

## Honour the time

The bounties of nature are immense. They are really immeasurable. The life, the life-like earth, the life-like sky & the wonderful contrasts occupying all these - contrasts of the corpulent & the sublime of the moving & the static of the mystic & the manifest. All so fascinating and so beautifully laid in perfect harmony with no chaos, confusion or conflict in between.

There is however one thing the nature has been miser in blessing the man with and that is time. The scarcest thing at man's disposal is time. Yet he spends it most prodigally & most wastefully. What is still more unfortunate is that most of us do not even realise how unwisely and unknowingly we allow it to slip out of our hands unutilised.

Kay Lyons has said, "Yesterday is a cancelled cheque, tomorrow is a promissory note, today is the only cash you have". The only day of any importance in one's life is today. Tomorrow is a tricky illusion. The promises of tomorrow are seldom whole-hearted. Let us therefore sit today. Today itself to make ourselves available to learn from the experiences & expressions of the wise who thought of time as a priceless possession & who saw it passing fast & based on their this realisation who learned to command it.

Time is something whole. Management of time is, therefore, management of the whole. Time management is, in fact, self-management, is career-management and, in one word, is life - management. It simply means installing a regulator in life to strike a balance in all its manifestations -

emotional, behavioural and functional. One cannot develop his faculties and make use of his potentialities without effectively managing time.

Cure is possible only after diagnosing the disease. "I am horribly busy" or "I did not get time" - such claims are often an unconscious admission of inability and lack of competence. It is basic, therefore, to first realise where we lack and where we fitter away the time. The problem starts when we become unconscious of the fact that a day consists of twenty four hours and not of eight-hours which he spend on our prime job. What happens to the other sixteen hours daily? Assuming that one requires eight hours sleep and another 4 hours for eating, dressing moving to and from etc. we have still four hours in hand left daily. To this may be added another 8 hours each of Sunday and other holidays. Just a little calculation and we will be surprised to know that hours of spare time in a week is just equal or sometimes more than the time we spend on our job proper.

A very valid argument obstructs our way here. One needs rest & relaxation. Recreational pastimes, reading newspapers & magazines and accommodating social calls also demand their dues. Remaining indifferent to the obligations of hospitality is also not easy. When to do all this if there is no spare time? This is perfectly right. But we have only to pause and think whether we are rightly using our time in these pursuits. Relaxation should not be confused with idleness. It means relieving tension. We can make the work itself a source of relieving tension, if we develop a fondness for the job in hand and do it with full interest. In recreational pastimes playing badminton or tennis for an hour should be preferred to watching the day long cricket match. Likewise, playing a musical instrument for an hour is better than viewing a 3 hour film and so also is walking half-an hour in the garden or the on the beach than just sitting one hour there.

Light material magazines & newspapers are produced with rapidity and should be read with rapidity. Newspapers can be glanced through in lunch interludes or while waiting for something or in other blank periods. It is unfruitful to remain glued to them for hours at a stretch. At social functions we should try to meet with experienced and learned persons. Discouraging and exchanging views with such persons is quite a gainful employment of time. Hospitality also does not mean observing long formalities and allowing the visitor to steal our time as he wishes. It is not just wise to always stand on ceremonies.

Six, seven or eight spare hours a day is an enormous time. But it is melted away commonly in excessive sleep, engaging in petty works which could well be delegated to others, waiting for the tea to arrive offered unnecessarily to a visitor dropping in just for nothing, gossiping on no-sense subjects, playing cards, flirting with a magazine or sometimes

simply idling. At the work place too, time is wasted in rewriting letters first dictated without full facts, in waiting along with others for a file which should have been on the table before the conference started, in the staff interrupting too often for seeking clarification on issues which should have been elaborately explained at the start or in stretching 10 minutes coffee break to half an hour gossip or in just searching out files, papers, equipments and appliances not kept carefully.

The most painful waste of time is however on a different count and that is indecisiveness. Moving the thoughts just forth & back without settling down either on 'yes' or on 'no' is not playing a fair game with time. The art of learning to quickly choose between the alternatives is the art of all arts. To decide fast about what to do, when to do and to get into the appropriate frame of mind of productive work can only ensure proper use of time.

The examples cited above are just illustrative. A close observation of one's own habits and his own surroundings will reveal the spots responsible for waste of time affecting him.

We shall now concentrate on factors fundamental in time-planning. The basic points are counted under :

1. Punctuality is the starting point. It means moving in harmony with the steps of time. Time does not remain in good company of those who cannot keep appointments or too often fail to maintain schedules.
2. Budgeting the daily time and allocating it to the day's work with an intention to stick to it is the second step. This done, it should be given the force of law which should not be disobeyed.
3. Planning an over-crowded day causes tension and results in early fatigue. There should be some breathing space in switching over from one job to other. This also facilitates accommodating unexpected calls & emergencies.
4. Regular daily work instils a sense of competence and confidence. This eventually results in more output and saves time.
5. 'One thing at a time' is the golden rule. Diversion to other matters, leaving the work in hand half-done, is the wrong way of handling the things.
6. Priorities should be determined and urgent matters should be given the first attention. To ensure better concentration on serious matters, it however becomes advisable at times to finish easy and low-time demanding things at the start.
7. Keeping a broad general picture of the month's work and, if possible, of the year's agenda in view and long range objectives in memory enables unconscious mind

to detect flaws & eliminate errors. It ensures time performance too.

8. Temptations towards too many outside interest is wrong. It is vital to eliminate the unessentials & unimportant.
9. Estangling in too much details or undue enquiries into trifles and involvement in wrong type of works or at wrong stage take heavy toll of time with little gains in return.
10. The best way to spending spare time is to devote it to certain works of art or beauty or usefulness so that one satisfies not only one's creative urge but also produces something of value to the society. Four - Five hours a week taken from frivolous pursuits and profitably employed would enable any man of ordinary capacity to master a complete science.
11. Reading self-development-course books enhances knowledge and experience which can act as a true guide in all spheres through out life. Acquiring diversified knowledge in spare moments and learning from the wisdom of others is like putting money in bank. Some day it yields a rich harvest.
12. Terminating overlong conversations, lengthy interviews and unnecessary interruptions without this being felt by the person involved is a skill to be perfected. Not allowing others to steal our time is important and so also is to cut down self-inflicted interruptions.
13. Effective time-management requires a certain amount of knowledge about the work one is engaged in. Also knowing one's own limitations in terms of resources, time & energy helps not going stray and awry. The work should be planned within these limitations. It is no use making grandiose plans which can never be put into effect.
14. Ensuring right infrastructure and proper arrangements that permit uninterrupted concentration during the period of actual work immensely saves time, labour and cost.

**Time honours those who honour the time.**

