

MAKING MINUTES MATTER

Your Guide To Being Content
With How You Spend Your Time

Mary Kutheis



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For M.O.M. and Dad.
I miss you every day.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Introduction	1
Chapter One – Ready to Take Back Control	3
My Story	3
If you don't like your current results...	8
You Must be Ready to Try	9
No Promises This Will Be Easy	11
Three Good Options	13
What I Learned from People Like You	13
Start Thinking in Terms of “Worklife”.	15
Why Other Solutions Haven't Worked	16
Tactics, Motivation and Desire.	20
Motivation and Desire	21
I Understand You	24
Chapter Two – Mindset Shifts	25
State of Mind Model™	25
More About Contentment	28
Others Stealing Your Contentment	30
Life Balance is BS	32
It's a Personal Professional Fusion	33
Your Brain Only Knows What You Tell It.	35
Nocebo Effect	37
Next Week Will Be Less Crazy	38
Ask “When?” Until You Can't Anymore	39
Accomplishments Journal	41
The Secret of Life Is....	42
Chapter Three – Starting with A Solid Foundation	43
Extreme Productivity	43
Reasonable Productivity	43
The Busy Executive	44
A Shift in Thinking	44
Your Results	46
Expectation Miscalculation.	46
When Did Life Get So Crazy?	47

Armed to Make Changes	47
Multitasking	48
Practice Not Multitasking	49
Prioritizing	50
Having Clarity, Not Regret	51
Priorities Shift	52
Planning	53
Determining Your Destination.	55
Chapter Four – Choosing	57
How Do You Spend Your Minutes?	57
Core Values.	58
Sample Core Values	60
When You're Not in Alignment	63
How Many Core Values Should You Have?	64
Creating Short Definitions	65
You Have Anti-Values, Too.	65
Sample Anti-Values	66
Mission	69
Vision	70
Goals	71
Where Do You Go From Here?	73
Commitments	74
Goals and Commitments Must Work Together	75
Activities and Tasks	76
A Word About Perfection.	77
All or Nothing is Usually Nothing.	78
Flexibility...to a Point	79
Choosing Means Yes. And No.	81
Quitting.	84
Feeling as Though You Have No Choice	85
Chapter Five – Focusing.	87
The Sterile Cockpit	87
Distractions are Constant.	88
Preparing to Focus vs. Procrastination	90
Does This Sound Familiar?	90

Internal Interruptions.	91
Computer and Web Distractions.	92
Cueing Devices	93
External Interruptions	95
The Preemptive Strike.	95
Focus Time.	97
Blocking Your Calendar	98
You Can Do Anything for 15 Minutes!	98
Teaming Up	100
Accountability Partners—Temporary	101
Accountability Partners—Long Term	102
Chapter Six – Routines and Processes.	107
But That's So Predictable and Boring	108
Habits vs Routines.	108
Routine Reminders	110
Quick Start and Wrap Up Routines	110
Processes	112
Managing Tasks on a To-Do List.	114
A Simple Process to Prioritize	117
Daily Focus Sheet	117
Updating Your Lists	118
The Only To-Do List that Matters	119
Capture To Dos On-the-Go	120
Venue Shift.	121
Tips to Make Your To-Do List Work for You.	122
Differentiate Projects and Tasks	122
Schedule Meetings for Maximum Efficiency	126
Chapter Seven – Putting Off Procrastination	133
You're Doubling Up on Your Anxiety	134
The Illogical Logic of Procrastination.	134
Hoping It Will Be Easier Later	135
Happy Now or Happy for the Long Haul	135
Preferred Stalling Technique	137
Catastrophizing a Task	138
Endlessly Gathering Data.	139

Being Controlled by Your But	140
Talking Sense into Yourself.	141
Just Five Minutes	143
Do the Small Thing	143
Seven Second Syndrome™	144
Seven Second Save.	145
Paralyzed by Possibility	145
You Had the Power All Along	146
Chapter Eight – Managing Stress	149
Slow Down	150
Be Mindful	152
Breathe	152
Meditate	153
Relieve Tension	153
Stretch	154
Walk.	154
Notice Nature	154
Listen to Music.	155
Declutter	155
Hydrate	155
Eat Well.	155
Nap	156
Vacation	158
Disconnect	158
Go on a Media Fast	159
Be Grateful	159
Share Your Time.	159
You Time	159
In Closing	161
Acknowledgments	163

Introduction

If it seems like every year time is going faster, it's because it is. Maybe not literally, but it does feel that way. Here's why the feeling is so palpable.

When you were four years old a year was one quarter of your entire life! But now, you're older. I'm 57 so a year is 1/57th of my life! That's a much smaller piece of the pie that is your time on this earth.

If you feel like time is going a little too quickly for your comfort and you want to make the most of every day, you're reading the right book.

I talk with business people every week who are tired. Some are overwhelmed with the sheer volume of things they need to get done personally and professionally. Their To-do lists are never-ending and feelings of accomplishment are few. Mostly because for everything that gets crossed off, three new tasks get added.

From the moment they hit their desk chair in the morning they go non-stop. Sometimes accomplishing what they set out to do but not as often as they'd like. Every day is a blur of busy-ness and yet the results they experience don't indicate the progress they want.

Leaving the office at the end of the day often feels like an escape rather than a thoughtful wrap up to the day.

Work is often taken home to be done with some resentment or ignored accompanied by guilt.

Falling into bed at night, exhausted, thoughts turn to what didn't get done and how quickly another day is going to dump more responsibilities in their lap.

If this sounds familiar—a lot or even a little—stick around. Because it doesn't have to be this way. Many, many people who had these same feeling are looking at life and work very differently today because they did the things you'll read in this book.

In this book you'll find little or no fluff. I tried to keep it simple because that's how I like things. A short story here, a quick example there, is all I added in order to help concepts make sense. You're busy enough as it is. If it wasn't critical to the content, I left it out to save you time.

You'll find no secrets and no tricks. People call ideas and tips “secrets” and “tricks” to catch your attention and that doesn't feel authentic to me. By definition, secrets aren't meant to be shared. You'll find straight talk and real-world solutions that work.

I'm not promising you that this book will fix your time management challenges once and for all. That statement is hype and not my style. Life is constantly changing and evolving. You go through busier and less busy eras that need to be noticed, assessed and adapted to.

You will, however get foundational strategies that can impact the rest of your life in ways you may not have imagined. I can confidently say that because it happened for me and for the many people who have gone on this path before you.

What you will also find is relief from overwhelm and something refreshingly positive to replace the feeling that your efforts never seem to be enough.

Are you ready? Then let's get going before another minute passes.

CHAPTER ONE

Ready to Take Back Control

My Story

It was 2015 and I sat at the kitchen counter with tears welling up in my eyes. The feeling wasn't remarkable because I was slowly falling apart in the days leading up to this day.

My business at the time could not be described as successful and had been on that track for more than two years. I had some clients and a little revenue but was constantly in fear of not being able to pay the company bills that came in every month. Bills I was incurring because I kept trying tactics to help me be successful. I built a new website. Hired a coach to help me brand myself and figure out what I should say on sales calls. I joined a group to help me with accountability, so I would actually make those calls. All of those strategies cost me money and none of them solved my not-enough-revenue problem.

The tears came from frustration as much as from fear. I knew I had a very important message to share with people struggling with overwhelm, but I wasn't sharing it. And I wasn't getting any closer to figuring out why.

But let me back up.

I started my business in 2001 and built it steadily over the years. In 2012 I lost my biggest client. I had done a very dumb

thing in allowing just one client to be the majority of my income. I knew it was a bad idea and a lousy way to run a business, but I let it happen.

I didn't actually lose my biggest client. I resigned my biggest client.

At first, spending almost all of my time with this one company was a joy because they were different than any other company I'd seen. It was so refreshing! I ditched corporate America to start my own business because I was so fed up with the dysfunction where I worked.

So, I had this wonderful client that changed the paradigm I'd experienced. As much as I liked the work I was doing with this innovative organization, I knew I should start filling the pipeline again and onboarding new clients.

But before I could make enough progress, the bottom fell out. The company started changing. Changing so dramatically that I could no longer continue the work I had been doing with any integrity. Though I didn't realize this at the time, they were no longer aligned with my core values, so I had to go.

In Chapter Four we'll talk more about Core Values. Knowing what yours are is vital in order to make good decisions about how you spend your time. When I defined mine, it became clear why I'd made decisions that sent me in good—or not so good—directions.

This dream client that started off in such a positive and promising way shifted into dysfunction so quickly and completely, that my heart was broken. I truly believed they were different. When I realized that they would not be the exception I had so trusted they would be, I calmly and professionally removed myself from the equation.

I resigned them as a client and promptly reduced my revenue by about 80%.

I needed to get back out there and market myself as a coach, trainer and speaker. My mission up to that time had been to share the importance of being productive. “Don’t waste time. Work smart not hard.” Blah blah blah. As a Productivity Coach I had built up a book of business before and knew I could do it again.

Except that I wasn’t doing what I needed to do to attract new prospects and clients. I felt weirdly paralyzed.

Frustrated with myself, I started talking to smart people I hoped could help me figure out my problem.

I spoke with several successful international authors, trainers and speakers. While serving as the programming chair of our local chapter of the National Speakers Association, I had the great fortune to spend time around these brilliant and generous people when they came in town to present programs for our chapter.

I spoke to a former coach and mentor who it seemed always knew exactly where he was headed. He was then and is now a tremendous success helping clients and companies boost business performance.

I spoke to other friends and colleagues with businesses similar to mine. They could immediately relate to my challenges and also helped me sort through the mishmash in my head.

I journaled, meditated, ruminated and mind mapped random thoughts and ideas.

Finally, I went through an exercise to determine my core values.

All of those activities served to uncover the truth of my dilemma:

I didn’t care one whit about productivity.

There I was, out there calling myself a Productivity Coach and yet productivity meant nothing to me. My disinterest was clearly the thing that was holding me back from reaching out to market and sell productivity training. Primarily, because being authentic was and is one of my core values.

Telling everyone to get more productive when I didn't care about productivity was about as inauthentic as it gets.

But what *did* I care about?

The answer that kept showing up was this.

“I want people to be content with how they spend their time.”

Note: The word “content”—accent on the second syllable—hits some people in a very negative way. If you're one of those people, I'm asking you to reserve judgment until you read Chapter Two.

That was it. The words felt as comfortable as well-worn jeans. I knew that was what I wanted to help people do.

But while my mission became clearer back then, it wasn't a smoothly paved road to get from there to here.

Because no one I was aware of was focused on that message, there was no road map. For many people that wouldn't be a problem. They would just start creating the road themselves. But that wasn't me.

I had been a rule follower my entire life. I wanted people to tell me the rules so I could follow them.

To that end I spent countless hours and dollars on sales training, train the trainer training, marketing consulting, website development training, PR training, training to be a better speaker, you name it. Each time what I wanted was for the expert to tell me the *right way* to do things.

In fact, each one of them probably did. They advised, coached or trained me on the method that worked for them. But

unfortunately, those same methods weren't always what I really needed.

I was in uncharted territory for what I wanted to share. When I firmly decided that "contentment" was the word that defined my message, I got LOTS of pushback. "Well that's fine and all but no one is going to buy that." "You have to stick with the 'money' word, which is productivity." "No company is going to hire you to help their employees be content. They want them to be productive."

While I wanted to shout my message about the importance of being content with how you use your time, I didn't have the gumption to go all in. I tiptoed around sharing that idea. I would mention it, but water it down to keep people from dismissing me entirely. The rule follower in me said, "What if you are wrong?"

I believed in contentment at my core, but to avoid risk, my public focus remained productivity.

And my revenue continued to be dribs and drabs of what it could have been. The worst part of that wasn't the lack of money, it was the people I wasn't helping. Overwhelmed, stressed people who really needed this message and this information.

Too afraid to show my real message and too unmoved to actually talk about productivity, the only thing I managed to do authentically, was cry.

Until I got mad. At myself.

When that happened, I decided to throw out the rule book and go my own way with my own message. And that is what got me here, writing this book for you.

I help people, specifically you, be content with how you spend your time.

Though my commitment to *sharing* the importance of contentment is only four years old, the ideas have been percolating for

decades. I spent 17 years in corporate America—where I learned what doesn't work. For the last 19 years I've been developing and honing ideas to help smart, ambitious people like you feel good about how you spend your time. In this book I share with you what I've shared with hundreds of clients.

How you spend your time is key to living a contented life.
If you want that contentment, let's get started.

If you don't like your current results...

The very first concept I created in my business was this...

*If you don't like the results you're getting you have two options: **Change what you do and get different results; Or, change how feel about your current results.***

This book is built around that concept. In these pages you'll find ideas for new ways to do things and new ways to think. Here's what we're going to cover:

For the rest of this chapter I'll share some foundational information and ideas to set the stage for the work that follows in Chapters Two through Eight.

In Chapter Two, a deep dive into the idea of Contentment. If you're already on board, you'll get revved up to do the work that follows. If you're skeptical about the idea of contentment as a worthy state of mind, you'll get enough information to see if you can kick that skepticism to the curb.

Next, a chapter on each of the two most important skills you will need as you try valiantly to successfully accomplish what you want to achieve despite the crazy busy pace of the world. One chapter is devoted to getting skilled at Choosing. That's followed by a chapter centered on honing your ability to Focus. The ability to Choose and the ability to Focus are cornerstone skills in the

effort to use your time wisely. When you use your time wisely, you'll naturally be more content with your life.

Then we'll focus on Processes. The real-world, step-by-step plans you need to streamline your efforts.

If you've ever procrastinated about anything (I know no one who hasn't), the chapter on Procrastination is for you. Tons of insight and ideas beyond what you may have already run across.

Finally, we close the book talking about your physical and mental self—and how to make the most of both.

You Must be Ready to Try

“You have to at least try it. One bite.”

Ever hear that as a kid when a pile of beets was staring at you from the dinner plate? You protested that you didn't want to eat it because, “I hate beets and they will make me vomit!”

“But,” your mom countered, “you've never HAD beets so how could you *know* that?”

“One bite. Then you can leave the table.” The standoff begins.

I work with clients who want to change something about their life at work. They might be overwhelmed by too much to do and not enough time to do it, not organized enough, procrastinate—robbing them of peace of mind, have trouble delegating or prioritizing, wish everyone could just get along, need to have a difficult conversation, etc.

In order to make these changes, I work with them to learn additional skills, develop better processes, create new systems, encourage changes in mindset, etc. And occasionally, that's where the standoff can begin.

I work with smart, successful people who are, more often than not, lifelong learners. They regularly seek to improve their own

skills and mindset and consequently have usually tried a lot of things with greater or lesser degrees of success.

Change can be hard—especially if something about the new idea seems either familiar or too “out there.” Routines can be so, well, routine, they can seem impossible to change even though they’re not working as well as they might.

“I tried that and it didn’t work,” or “That won’t work for me,” or “I’m not going to do that,” they sometimes say or imply. In fairness, I don’t expect my clients to take orders—we’re equals after all—and push-back is not only welcomed but encouraged.

At the same time, being unwilling to even *try* a new way prevents them—and you—from experiencing the change we all seek.

Back to the beets. It’s possible that the first bite *is* vomit-inducing and now, unpleasantly, you and stern parent both know.

This actually happened in my family. My sister despised corn relish and I’ll bet my Dad wished he had listened to her when she said the outcome would be ugly if she was required to eat it. After leaving the restaurant, Dad was at the wheel with sister standing behind him in the back seat. (No seatbelts in the 1960s.) He ended up wearing the corn relish down his back. “Told ya!”

But it’s also possible that the first bite just gives you data about small changes you need to make so you will like it. I despise beets but love borscht. Go figure.

Likewise, when you attempt to change behaviors or your mindset, the first step may not be comfortable. You will need to step out of your comfort zone. You have to do it in order to see where to go next. Always be honest with yourself about how much you are trying to apply the solutions.

When you have a solution in front of you, give it a fair shot and see where it works and where it doesn't. Make changes from there and you're on the road to better results.

EXERCISE

Think of something you've learned that had the potential to help but you never gave it enough of your effort to see if it would work. It may be a practice to reduce your stress or a way to manage meetings. Just about any idea you may have picked up in a book or article but never got any further than reading it and saying, "Hmm. That sounds interesting." This time, grab a notepad, jot it down, and take some steps to try it.

No Promises This Will Be Easy

When was the last time you felt triumphant about something you achieved or accomplished? What was it? If you were asked, "What about achieving it was so rewarding and made you so happy?" what would you answer?

Here's a story about effort, reward and happiness.

A colleague shared a story about bonuses that were given out at his company. Some departments were high performers and succeeded well beyond their stated goals while others didn't even meet the minimum requirement. To determine bonuses, all the quality and customer satisfaction scores were combined, and everyone got the same bonus percentage.

My colleague said you could tell, just by the demeanor of the employee, into which category they fell. The high performers were happy and proud of the job they had done and had animated chats about the bonus. The sub-par performers were subdued and didn't discuss the addition to their paycheck.

Interesting. You might think the high performers would be upset that they didn't get a bigger bonus because they actually put forth greater effort. Or that the under-performers would be thrilled they received a bonus at all.

Back to your feeling of triumph I asked about. Why did it feel so great?

The most common reason people give is because success *didn't* come easy.

In my colleague's company, the high-performing workers were happy because they *worked* for it. The under-performers were less happy because they knew, deep down, they hadn't earned it.

Isn't that the case for you? You were elated about your success because you worked for it. Perhaps you even overcame some big obstacles or fears. Your effort got you the result you wanted.

Even in tough times, the joy isn't all about the money. It's about persevering in spite of it being a grind. People love to tell "war" stories about the all-nighter they pulled to meet the client's demand, or the eating plan they stuck to in order to drop that last 10 pounds, or how they gave a winning presentation when they used to be terrified to speak in front of people.

Accomplishment against the odds feels great. Working hard feels great. Giving in to fear and procrastination feels lousy. Making excuses feels even worse.

Books that promise easy fixes or gurus that offer over-the-top results with minimum effort are feeding you a load of garbage. Don't eat it.

If you're struggling with overcoming procrastination or getting your schedule under control or knowing what to do when, it may not be easy to get things the way you want them to be. But, boy will it be worth it.

Three Good Options

Speaking of changing things up, always remember these three options:

Do it differently—change your process

Delegate it—get someone else to do it

Dump it—Just stop doing it or having it done altogether

You may be surprised at how many things can end up in these categories, leaving you with more time in your day and your life.

In the chapters that follow you'll get information to help you decide which of those options is best for you and solid ideas about how to put the best option into action.

What I Learned from People Like You

In a survey, I asked several questions about what the respondents were struggling with the most. I'll share those results with you in a minute, but for now, I'd like to ask you the same questions.

Each question is framed as an ideal state or condition. For instance, "I have a clear plan for each day and for the majority of the time I am able to follow that plan." Each question has five possible answers indicating the amount of time this ideal state is your reality.

For each question use the scale below and write next to it the number that corresponds with your experience:

5—All the time

4—Most of the time

3—Half of the time

2—Less than half of the time

1 – Never

1. I have, and use, an efficient and effective process for handling email.

2. I am NOT significantly impacted by interruptions during the workday.
3. I consistently do the most important tasks first, rather than doing the easy tasks first.
4. I'm able to focus when necessary and do not feel the need to multitask.
5. I am content with how I spend my time, both personally and professionally, and maintain what I consider to be a good work/life balance or blend.
6. I have a clear plan for each day and for the majority of the time am able to follow that plan.

For any question you answered that you live in this ideal state half of the time or less, there's room for improvement. If you feel like you're in that ideal state most or all the time, it doesn't need immediate, or any, attention.

Now, you can see how your responses measure up to the other respondents. For each question I've provided two numbers. The top figure represents the percentage of responses being in the ideal state more than half the time. The bottom figure represents the percentage of responses indicating being in the ideal state half of the time or less. The questions are listed in order from most to least challenging situation—based on responses.

1. I have, and use, an efficient and effective process for handling email.
More than half of the time—19%
Half of the time or less—81%
2. I am NOT significantly impacted by interruptions during the workday.

More than half of the time—25%

Half of the time or less—75%

3. I consistently do the most important tasks first, rather than doing the easy tasks first.

More than half of the time—29%

Half of the time or less—71%

4. I'm able to focus when necessary and do not feel the need to multitask.

More than half of the time—29%

Half of the time or less—71%

5. I am content with how I spend my time, both personally and professionally, and maintain what I consider to be a good work/life balance or blend.

More than half of the time—38%

Half of the time or less—62%

6. I have a clear plan for each day and for the majority of the time am able to follow that plan.

More than half of the time—42%

Half of the time or less—58%

These responses show that while these challenges aren't universal, they're quite common. If you find yourself in the bottom half today, you're in the right place and you're certainly not alone.

Work your way through this book and make some key changes. Soon you'll find yourself purposefully rising to the top.

Start Thinking in Terms of “Worklife”

It's unlikely you've heard the term “worklife” yet. Why? Because I made it up. The work I do with my clients is focused primarily on time at work. But we're not business robots. We have a life at

work. Work is part of your life and it's a big part. Big enough that it deserves focused attention on how to make time spent there as good as it can be. So, I call it your "worklife."

Know that as you read the ideas here they've been developed as a response to challenges experienced at work. However, the skills learned and mindsets achieved are sure to positively impact your personal life as well.

You're not a different person at work and at home. The challenges you face at work impact your time away from work. If you're going through a rough patch personally, it's impossible to shut that out entirely just because you're on the job. If your job is frantic, boring or overwhelming, you'll bring that same energy back home with you. When you're content with how you spend your time at work, you'll be more content with how you spend your time all the way around.

Why Other Solutions Haven't Worked

Chances are this isn't the first book you've picked up on time management. Perhaps you've even taken a webinar or workshop on how to get a better handle on your time. But you're here, so you must still want some help. If you didn't get the result you were looking for with those other options, you wouldn't be the first. Here are several reasons why it may not have turned out the way you hoped.

The Solution was Too Complex

Over the years, I've coached people who latched onto a new system only to give up in frustration days—or hours—later. Why? The system was too complex.

There are systems out there that have flowcharts that make my eyes cross. Are you supposed to run every decision about every task through a giant flowchart? How much time will that take? Time that could be spent actually accomplishing something!

There are color-coded systems and special notebooks or planners to capture and prioritize your tasks. There are dozens if not hundreds of software platforms and apps you can use as stand-alone task management systems or as add-ons to other systems.

For many, electronic solutions create a hurdle that ends up being a dead end. More about that later.

If you have to spend days or weeks just to learn or understand the approach before you can use it, it's too complex for you.

You're seeking solutions because you don't have enough time as it is. If the solution makes your life more complicated, how can that be a good thing?

Life is complicated enough. The ideas in this book are simple. Candidly, you may have heard variations of some ideas before, but I've worked hard to pare the strategies and processes down to bare bones. Working through the ideas and exercises IS a commitment, but it's do-able.

The Change was Too Drastic

You may have been asked to change too much at one time or just entirely too much.

The best changes work with your current habits and preferences. Changes need to be small, purposeful and cumulative.

I coach with clients for sixteen weeks for a reason. Change needs to happen incrementally in order to stick. 180's never work long-term.

Change something. Try it for a bit. Adjust. Practice it for a bit longer. Add another small change to the new process. And so on.

Patience, grasshopper. Even Olympic swimmers get better in fractions of seconds. As small as the improvements are, those fractions can make the difference between being *on* the podium or looking *at* the podium.

The changes you make along the way may sometimes seem insignificant, but they're not. Every single one matters.

The "If I can, you can too" Theory

You've seen stories about the newly fit man who lost 100 pounds and finished a marathon. Or the woman who goes from living in her car to being a multimillionaire in business. Because their earlier lifestyle was so wildly opposite of the current state, they claim that if they "Can do it, ANYONE can."

Bull. Crap.

To be absolutely certain you can accomplish the very same achievement, all the factors about that person and their experience would need to be the same for you and your experience. You would need to have access to the same resources, motivation, support, desire, level of intelligence, commitment, opportunities, economy. You get the drift.

There are over 30,000 books on time management out there and another 50,000-plus on productivity. The reason there are so many is that the ideas in any one of them work for some number of people. At the very least, the ideas work for the person who wrote the book.

The ideas I put forth in this book will work for many, many people, but if you have circumstances, other than your own will-power, that prevent you from achieving success, you could still struggle.

I'm not a naturally organized person. I've just learned over time that I function better if things are simple and orderly, so I've built systems and routines to support that. If you thrive on chaos, this isn't the book for you.

People may have similar challenges, but the solutions are nuanced because everyone isn't the same. Change is individual.

This book gives simple, followable advice that will work for lots of people. If you think it should work for you but it doesn't, get in touch with me and we'll see what might be going wrong. I'm serious. Call or email me. We'll talk.

The 21 Days to a New Habit Myth

Just about everyone interested in self-development has heard the theory that it takes 21 days to create a new habit. Personally, I had never had success making that happen. So, I tried to research how others were doing it and what I was missing.

Have you ever been perplexed like I was, and thought, "Why am I the only one who hasn't been able to make this 21-day miracle stick?"

Turns out we aren't the only ones. No one else is doing it, either. Further, there's no science to back up the idea. But I can tell you where this myth got started:

Psycho-Cybernetics by Maxwell Maltz. I happened to pull that book from my shelf one day to give it a re-read. It had been years since I picked it up and I thought I'd give it a skim.

And there it was.

The passage explains that should the reader attempt the ideas in the book, he shouldn't get discouraged if change doesn't happen right away.

“Instead, reserve judgment—and go on practicing—for a minimum period of 21 days.”

“It usually requires a minimum of about 21 days to effect any perceptible change in a mental image. Following plastic surgery, it takes about 21 days for the average patient to get used to his new face...People must live in a new house for about three weeks before it begins to ‘seem like home.’ These and other commonly observed phenomena tend to show that it requires a minimum of 21 days for an old mental image to dissolve and a new one to jell.”

He’s talking about an *image* not a *behavior*. Big difference!

Evidently, over the decades this idea has morphed into the idea that you can develop a new habit in 21 days.

Nope. Not so.

What you *can* do is develop a new routine that will start to feel more familiar within a few weeks.

A routine is not a habit—and the distinction is critically important.

I talk in detail about routines in Chapter Six and as part of that discussion, a bit about habits. For now, if your routines eventually become habits, great. But when they don’t, you still have the routine established and can use your brainpower for more important things than re-inventing processes for repetitive tasks.

Tactics, Motivation and Desire

When you’re struggling with time management, you may fall into one of two camps:

1. You don’t know what to do to better manage your time; or,
2. You *know* what to do to better manage time but still aren’t doing it.

These two key areas of challenge mean you lack the tactics, have motivation issues, or simply don't have a strong enough desire tied to the motivation. All of these are powerful, and frankly critical, when it comes to getting better results.

Let's take one at a time.

Tactics

This is for people who really have little or no idea how to manage a busy work schedule, prioritize effectively, get organized, stay focused, get things done, use time wisely, etc. If that's you, you'll get what you need here. In the coming chapters I'll share tactics for:

- Improving your ability to choose
- Increasing your ability to focus
- Developing efficient and effective processes
- Overcoming procrastination

These tactics are the tools you need to overcome your time management challenges. Tactics may be all you need. Or you may need to look at the quality of your motivation and desire.

Motivation and Desire

My dad started smoking before I was born and kept it up every day of his life. As smoking became less and less socially acceptable he had more pressure to give it up. He couldn't smoke inside homes other than his own. Many public places had begun banning smoking. The cost of cigarettes continued to climb. Perfect strangers would "inform" him of the dangers to his health.

As far as motivation to quit, he had plenty. It would save his health, fatten his wallet, get him welcomed back into homes and restaurants. So, he went through auricular therapy in an effort to quit. That's not a typo. Auricular therapy is where the external

surface of the ear is stimulated to alleviate a condition in another part of the body. In this case, as a smoking cessation method.

It worked. He no longer craved cigarettes.

He was utterly miserable.

You see, there were all sorts of *motivations* to quit smoking. Trouble was he had no *desire* to quit.

Smoking wasn't just sucking on lit tobacco for him. It was relaxation. It was social time. He missed it terribly. It was the weirdest thing. He didn't *have* to smoke anymore because of addiction, he *wanted* to smoke because he enjoyed his life with cigarettes in it.

It's a perfect example of motivation not being enough to make a change. Here is another:

A gentleman hired me to help him figure out how he could stop working on Saturdays and still get everything done.

When coaching a client, I'm purposeful in uncovering the motivation and desire before we start looking at new tactics.

His motivation was clear. His wife really hated that he worked on Saturdays. She wanted him to spend time with the family and on some Saturdays even take over childcare entirely. As a stay-at-home mom she needed a break.

So how about his desire? He had zip, zilch, nada desire to give up his Saturday workdays. Turns out he loved working on Saturdays because he could get so much done when the office was quiet. When we figured that out, our strategy shifted.

The solution wasn't to stop working on Saturdays, it was to look at his entire schedule and see where he could fit in more family time and ways to let his wife get a breather. We were able to examine how he managed his workload and shift enough activities to meet both of their needs and desires.

Your Motivation

The motivation to use your time wisely may include having more quality time with family, more time to relax, being able to make more money without working more hours or having time to focus on getting healthier.

EXERCISE

Why are *you* motivated to make changes? Take a few minutes and really think about it. Write down as many reasons as pop into your head. You'll need that information to take the next step.

What are my motivations to make these changes?



For the record, I'm not a big fan of motivational quotes and don't even get me started on those sappy motivational posters. Quotes and posters mean nothing if you don't take action. And action requires desire. Which is where we go next.

Your Desire

Now that you know you know your motivations, are they accompanied by desire? Do you really *want* more time with your family? Some folks with seriously dysfunctional families don't.

Do you *like* relaxing or would you just be bored?

Do you want more money or just think you *should* because people will see you as more successful?

Will you exercise and pay more attention to nutrition when you have more time? Or in truth, are you happier that you don't have time to spend your energy that way?

Look at each one of your motivations and assess your level of desire. Without desire, you won't have enough oomph to do what

you need to do to make change. Since you already feel pressed for time, don't waste any of it reaching for things you don't really want.

EXERCISE

Specifically, what desires would be fulfilled by making the changes I'm considering?

I Understand You

I'm not a psychologist or mental health professional. But I do have keen insight into human behavior. Through experience, intuition, training, and tools, I understand why we behave the way we do and how you may be standing in your own way. Work through this book, pick up the ideas and tips that serve you, and in the end you'll be smack dab in the middle of having more contentment in your life.