

Self management versus time management

Do you know sentences like this: I don't have enough time", "I am always running late", "I am frustrated because I feel there must be another way", "I never find the time to do the things I really love to do"....

"I don't have enough time"

Do you have electronic calendars and appointment books; or have you already taken a time management seminar hoping you will have more time and will be able to manage your time better, and nothing changed?

What about the following: I believe there is no such thing as time management. Time is the same everywhere. 24 hours a day, 168 hours a week. Not more and not less, it's a limited resource. Instead of looking at how you manage that limited resource, what about looking at how you spend time?

Time is the same everywhere

I call it "activity-management or self-management" - this is what we chose to do in our time. What activities do we want to put in our time and what activities don't we want to put in our time. This is our choice. To take it a step further: Who decides this?

From my own point of view I say, each and every one of us decided that. We make new appointments and, we cancel appointments. We decide how we want to manage our lives. That's what I call "self-management".

I often ask my clients to write down and track how they spend their time for a week, from the moment they get up until the moment when they go to sleep.

A small exercise!

Writing down all the activities, from having a shower and, breakfast, counting the hours they need to get to work, tracking their tasks at work (meetings, answering phone calls, and e-mails), the time they worry about their work, household chores, shopping, cleaning and so on. Focus on the activities – how and with whom, you spend your day.

Many of my clients were surprised about the outcome of this exercise. Very often we are not aware of how we spend our time and how much time we need for certain things.

You can do this little exercise for an hour or for an entire week. Some of my clients bought little notebooks to write everything down.

After doing this exercise I ask my clients to answer the following questions:

Questions you can ask yourself

- Am I living a happy and balanced life?
- Is this exactly how I want to spend my life for the next 10 years?
- Are these the priorities in my life I really want to live for?
- Does this time amount spent reflect the priorities in my life?
- Am I doing too much?
- Do I spend time on my own?

Now the good news: **YOU** can change that. You are in charge and you can manage yourself. You are the one who decides which activities you want to follow and which ones you don't want to pursue. It is also possible to say no. You are allowed to cancel an appointment in order to have more time for yourself.

What activities would you love to do?

Going for a long walk, taking a bath, having a massage, listening to music, reading a good book, having lunch with a wonderful friend or doing absolutely nothing enjoying your time alone.
What else?

You can change your priorities. If you are not happy with how you spend your time, change your activities, and add new ones. Start with a small one and as you increase that muscle you will have more ideas. Make this a game, make it fun and enjoy it.

Changing your priorities

Ask yourself the following questions:

- What activities make me smile?
- Where do I want to spend more time in my life?
- What needs more attention in my life?
- What gives me energy?
- How can I build my life around that?

I'd love to hear from you – your ideas, and your success stories. If you feel stuck, and need an energy boost, send me an e-mail and we can arrange a call. I am here to support you.

I hope this helps.

Warmly

Heidi

This article appeared in the magazine "Hello Basel" , an English – language magazine in Basel