

# Learn how to relax and you'll find you have enough time

Women's roles have taken a sharp turn through the last few decades. Those who were once housewives are now chief executive officers or even astronauts. Women have moved courageously into diverse super roles.

In balancing super roles and family demands, women burn the candle at both ends. A major concern is lack of time. For many, it is like running a marathon with a laptop in one hand, a phone in the other, a child on the shoulder, and a boss on your back — along with the expectations of oneself and others. The inevitable will happen: The back is bound to break.

Women are built to be strong, both emotionally and mentally. It is not that they don't have the reservoir of strength within to keep the balls up in the air, but that they often dishonor, under-use and misperceive time.

## Honoring Time

Time is dishonored when spent on empty talks, draining relationships, unwanted phone calls, unforgiving painful memories, or self-sabotaging addictions. Women must consider how much of their time is spent on productive, versus destructive, behaviors, activities and thoughts. Mental and emotional energy is dissipated when engaged in destructive activities. Honor the self by disengaging from time- and energy-losing activities, first by becoming aware, then by making a conscious choice to say no and finally

replace these activities with productive ones.

## Using Time

Most women want their lives to run on the expressway to success. However, the majority of their time is focused on future dreams or past failures, leaving small amounts of time to effectively handle the objectives of today. It is the proper use of time today that will get optimal results tomorrow. It is unheard of to work yesterday, or on a future date, to get results today. Thus, not only is it wise, it is extremely effective to use and invest energies in the now.

## Perceiving Time

To have a deeper understanding of how time is perceived, listen carefully to the negative terminology women often use in association with time. For example:

- I don't have any time.
- Time is running out.
- I am not getting any younger.
- I wish the time would move faster.
- When will the weekend arrive?

When the above statements are repeated, it conditions the mind to perceive time as a scarce resource. Instead of using time wisely, women end up losing time and energy. Furthermore, the last two statements conflict with the idea that time is lacking by proclaiming a devastating desire to carelessly waste time. A cluttered mind filled with conflicting perceptions causes confusion and blurs our vision. Unlearn the dichotomies of preconceived notions regarding time.

To succeed, women must abandon unproductive and destructive habits that keep them stuck. Though the way women honor, use and perceive time is an acquired habit, it is never too late. The investment of time made today to unlearn what does not work will clear up cluttered minds and energize and balance life.

To rid yourself of old habits and create new

ones, the mind needs to be disciplined, as it will fight to return to its set ways. In the beginning, start small:

- Set aside 15 minutes of uninterrupted time a day for yourself.
  - For the first few days keep a log of what doesn't work in your life until you can't think of further problems.
  - Pay special attention to things that bother you, as these are the clues to your inner state of being.
  - If you can't get to the bottom of bothersome situations, don't beat yourself up. Instead seek a life coach.
  - Next, write how you would want your ideal life to be.
  - Now stretch the 15 minutes to 25 and in that time do something you love — take a walk, dance, practice yoga, meditate, do Tai Chi, paint, sing, etc.
- When women engage their minds in something they enjoy, their level of concentration increases, resulting in increased vitality.

Spending time relaxing on a regular basis will eventually dissipate negative memories and fuel women with the life force they need to handle

all their responsibilities.

Relaxed minds move effortlessly toward desired results, while cluttered minds keeps women stuck. By giving themselves the gift of time, women are honoring and using the most precious resource they have — the woman within.

Over time, relaxation will cause tainted perceptions to lose their tight grip on the mind. One day, in the middle of chaos, the memory of bliss experienced during relaxation will kick in automatically without any effort. That will be the test of time and women will know that the newly-found habit is here to stay.

Don't stop. Keep the practice going. Just as bodies require food, minds require relaxation. The daily practice of relaxation will ensure that you effectively meet your increasing demands. Most importantly, it will allow self-expression in what you choose to do.

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## GUEST COLUMN



NEERJA BHATIA

## Words from Wise Women

"Medicine is a great profession. ... It's still a very moral profession. I know we don't make millions like those software people, but we make a decent living. And in the medical profession, there are always jobs. ... There are so many diversified interests in medicine that women can work part time — if they have stayed with the same group and shown their worth."

— Chander Kapasi, physician