

Time Management

Mindfulness Worksheet

Date / Time:

So far today, have you brought kind awareness to your:

Thoughts? Heart? Body? None

To begin this Time Management Meditation, please bring kind awareness to

- why you chose this topic
- how your belly, chest, and head each feel when you reflect on this topic
- the emotions that you can associate with these visceral feelings
- the positive or negative impact of any stories you believe in regarding this topic
- the fact that many others are feeling similarly about this topic as you
- how you might feel with increased awareness around this topic
- when you can apply increased mindfulness to this topic in your day-to-day life



■ PURPOSE / EFFECTS

Learning how to effectively manage your time is becoming more important, but often also more difficult, in modern technical go-go societies. This method can help you assess how well you are managing your time. It also offers suggestions to improve your time management skills, which can increase your efficiency and productivity.

■ METHOD

Summary

First, assess your current time management skills. Then, practice prioritizing, delegating, eliminating distractions, and saying “no.”

Long Version

Assessing Your Time Management Skills:

Choose a typical day and track, in fifteen minute intervals, how you spend your time. An easy way to do this is to create a little form, using a spreadsheet, in which each row is a fifteen minute interval (e.g., 7:00 am, 7:15, 7:30, 7:45, 8:00, etc.) and each column is a different type of activity (e.g., sleep, cuddling partner, shower, breakfast, commute, work, kids, dinner, TV, reading, emails).

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Then add up the time spent in each category. If possible, do this exercise for more than one day, and then average across all the days you track. Review the results and draw your own conclusions about how spend your time.

Tips for Time Management:

➤ **Prioritize**

Practice prioritizing tasks by breaking them down into 3 groups:

1. Those that definitely need to be finished today.
2. Those that need to be done within a day or two, but not necessarily today.
3. Those that need to be done farther out in the future.

➤ **Make a schedule for your daily activities**

Each morning, write your to-do list for the day in order of priority. Once you have made this list, really try to DO your top priority items.

➤ **Delegate**

Keep looking for any tasks can be appropriately delegated to others. For example, ask for needed support at work, or insist that your kids (if you have them) help with the dishes.

➤ **Identify and eliminate distractions and time-wasters**

Look for any unnecessary activities that drained your time or distracted you. These could include staying up late watching dumb TV and feeling drowsy the next day, or getting sucked into the conflicts of others that truly don't need to concern you.

➤ **Learn to say "no"**

An important aspect of time management is knowing how much you can realistically get done. After scheduling your daily tasks, be wary of agreeing to do additional work for others if you know that it will postpone your original plans. While saying "no" can initially seem difficult, it often becomes easier with time, and you will be rewarded by completing more of your to-do list.

➤ **Avoid perfectionism**

Some people waste significant amounts of time trying to do a task "perfectly." If this sounds familiar, practice setting time limits to each task you do, and work with tolerating the possibility that it might not be perfect.

➤ **Just do it**

Avoid procrastinating the tasks you dread by spending at least 10-15 minutes on one of them each day.

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HISTORY

The tips and practices offered in this method came from a variety of sources, including the Mayo Clinic's online resources, and Michelle Craske and David Barlow's book *Mastery of Your Anxiety and Worry*.

CAUTIONS

It is important to remember that often in today's hectic society there is simply not enough time to do all of the things you would like to accomplish. Even after implementing the techniques offered in this method, it is still possible that you will struggle with time management. Please remember to be gentle and patient with yourself if you cannot complete all of the tasks on your to-do list.

Additionally, you may receive some negative feedback as you begin to say "no" when others ask you to do something for them. Trust that you know best what you can handle and are actually taking care of yourself by saying "no," even if it initially displeases others.

NOTES

Keep in mind that in addition to these time management suggestions, sometimes it may be necessary to re-adjust your expectations regarding how much you can actually do each day.

Thank you for your mindfulness practice.