

From the Heart...

...Life Skills for Today's Family

By Sharon L. Benedict MS, CLC



When Time Runs Out . . . or Not

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Think about a time in your life when you believed time had run out for you? Was it in a relationship, a job, your “old glutcher” (car, that is), or even your old “ticker” (heart, that is)?

We all know that we don't really know what tomorrow will bring. Yes, each day we all have scheduled our time in so many ways. But guess what? It's not just you that sets the schedule. Other people are after your time. There are thousands of movie rental stores urging you to spend time watching one or more of their movies. There are hundreds of amusement parks calling you to “spend the day with us.” And I couldn't even imagine how many sports events draw you to spend hours every week cheering your favorite team.

The one thing about time is you blink and that time is gone forever. We spend money. We spend time. The difference is we have the option of saving money, but not time. When we use it, that's it. It's not coming back. All you can do with time is spend it.

Consider Methuselah, the grandfather of Noah, from the Hebrew Bible (Genesis 5:27), who supposedly lived 969 years. He was really just like you and I as far as time is concerned. He too didn't know how long he was going to live.

Every morning he only had today. You don't know how long you will live. You too only have today.

Whether we perceive time moving fast or slow, that is our perception, not time's reply to us. Ivan Turgenev (1818-1883) was a Russian novelist, short story writer, and playwright. In one of his writings, he penned "Time sometimes flies like a bird, sometimes crawls like a snail; but a man is happiest when he does not even notice whether it passes swiftly or slowly." We could then be so in the moment, fully engaged, that time almost feels infinite.

Scientists for the past century have been wrestling with the mystery of time and space. It seems that time, space, and whatever object floating in space seemingly change the way time is recorded. In *Splitting Time from Space—New Quantum Theory Topples Einstein's Spacetime* By Zeeya Merali (November 24, 2009), "Einstein famously overturned the Newtonian notion that time is absolute—steadily ticking away in the background. Instead he argued that time is another dimension, woven together with space to form a malleable fabric that is distorted by matter." Yet, the mystery still prevails. Only time will tell, pun intended.

Then add the distinction between "Chronos" and "Kairos," the Greek language that makes Chronos refer to numeric, or chronological, time. Kairos literally means "the right or opportune moment," and is specifically related to metaphysical or Divine time. In theology, Kairos is qualitative, as opposed to quantitative. Where chronological time keeps being spent, divine quality time just might redeem some your spent time in its own mysterious ways.

So, keep that in mind and heart as you make choices each moment throughout the day. Time may not have run out as you thought. For each day is another opportunity to redeem the time, even if you are actually a day older. What a gift to treasure!

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From the Heart. . .

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By Sharon L. Benedict MS, CLC



Not enough time and too tired to do anything about it

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Are you in the middle of a maze of things to get done, decisions to make, actions to take today? Is the list driving your life more than you? If it is, then you probably are having a rough time figuring out what is most important versus what seems to be urgent. And there doesn't seem to be ever enough time.

You also may be avoiding those more difficult things to face and take care of. Why not just get the easy ones done fast and come back to the hard ones later or never. The hard ones just might disappear or take care of themselves eventually, right? Maybe all this is giving you one ginormous hint (meaning giant, enormous, huge, gargantuan—you get the picture)!

No, it's not "just get organized", although it does play a part. Let's cut to the chase . . . you are just too tired to do anything about it. You don't even have the energy to read the list of "to do's" you stuck under the pile. Out of sight, out of mind. And for the moment it feels good.

What do you do about it? Just get tough and keep moving? Ignore your exhaustion? I don't think so. No matter how many times you try to turn the ignition key, the engine won't start. It only replies with either a few grinding noises or repetitive clicks before complete silence may show up. No, I'm not

talking about your car. Your own internal engine is giving you warnings that something is low or missing. And you need refueling or something replaced.

Consider first that the key doesn't turn. You just may have your "get up and go" in park—your motivation isn't moving. So, give yourself a 15 to 30 minute break to jump-start your motivation and try again.

If that doesn't work, then consider that your fuel and/or fluids may be low or on empty. It sounds silly but many people keep pushing themselves on an empty stomach and also get dehydrated. They don't realize, in the long-run, they overheat, run out of steam, and end up not doing a very good job with the job at hand. Simply, fill the tank—go eat, and keep the fluids flowing in your body. Then see if your engine reeves up again.

If not, consider your spark plugs may be loose or need replacing. If an area of your life has a loose connection, simply reconnect. Sometimes something in your life needs to be replaced (and I don't necessarily mean your spouse!). Check under the heart hood and find out if you need something new in your life to jump start you again.

If not, consider that it could be your battery—your mind, heart, and body are just plain exhausted. If your headlights, your mind of course, is not as bright as usual, time to recharge. Be sure to read your owner's manual (i.e. what's most important in your life) on how to jump-start so you won't end up again burning out body and soul components. Ask a knowledgeable friend to help you. You sure don't want to wait until you hear that erratic "clicking" noise in your heart that

could also indicate “blocked fuel lines,” and you are dangerously low, bordering on dead!

While you are checking up on your mind and heart, look over the rest of you for any area needing help. Don’t wait to look under the hood tomorrow, next day, or next month. Believe me, it’s no fun to find all your wires and cables have become corroded and may need to be replaced before you can get yourself back on the road again.

So, before you try to prioritize and get organized with your list, take a much needed inventory. But even before you do that, take a peaceful walk in nature and a long, quiet nap in a place of refuge (if not your own home, find that special spot). And turn off your cell phone or any other device that would interrupt. Do it today. Both nature and nap will do wonders for waking you up to a new day for tackling that list. Next article will focus on tips for tackling.

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Tips for Time

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Had a nice nature walk and nap yet? I hope so. You will then be ready for tips to tackle managing your time. If you haven't done your nature walk and nap, do it now. Then come back to this article.

Sarah Welch and Alicia Rockmore offers us in their article, *Buttoned Up: Nine immutable laws of time management*, some great tips I pass along (<http://www.timesreporter.com/life/x715340241/Buttoned-Up-Nine-immutable-laws-of-time-management>). Check out the details. For now, I'll give you the highlights and pose a question for you on each tip. My hope is your response will get you started in the right direction being more in sync with your life and daily responsibilities.

The first tip states "In anything, 20 percent of task are critical, 80 percent are trivial." I offer a question for you that may help you know the difference.

"What is most important to you?"

The second tip is "Delegating is the only way to get more done in less time..." My question for you is "Who do you have to delegate to?"

The third is "Inertia is a powerful force." My question is "Which is causing your inertia...not wanting to tackle the most difficult project or situation or just still too tired to tackle it?"

The fourth is “Work will fill up whatever time you have allotted for it.” My question is the same as Welch and Rockmore. “If I had to complete my most pressing project in half the time, how would I do it?”

The fifth is “Multitasking impairs intelligence and hurts your efficiency.” My question is “Which is easier and takes less time for you...multitasking or completing task sequentially?” Do the one that takes less time. Regardless what researchers may say about the time wasting issues in multitasking, some people actually use less time when multitasking. It really all depends on your personality style, age, task at hand, and life situation.

The sixth is “Nothing goes according to plan.” My question is “Where can you slip in flex time for the unexpected?”

The seventh is “What you write down and schedule gets done.” My question is “What is the difference between important and urgent for you?” Often times, we are pushed to do something that you or someone else feels is urgent, but not necessarily important at that particular time. Write down what you believe is important, put a deadline on it, then do it.

The eighth tip is “Every person has a ‘prime time’.” My question is “When do you feel the most energetic?” Whatever that time is do what is most important during those hours.

The ninth and final tip is “Batteries run out.” My question is “How do you slot in ‘ME’ time to make sure your batteries don’t run out?” If you were able to read the previous article, and you are stressed and tired out, now is the time to take that nature walk and a long nap, along with some whole, healthy foods to

renew your energy. I hope the time you used to read this article has helped you tackle and treasure your time.

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The digital age and time tools

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With all the personal and work appointments, deadlines, reminders, even random thoughts or ideas you want to save, where can you keep them all in one place? In years past most of us had a physical calendar in the kitchen and/or on our desk. We also used a day planner notebook that we took everywhere we went. Then we had the standard cell phone that took calls, left messages, and had a basic calendar on it. We also had a computer at home and/or work with email capability, word processing software, and the other computer basics.

Yet, in just a few years we now have the smart phone, ipads, you name it. Are these just more electronics hanging around duplicating functions? Or are they really useful and valuable time management tools? It really all depends on you, doesn't it?

First, have you taken the time to learn the features in each one? If not, they are of little use and a waste of money. Yet, if you do learn their features, and that takes quite a bit of time to learn and practice using them, they just might prove their cost. One big difference between this decade and the past decades is integration. You can actually synchronize your smart phone with your computer, ipad, and other mobile devices now.

Keep in mind you may need to go to a workshop offered by the provider online or on site to make sure each step is correctly followed. Otherwise, all kinds of difficulties can arise blocking interfacing between your phone, email, Google, photos/video uploads and downloads, social networks, your computer. It's a big cyber world out there now. And when all is connected and interfacing with each other, a lot of information is also being accessed into marketing databases.

Hopefully, there is sufficient security to safeguard your more private information. So, how far do you want to go to "get connected" and still have a sense of privacy? That is a question only you can answer. On one hand, when completely connected, you are right there with most of your friends, and have access to just about any website, social network, application with games, products and services known to man. On the other hand, the number of soliciting calls skyrocket for some. You may have to just ignore the ads and also work around the spam coming in all directions.

Although some people consider me a techy person, I am far from meeting the level needed to make all the connections. My learning curve is rapidly mounting since I just bought my first smart phone, Droid 3. Yes, I know, Droid 4 and Droid Razr are here now, including iPhones; and getting faster and more sophisticated by the day. I am glad to just start with Droid 3 for my purposes. I've worked on the basic setup and am now at the Google interface junction. I now have a problem to solve since the phone doesn't recognize my Google account for some strange reason.

Keep in mind that Google is one of those marketing databases that will be collecting my buying and visiting tendencies. And I will need it to access their apps, including scanning barcodes that lots of vendors, nonprofits, businesses, magazines use now to get you immediately connected to relevant information of interest.

As I give you just a glimpse into this new cyber world, I am still trying to decide how deep I am going to get into this. I am fast learning that to do any kind of business, getting cyber and digitally savvy is a must. So, here I go, one step at a time hoping to achieve connection that is “simple, accessible, and reliable.” These are three standard time management criteria for any tools you may want to use to make your time and day go more smoothly.

As of today, I am beginning to see that my Droid 3 is offering features that has actually used my time more efficiently. And I can be free of all the notepads I carried along with me to write down something I don't want to forget. Although, I do keep one notepad and pen handy, just in case my phone is misbehaving. That still does happen even with their so-called “smart” phones. I also made sure all contacts, messages, photos, videos are backed up.

One final thing I have learned lately is to have a password on the phone to lock others out in case it is lost or stolen. And get replacement insurance, just in case. My daughter's phone was stolen recently. Fortunately she had insurance and it was easily replaced; and she could download her contacts that were backed up. Now that's a time-saver in itself.

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