Beyond Time Management

It's the number one complaint I get from clients. "I just don't have enough time!" Almost without exception, people use time as their number one excuse for not having the life they want and see themselves as victims of their reality of "no time." The ability to spend time with family, work out, or take a seminar seems nearly impossible in the shadow of sixty-hour workweeks and the demands of the job outside the home. Heaven forbid we should take on a hobby!

Volumes of books have been written on time management and chances are, somewhere along the way of our personal growth and development, we learned a couple of methods to combat the demands of our hectic schedules. Tips on how to manage our time are everywhere to be found, but are those tips really providing us with the answers we need to find the joy we so want in our lives?

There is one truth about time. It's a fixed commodity and one cannot "make more time." It's impossible. There are only 24 hours in a day. Non-negotiable. Sorry, we can't change that. However, one can shift one's experience of time. And while this may seem a rather esoteric response to a very practical issue, there are some very practical "how-to's" that can be explored around this idea.

First, let us examine what some of our very basic beliefs are about time. Are you one that that believes "time is money?" Or do you live by the adage, "there's no time like the present?" Do you resist the "ravages of time?" Or "is time on your side?" What does "in a timely manner" mean to you? These phrases represent just a few commonly held notions around the concept of time. So, our first step in creating freedom in your life in this "time domain" is to first take a look at what cultural and societal beliefs you have either consciously or unconsciously accepted about time. Do you share your company's beliefs about time? Are you always "a day late and a dollar short?" Are your deadlines impossible to meet? Over the next couple of weeks, notice how you experience time and notice what you are saying about time. This means noticing the time you have, and the time you don't have. The time others "make" you waste, or the time you give up to do something you really love to do.

Then you will want to tell the truth about how you are really spending your time. Every person has a particular style in life that allows for his or her success and these strategies are reflected in the way that time is spent. Are some of your success strategies then working against you? Perhaps you run a company that is known for it's unique product. Everyone in the company is completely devoted to the sale of this product. Most of the company's resources are relegated to supporting outside sales. But when will the time be spent for product innovation? How will this company survive the natural evolution of the marketplace? Obviously, this raises the question, what adjustments need to be made to factor in the certain obsolescence of the currently popular product?

Every time you say yes to one thing, you're also saying no to something else. What are you choosing to say yes to when a larger perspective needs nurturing?