

What is the most valuable resource on the planet? It isn't gold in any way. Platinum and rhodium are more expensive metals, although it isn't one of them. It's also not about the money.

The solution is simple: time. Want to find rare metals or make some quick cash? You'll need some time to complete it. To do anything, you need time. It's a one-of-a-kind resource.

Unfortunately, it's also hard to come by, especially now that it's getting harder and harder to find. Everything and everyone appears to want to take our limited time away from us, from demanding jobs to unending social media feeds.

If only time could be stopped. There is, at least in a figurative sense. You're going to find out what it is!

In the following chapters, you'll learn:

- How you might have more time than you think;
- Why you're wasting more time than you need to; and
- How to deal with it.

Chapter 1 - How you use your time, how much energy you have, and how aware you determine what you receive out of it.

Consider being able to halt time — not metaphorically, but actually. The clock will stop ticking if you snap your fingers. Congratulations. You now have unrestricted time to complete that job assignment, write your memoir, or do anything you choose.

But what if you spend all of your time on your phone? What if you were too weary or scattered to concentrate on something more important? So, in that scenario, you might as well waste all of your freshly acquired time.

On one hand, time is a highly definite and finite concept. A day, a week, and a lifetime are limited in a number of hours. Meanwhile, no matter how you slice it, an hour is an hour: 60 minutes, 3,600 seconds - it's always the same. And an hour only allows you to accomplish so much. Is this a decent workout? Sure. Is it time for a vacation? Clearly not.

Time, on the other hand, is a far more fluid phenomenon. What you receive out of it is determined by three variables.

First and foremost, how are you going to spend it? Are you occupying your time in a way that is fascinating, helpful, significant, or enjoyable? If you say yes, you will get a lot more out of an hour than if you answer no. Are you going for a run? More stamina. Do you have a side hustle? More money is needed. Are you reading a book? More information. But simply hanging about on social media, looking at images of other people's lives? There won't be anything to show for it.

Now for the second consideration: how much energy do you have? You may spend that hour in a pleasurable and productive manner if you're feeling energized and ready to go. However, if you're fatigued, you won't be able to do anything, let alone enjoy it. Perhaps you'll wind up zoning out in front of the TV, slumped on the couch.

Lastly, there's the final consideration: how attentive are you? Are you fully aware of what you're going through? If you say no, you've effectively wasted an hour. This is true even if you're doing something great, such as trekking through a gorgeous forest.

Thus, no, we won't be able to halt time. We also can't change the reality that we only have so much time. But there's more we can do with it. We can also stop wasting so much of it.

Chapter 2 - You must preserve your time, energy, and attention in order to achieve your goals in life.

Consider your life to be a garden. You're trying to cultivate some "plants" in this garden. Each plant represents something essential to you in your life: your profession, health, relationships, hobbies, and anything else.

But there's a catch. Your "life garden" is limited in size, with just approximately five to ten plants allowed. Yet there's only so much "water" you can give your plants. The water represents your time, energy, and focus. So, how can you encourage your garden to grow? The key to success, then, can be summed up in two words: resource management.

Your "water" is an extremely necessary resource for your "plants" within your life garden. It is, however, extremely scarce, so you must distribute it wisely. Your profession will never flourish if you do not devote any time, energy, or attention to it. However, if you give this one plant too much water, it will thrive at the price of your other plants.

You should also be cautious about allowing new plants into your garden because they may choke out existing ones. Let's assume an old high school friend wants to renew a connection with you despite the fact that you no longer have anything in common. You're not spending time with the people you truly want to connect with if you start spending time with him merely to be polite.

Such as that boring book you've been reading for months, the online classes you've dropped interest in, or anything that you think isn't worth your time, energy, or attention. There are many other "plants" in your life garden that deserve your water more than "weeds," and they won't receive it if you waste it on "weeds." These are the plants you don't want to cultivate since they take up valuable space and water that might be used for other plants that you want to water.

There's a good chance you already have weeds in your garden. As harsh as it may sound, you must remove them — and then be vigilant against new ones infiltrating and establishing roots.

Chapter 3 - You should carefully consider how you spend your time.

Have you ever worked in finance or invested in the stock market? If that's the case, you've certainly come across the term "return on investment," or ROI for short. It's a metric for determining how much money you make when you invest in a stock option or a company endeavor. It's obvious that the aim is to make more money from the investment than you invested in it. The higher the return, the better the return on investment.

How we invest our time follows a similar reasoning. The million-dollar questions are now: What is the return on your time investment? And how do you plan to devote your time? Do you have one at all?

If the answer is no, now is the time to take action.

Let's assume you have a half-hour to kill. Whatever you choose to do with that time, you will have some type of effect. You may enhance your fitness by going for a stroll. You'll enhance it even more if you do an elevated workout. If you smoke cigarettes, you will have the opposite effect.

The option is entirely yours — and that is precisely the point. You must choose how you will spend your time. And that choice is fundamentally one of investment. You invest a specific amount of time in one activity or another in exchange for something else - whether it's a better physique or a cigarette.

When you invest a specific amount of time in an activity, you reap the benefits - whether it's a healthier body or a smoker's cough.

Obviously, the options aren't always that clear. So, under normal conditions, how do you make investment decisions? So, consider your alternatives in terms of the results they generate. Do they make you feel better about yourself, your health, your happiness, your money, or your general quality of life? And, if so, how much will it cost?

If you compare your alternatives using these criteria, you'll see that some have higher returns than others. However, it all depends on your requirements. If you're merely looking to get in shape, investing in a high-intensity exercise is a great idea. It crams a lot of activity into a small amount of time. Walking, on the other hand, is not a high-yield workout alternative. However, it might be a fantastic opportunity to reconnect with nature or have a friendly discussion.

No one would invest their money in the stock market without evaluating their alternatives and planning their investing strategy, would they? So, why not do the same with your most important resource, your time?

Chapter 4 - You have far more control over how you spend your time than you would believe.

You could be thinking to yourself, "Wait a minute." Is it true that we have so much control over how we spend our time?

Let's face it, everyone has numerous commitments to accomplish as well as busy schedules to keep up with during the day. The list continues on and on: going to work, meeting deadlines, picking up groceries, answering phone calls. We don't appear to have much freedom even in our so-called "leisure time."

To some extent, this is correct. However, it leaves out an essential component of the equation.

Certainly, some responsibilities are forced on us by circumstance. It is necessary to submit taxes. Dogs must be walked on a regular basis. However, if you make a note of all the time obligations you've made to other people, events, and activities, you'll notice that many of them are just that: commitments.

You don't have to engage in a protracted conversation with a coworker who stops you in the corridor for some idle chitchat. You are not obligated to go on a skiing vacation if a buddy asks you. You are not obligated to stay in a book club after you join it. You make the decision to do these things, which is fantastic if you benefit from them. But this isn't always the case. Instead, you may be following them out of a misunderstanding of politeness or duty.

We have to put an end to this. All of these pointless, unsatisfying obligations may not take up nearly as much time as you think. However, they all add up to a significant number of wasted hours every week.

That isn't to imply you should start being obnoxious to strangers. There are courteous ways to end a discussion, refuse a vacation, or withdraw from a book club. The idea is that if your time is better spent elsewhere, you should take advantage of these choices.

You can also reduce or alter your commitments in numerous ways. Try making a phone call. These occupy a significant portion of our time, both within and outside of work, for many of us. However, instead of the typical 30 minutes, you could be able to finish that customer call in 15 minutes. Maybe you could rearrange your weekly call with your mother to a time that is more convenient for you - one when you will feel invigorated rather than pressured by the call.

Either way, you have many more alternatives than you may believe.

Chapter 5 - You have a lot of freedom in how you do things even when you have to do them.

Okay, you could say. Maybe I'll be able to reclaim some of my time. But that's only a speck on the horizon of my day. The majority of it is filled with commitments I can't avoid and can't modify.

Going to work is an obvious example for many of us. That's something you've got to do unless you work from home, start a business, or win the jackpot, right?

In a nutshell, yes and no.

Let us just assume you have to maintain your existing employment and housing owing to personal reasons. Let's assume you have to commute since the distance between locations A and B is too great. There isn't any other option.

However, how do you make that commute? Walking, taking public transportation, or driving? In many cases, you have a choice, and certain alternatives are healthier for your body – and the environment – than others.

Even if you have no choice but to go by automobile, you still have options. Are you a solo driver? Alternatively, do you join a carpool?

Even if it isn't an option, you still have a lot of other options. What do you do when you're alone in the car? Do you listen to music, audiobooks, or podcasts? Do you want to talk on the phone? Or do you merely mutter about the traffic while staring at the bumpers in front of you?

These decisions, as little as they may appear, may have a substantial impact on the number of hours you spend driving each week. You may transform your travel time into leisure time by listening to soothing music. You may transform it into learning time by listening to an audiobook. Making a phone call, on the other hand, depends on who you're speaking with. Is it a customer? It's time to get to work. Is it a friend? It's time to mingle.

Whatever you choose to do, whether it's listening to great literature or catch up with your father, your options don't end there. What are you doing with your body, for example? Do you slouch or maintain a decent posture?

You may also use the opportunity to practice Kegel exercises, which include tightening and relaxing your pelvic pubococcygeus muscles. This can help you strengthen your core and improve your sexual life as you listen to music, study history, or do whatever else you choose with your time!

Chapter 6 - You must eliminate technology distractions from your life.

Perhaps you're one of the fortunate few who don't have to commute in the morning. While working from home in pajamas may be more convenient than going to a traditional office, there are still many instances during the day where you're waiting for something else to happen. It's waiting for the elevator to open, the waiter to bring the check or the microwave to complete if it's not waiting for the customer care representative to pick up the phone.

Most of these encounters take only a few seconds or minutes, but they mount up, leaving us with the dilemma of how to occupy all of that free time.

Since we're being honest, many of us can say, "not so well." The reason for this is because of the use of technology.

Consider yourself in line at a coffee shop. How do you pass the time when you're bored? If you're like most people these days, you're probably staring at your phone. Perhaps you're reading the news or scrolling through one of your social media accounts. Maybe you're checking in on one of those chat applications where you and your buddies talk about nothing in particular.

In any event, for many of us, gazing at a phone has become the standard, go-to pastime anytime we have free time. Is it any wonder, then, that we spend so much of our spare time doing nothing? We spend a significant portion of time engrossed in different electronic screens as if we were zombies. It's either our laptops or televisions if it's not our phones.

No one, however, is compelling us to spend our time in this manner. We can reclaim the time we're wasting and put it to more productive use.

The first stage in this process is to break the habit. Stop and take a few deep breaths into your lower belly the next time you're waiting someplace and feel the want to bring out your phone. Is there any information you really must have access to right now? Or have you simply grown apprehensive about spending time alone with your thoughts or observing the environment around you?

Rather than people watching, you may stretch or perform some stretches.

Chapter 7 - You may appreciate the present moment more by practicing mindfulness.

Deepen your breathing into your lower abdomen. Make a mental note of yourself.

There's a reason why the last portion of the last blink felt familiar to you. It was essentially a mindfulness practice in miniature.

That, however, is only the tip of the iceberg. There are several more ways that mindfulness may assist us in focusing on the present moment and attempting to make the most of it. We'll take a look at one of them in this chapter. However, if you currently practice mindfulness, it's a powerful approach you may not have explored before.

Many of us are so preoccupied with our daily activities that we scarcely notice what is going on around us. If you already know mindfulness, you're aware that one of the goals is to bring your distracted mind back to the present moment. But how do you go about doing that?

So, the next time you find yourself in a strange area, give this a shot. It might be a holiday destination in a tropical paradise. It might just be a new neighborhood in your city that you've stumbled across. It makes no difference for this activity. Simply put, you're going to pause, look around, and say to yourself, "This may be the last time I'm ever here."

Take note of how your viewpoint abruptly alters. You're not just strolling through the neighborhood anymore. You're taking in the sights, scents, and textures of the people, streets, and buildings in your immediate environment. You're paying greater attention to everything. You've picked up on the enchantment of it all. In other words, you're totally immersed in the current moment of your life rather than rushing through it.

Are you ready for the big reveal? You aren't simply doing a mental experiment. It's possible that this is the final time you'll ever be here - wherever that may be.

To put it plainly, awful things may happen in the blink of an eye, with no warning. The only thing we can be sure of is that we will die one day. That day may come now, tomorrow, or in two decades. We simply don't know.

That is precisely the objective. We should strive to cherish our moments as if they were the last ones we'll ever have, because they may be.

Chapter 8 - You must schedule more time for yourself.

What did you do with your morning today? If you're like most individuals, you probably spent the majority of your time in the shower. There are those of us who spend so much time in our restrooms that they resemble a steam room at the end of the day.

Obviously, taking these long, hot showers every day is terrible for the environment. If your water source contains chlorine, it is also bad for your health since your skin can absorb the toxins. However, there's a deeper issue here, and it raises a more general topic that will help us connect everything in these blinks together.

Sure, that lengthy, hot shower is really relaxing. Is this a worthwhile use of our time, even if we ignore the environmental and physical consequences? The majority of us spend our shower time simply zoning out, savoring the warm sensation of the water and the sense of seclusion we have.

That's your problem right there, as car technicians like to say. The shower is one of the only locations where we have some sense of privacy for many of us. It's also one of the rare occasions during the day when we treat our bodies to something lovely and soothing. To put it another way, we're short on "me time," and we use the shower to make up for it.

What's the most obvious solution? Take some time out for yourself. Maybe there are more effective methods to de-stress and re-energize oneself. You might get a massage once a week or stretch every morning. Alternatively, you might indulge in a luxury bath a couple of times a week, interspersed with shorter, more ecologically friendly showers.

You are the only one who knows what your body needs, therefore this is another awareness practice. You must listen to yourself and choose what feels right for you.

This is also an opportunity to practice time management. You should plan your "alone time" into your days and weeks. Everything else that energizes you and makes you feel like you're making the most of your time is the same. Working out at the gym, going on walks with a buddy, spending time with your family, and having sex with your spouse are all things that can be done if you set aside the time to do so. So, what do you have to lose? It's up to you to take control of your life!

The Art of Stopping Time: Practical Mindfulness for Busy People by Pedram Shojai Book Review

While you may not be able to halt time, you can reduce the speed and get something out of it by spending it wisely, being more attentive, and recharging your batteries. To do this, you must set aside time to practice mindfulness and engage in activities that provide you with energy. That necessitates effective time management. You'll also be able to effectively control your time by becoming more attentive and energetic, allowing you to use it more effectively, enjoyably, and meaningfully. The final result is something that might be referred to as temporal prosperity, in which your limited time on Earth is put to the best possible use.

Gongs should be practiced.

It requires around 90 days of effort to develop improved time management skills. The author suggests performing what he calls a 100-day gong to help you overcome this. Daily basis, you practice one "time-stopping" method, which he refers to as a gong, for a set amount of time. We went through seven of the gongs in these blinks, so you could practice for a week if you wanted to. As an example, Monday: in your life garden, name the plants and weeds. Tuesday: combine one of your meals with the meditation exercise. Wednesday: while driving, listen to an audiobook. Thursday: gently refuse time obligations that you don't desire. Friday: take a long, relaxing bath. Saturday: schedule some time with your family. And on Sunday, consider the return on your time investment.

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