

# *From the Heart...*

*...Lifeskills for Today's Family*  
*By Sharon L. Benedict MS*



## ***Time & Time Again***

(published in Boerne Star, Friday, Feb 5, 2016)

Before you continue reading this article, set it aside with a question I offer to you.

At this moment, how does this time, this moment, fit into your life?

What was your first thought? Maybe you were sipping on a cup of coffee, taking a morning or evening break as a routine for you. Possibly, you were cruising through the paper to see what's in it and my article caught your eye. Or, maybe, you are one of my loyal readers who can't wait to see what I come up with next. BTW, thank you!

May I also thank all readers who have paused over the years for a moment to read any of my articles. My hope is my muses and, at times, venting, have provided a pleasant if not purposeful moment in time to reflect on life and those daily lifeskills we face each day. And here we are again with a new February where time is the topic.

Back to the question now. For myself, my first thought while writing this article was, "I do love to write but hope I can keep on keeping on with some bits of wit, whimsy, and even wisdom along the 'writing' way." It's been an amazing ride starting my 11<sup>th</sup> year. Since the number 11 throughout my life has always been a significant number for me, I will consider this year a banner one with possible surprises along the way. Maybe those surprises may come with some challenges. Yet, I find that life is always a faith-filled balance of attitude between the good stuff and the bad stuff. So, even with my

senior years, I will continue to be my ever positive Pollyanna! So now that you have heard my first thought, what about yours? Here are some possible ones you may have:

- I know...I am just procrastinating getting that to do list done. But it's nice to just sit for awhile.
- This is my time, my moment, to chill, and do whatever I want. And reading the paper is it.
- After hearing some difficult and scary news from the doctor today, I am more and more grateful for this moment in time.
- My first thought surprised me. I have been so concerned about the direction of our nation thinking, "What can I do? I am just one person." Then it came to me to do something today right within my community to walk my talk.
- So many of us take for granted we will have that next moment, next day, next year. But we really don't know what our tomorrows may be. So, what I am doing right now, is it what I should do with this moment?

As the author of this byline, I would love for you all to believe reading my articles are an important part of your day. Yet, I also heartily concede we each only have one life to live. You are the only one to know whether this moment is to be part of your day and life.

For my part, I will continue to diligently work to write about lifeskill topics that will hopefully make a difference in every reader's life. May you enjoy the moments gifted to you each day. And whatever you are doing in those moments may they be filled with love, laughter, and life.

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*Sharon L. Benedict, is a speaker, author, and weaver, and loving it! She is available for speaking engagements, free-lance writing, and will even weave you a one-of-kind creation, just for you. Sharon also welcomes your questions and comments and can be contacted at [seekreachachieve@gvtc.com](mailto:seekreachachieve@gvtc.com). Visit her website at [www.celebratingyourjourney.com](http://www.celebratingyourjourney.com).*

# *From the Heart...*

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## **What do some say about time?**

(published in Boerne Star, Friday, Feb 12, 2016)

What do people say about time? And how do we learn to manage the time given us each day? Let's start with what more notable individuals have said about time. One of my own quips helps me stay focused, such as, "How time flies when muddling through!" Who wants to just muddle through life? I know I don't. Yet I find myself at times feeling definitely "stuck" in place wondering where I am.

Here are gems from those notables who have helped me get out of the "time muddling mire." Hope they help you pause for a moment or a day to get unstuck too.

- "At the end of your life, you will never regret not having passed one more test, not winning one more verdict or not closing one more deal. You will regret time not spent with a husband, a friend, a child, or a parent." Barbara Bush (1925-present), First Lady of the United States
- "Time flies over us, but leaves its shadow behind." Nathaniel Hawthorne (1804-1864), American Novelist
- "Lost time is never found again." Benjamin Franklin (1706-1790), US Founding Father
- "Time and memory are true artists; they remould reality nearer to the heart's desire." John Dewey (1859-1952), American Philosopher/Psychologist

- “Time is a sort of river of passing events, and strong is its current; no sooner is a thing brought to sight than it is swept by and another takes its place, and this too will be swept away.” Marcus Aurelius (121-180 AD), Roman Emperor
- “You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people all the time.” Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865), President of the United States
- “Better three hours too soon than a minute too late.” William Shakespeare
- “We must use time wisely and forever realize that the time is always ripe to do right.” Nelson Mandela (1918-2013), President of South Africa, Anti-apartheid Revolutionary, Politician, Philanthropist
- “Half our life is spent trying to find something to do with the time we have rushed through life trying to save.” Will Rogers (1879 - 1935), New York Times, Apr. 29, 1930
- “The advantage of a bad memory is that one enjoys several times the same good things for the first time.” Friedrich Nietzsche (1844 - 1900)
- “In times like these, it helps to recall that there have always been times like these.” Paul Harvey (1918-2009), conservative American radio broadcaster
- "The greatest lesson in life is to know that even fools are right sometimes." Winston Churchill (1874-1965, *Cracking up: American humor in a time of conflict*. 2006)
- "Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow." Albert Einstein (1879-1955), Theoretical Physicist

These are just a few thoughts to consider. What do they say to you? For me, they encourage me to stay focused on what is most important to me and those I love. Time flies but always leaves behind reflections and realities of a life lived for the good or the bad. Time lost is forever gone. So, to redeem the time make the most of what you have in each moment with cherished memories. Even when we do foolish things, eventually time will give us the opportunity to learn from the experience. And with every moment of time, we can always do the right thing.

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# *From the Heart...*

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## **Treasuring Time**

(published in Boerne Star, Friday, Feb 19, 2016)

In the month of January the lifeskill focus was Core Values & Relationships. Our thoughts centered around new beginnings not just for ourselves but also for those around us. We also centered ourselves around what is most important in our lives through each season of relationships.

Relationships that last forever consisted of certain key qualities and priorities, such as you are committed to offering communication with love, and genuine listening from the heart. You also work at a balanced relationship where the two of you mutually support each other and simply enjoy being around each other.

We then centered our thoughts around saying goodbye to a dear friend who may have struggled with a life-threatening illness. You were there by their side throughout the journey. You also knew that only those who have made the cancer journey could ever understand more fully the depth and courage required to fight the good fight.

Questions were asked whether or not your friend wins the battle here or wins it on the other side. "How do you say goodbye to a dear friend? What do you say before they are gone? How has your own life and faith been challenged? How do you share your love and faith while they are still with you?"

You may wonder, “Why is she reviewing January articles?” I answer with a question for you, “What do these January articles all have in common?” Yes, it is about relationships, your core values, and what is most important to you. Yet, here’s a hint that ties it all together. *“Treasure the moments as you Invest and make forever Memories of Encouragement and love.”*

With every thought and action we take, does the time spent each day reflect the values and relationships that make this life worth every moment? I hope so. One exercise that can spotlight how you use your time may prove helpful knowing every moment does have meaning. We all have daily responsibilities between those fixed, scheduled in activities and those that may surprise us, filling our days in between.

Many of those “in-between” activities can often end up wasting our days. They may also end up changing our lives forever. To have meaning in every moment takes some thought and time. Here’s a chart to consider. With each lifeskill area write in how much time you spend through the week and the activities.

Lifeskill Area	Amount of Time Spent & Activities
1. Core Values/Relationships	
2. Managing Time	
3. Career & Money Managing	
4. Recordkeeping	
5. Possession Care (taking care of your “stuff”)	
6. Housekeeping	
7. Wellness	
8. Meals	
9. Childcare	



10. Recreation/Entertainment (How do you “play”?)	
11. Reflection	
12. Celebration	

Every lifeskill has an important place in your daily life. How does it add up for you? Any change you want to make in the way you spend your time and life? What areas say “I am in the right place at the right time”? In what area(s) do you believe you are spending too much time or not enough?

If you are spending too much time in one area, how do you want to change that? One example could be your career or job is robbing you of time away from family, friends, taking care of your health/wellness, or there is no time to play and just relax. Choose one area where you spend too much or too little of your time, then commit yourself to one specific way toward changing the amount of time and/or activity to better align your week and life.

You may best be able to accomplish this change after discussing your thoughts with your family. Ask them for input and ideas. You just may be surprised what surfaces in the conversation. Hopefully, the whole family will share in your time management adventure so everyone will discover a more family-friendly way to spend those 24 hours each day. And if you ever wondered how your future will look, remember, what you do in each moment actually adds up to your future. So treasure your time today and every day.

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## ***Time-Ticking Politics***

(published in Boerne Star, Friday, Feb 26, 2016)

What a year this is turning out to be. We all knew 2016 was going to be a presidential election year. Yet, most of us are already exhausted from the political carnage we are witnessing each day. And it's only February!

For some, you may be in the thick of it campaigning for your local, state, or national favorite. Others may be the silent majority waiting for the dust to settle a little more before stepping in to the fray. There are also those on the sidelines who prefer to vent on Facebook their interminable rant about any one or more of the candidates. And God-forbid if a Republican or a Democrat gets elected! Of your God-forbids, they may definitely depend on your party affiliation, personal loyalties, and beliefs.

I hope no matter your affiliation, even your Facebook forecasts or fantasies of the future, we all will be able to stay somewhat sane and rational throughout the coming months. I bet you wonder, "How in the world is that possible?" Well, dear reader friend, I hope what I offer here will give you solace through this season's swaggering political posturing.

I realize there are very serious situations at stake for our nation and the world. And none of them should be taken lightly or ignored. For so many, this time-ticking political season feels more than a time-ticking bomb about to explode. However, can I

begin with a ray of hope that comes from beyond humanity's exceptional tendency to think in terms of the extreme gloom and doom variety? It seems that truth is hard to come by these days from all the blistering bravado blasted across the airwaves. And much of so-called "truth" seems to be a variable easily bent in any direction one desires.

In spite of this reality, can you first decide that no matter what happens God does exist, loves his human creation, and would rather offer His Truth with Mercy in the midst of our mess? And that inside each of us we are given the opportunity and ability to be a positive presence for our community and our nation whatever the party affiliation or values we hold dear. If you can, then we just may be able to actually recognize wisdom when it whispers to us. That is where our hope rests.

Here is another hopeful help. No matter how passionate you may be about your values and political platform, you can disagree agreeably. We each have the freedom to choose how to respond to that person in front of us who may be on the far side of our values, both personally and politically. But there is no denying it; that person in front of you is a person deserving of respect for simply being human. If you make the effort, you will find some common ground to affirm each other as you respectfully disagree. Believe me, this sounds simple, and it is. However, it is far from easy.

Our emotions and insecurities always seem to flare up when we least expect them. That is particularly so when we tend to believe the world is doomed if it doesn't go the way we want it to go. And if we were to be honest about it, we would want everyone to have the values we hold dear. We also work hard at trying to convince them those values are virtues applicable for everyone. So, you may need to "pause" for awhile to

recompose yourself before the mouth starts to open and the body starts to reverberate any rant or rage. You just may find a friend on the other side of your camp.

So, whether you are in the thick of it or staying on the sidelines for awhile until voting day, I can guarantee you will have an opportunity to share your personal and political values somewhere along the way. I hope you discover that you can remain hopeful for our nation's future because you trust in God's Mercy and His much greater desire for humanity's future than any of us. And that you can "pause" and reflect prior to voicing your thoughts or venting your opinions face-to-face, on Facebook, or any other social media.

May what you share be done with respect and personal responsibility for the impact your voice and actions will have on others and our nation. This is your time and opportunity in 2016.

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