wellbeing. Our health and our relationships can suffer. One answer may be to keep up our necessary activities, whilst pruning out some of the extraneous ones; there is always the option of delegating too. And even in the midst of activity there is the possibility of finding composure, for example by taking short breaks. These pauses may even mean we achieve more in the long run, as we avoid burning ourselves out, and find renewed energy to carry on. Conversely, continual effort can leave us feeling frustrated and exhausted, and like we are chasing our own tails.

Taking time out can have all sorts of benefits. It allows our subconscious minds to process what has gone before, and sometimes new inspiration comes from simply doing nothing. We can all benefit from making time to pause, reflect and dream. Try sitting in silence, or taking a walk in nature, and make sure you leave your mobile phone and your laptop firmly switched off! Work should be viewed as a part of life, and not the other way around! Of course, we work partly because of our desire for material things, but more and more possessions do not necessarily bring happiness and peace of mind. Breathing space and quality time, on the other hand, both can and do!

Making time to play, and to simply have fun can nurture the soul, and make us more rounded human beings. If we create more space in our lives then we are more likely to have time for others - time in which we can be truly compassionate and caring. We can apply the brakes and make opportunities to really listen to what other people have to say; good communication with another makes us feel more connected with the human race, and – I might add – with ourselves. After all, do we want the epitaph on our gravestone to read, ‘Never missed a day at the office’, or would we prefer something like, ‘We were loving and caring people who shared our time and our selves generously with those we came into contact with’?

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