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Foreword

The pace and intensity of our lives, both at work and at home, leave several of us feeling like a person riding a frantically galloping horse. Our day-to-day incessant busyness — too much to do and not enough time; the pressure to produce and check off items on our to-do list by each day's end — seems to decide the direction and quality of our existence for us.

However, if we approach our days in another way, we can consciously change this out-of-control pattern. It only requires the courage to do less. This may sound simple, but doing less can actually be very difficult. Too often, we mistakenly believe that doing less makes us lazy and results in a lack of productivity. Rather than, doing less helps us enjoy what we do achieve. We learn to do less of what is extraneous, and engage in fewer self-defeating behaviors, so we create a rich life that we truly feel great about.

Just doing less for its own sake can be easy, startling, and transformative. Imagine having a real and unhurried conversation in the middle of an unforgiving workday with somebody you care about. Imagine completing one discrete task at a time and feeling calm and happy about it. In this book, you will see a new approach. The approach is equally useful for our personal life and our work life. In fact, the two hemispheres of our work and personal lives constantly reflect on and affect one another, each changing and/or reinforcing the other.

Every life has awesome meaning, but the fog of constant activity and plain bad habits can often obscure the meaning of our own. Acknowledge and change these, and we can again enjoy the ways we contribute to the workplace, enjoy the sweetness of our lives, and share openly and generously with the ones we love. Less busyness leads to appreciating the sacredness of life. Doing less leads to more love, more effectiveness and internal calmness, and a greater ability to accomplish more of what matters most to us.



How To Accomplish More In A Fraction Of The Time

***Getting Results Super Fast Through Prioritizing, Leveraging
And Focus***

Chapter 1:

Prioritizing

Synopsis

Not everything in life can be a priority. Many important things will compete for attention over your lifetime, but there are not enough hours in anybody's lifetime to give attention to everything that could potentially be a priority.

Determining your basic priorities is a key exercise in moving toward more efficient use of your time. Your basic priorities provide a means for making time choices, helping you decide where it is important to invest yourself and where you are able to let go.



Prioritizing

Setting priorities is a matter of deciding what is very important. In this case, "important" means significant to you. What activities and roles give your life meaning? These are the components of your life where you would like to succeed the most.

Not everything in your life can be a priority. Many important things will compete for attention over your lifetime, but there are not enough hours in anybody's lifetime to give attention to everything that could potentially be a priority. Determining your basic priorities is a key exercise in moving toward more efficient use of your time. Your basic priorities provide a means for making time choices, helping you decide where it is important to invest yourself and where you are able to let go.

On a daily basis, you also have to learn to set task priorities. Prioritizing tasks includes two steps:

- Recognizing what needs to be done
- Deciding on the order in which to do the tasks

How do you determine what work needs to be done? For the most part, it relates back to your basic priorities. To be efficient in your time use, you have to weed out the work that does not fit with your basic priorities. Learn to say "no" to jobs that look interesting and may even provide a secure sense of accomplishment but do not fit with your basic priorities.

You also have to be able to separate out the tasks that require busywork that tends to eat away at your time. Many tasks that fill your day may not really need doing at all or could be done less frequently. Task prioritizing means working on the most significant tasks first regardless how tempted you are to less significant tasks out of the way.

Certain skills help in using time effectively. Most of these skills are mental. While it is not necessary to develop all of the skills, each contributes to your ability to direct time usage.

Time sense is the skill of estimating how long a task will take to accomplish. A good sense of time will help you be more realistic in planning your activities. It helps prevent the frustration of never having quite enough time to accomplish tasks.

To increase your time sense, begin by making mental notes of how long it actually takes to do certain routine tasks like getting ready in the morning, running a load of laundry or delivering your child across town to baseball practice.

Goal setting is the skill of deciding where you want to be at the end of a specific time. Goal setting gives direction to your morning, your day, your week and your lifetime. The exercise on deciding your lifetime priorities is a form of goal setting. Learn to write down your goals.

If you are like most people, goals are just wishes until you write them down. Keep your goals specific, as in "weed the flower beds in front of the house" rather than "work on the yard." Keep your goals realistic or you will continually be frustrated by a sense of failure.

Standard shifting is adjusting your standards as circumstances change. Your standards are what you use to judge whether something is good enough, clean enough, pretty enough, done well enough.

Perfectionists have very high, rigid standards, and they have trouble adjusting to the changing demands or circumstances of their life. Develop the ability to shift standards so you can be satisfied with less than perfect when your time demands are high, instead of feeling as if you are somehow falling short.

Time planning is outlining ahead of time the work you need to be done in a specific period. Sometimes time planning is as simple as writing out a "To Do" list to ease your mind from holding on to too much detail.

At particularly stressful times, the "To Do" list may expand to include a more specific calendar of when tasks will be done. While a detailed time schedule can be too confining to use all of the time, it is a good way to take the pressure off at exceptionally demanding times.

Recognizing procrastination is a skill in itself because procrastinators can do an incredible job of hiding their procrastination from themselves. Procrastination is needlessly postponing decisions or actions.

You might disguise the procrastination response with an excuse like waiting for inspiration, or needing a large block of time to concentrate with your full attention, or needing more information before tackling a project.

It takes skill to differentiate between procrastination excuses and legitimate reasons for delaying a decision or action. Without the ability to recognize when you are, procrastinating there is little chance of overcoming this immobilizing habit.



Chapter 2:

Tips to Help You Prioritize

Synopsis

Here are some tips to help you prioritize. It is important to use these tips on a regular basis to help remain focused. Each of these techniques can help you in getting closer to your goal of becoming more effective with your time.



Tips

Each of these techniques can help you in getting closer to your goal of becoming more effective with your time:

1. Assume ownership of your time

Most individuals would be surprised if somebody reached in their wallet without asking and helped themselves to the money found there. But how different is that from letting other people help themselves to your time? Take possession of your own time and do not allow other people to make commitments of your time without your permission. It is not selfish to keep other people from consuming your time. Give your time freely when you want but do not make the mistake of undervaluing this resource, or feeling guilty when you do not allow other people to waste it. Think of a time lately when somebody wasted your time. How could you have dealt with the situation better?

2. Prioritize

Continually check yourself to see that you're working on the most significant things. Helping your child talk through a problem, he/she is having or discussing the day's events with a spouse or friend may be more significant than getting the dishes done or a load of laundry completed. Do not think of priorities only as tasks that need doing. As you remind yourself to direct yourself to the most important tasks first, you will find yourself letting go of tasks that really did not need to be done in the first place.

3. Learn to say "no"

It is not that saying the word is so difficult. It's more the feeling of guilt that many women experience as soon as they use the word. Try centering on the significant things that will be done because you used that two-letter word to decline something which was not a part of your priorities. Considering your past week, what are some things you should have said "no" to?

4. Protect your blocks

Think of your day as numerous large blocks of time with the blocks divided by natural interruptions. Where you have control, keep your blocks whole, scheduling appointments and meetings, running errands at the beginning or end of a block instead of in the middle. Having an appointment in the middle of a block leaves little time at either end to tackle a major piece of work. Keeping your blocks of time as big as possible gives you a feeling of having more time that is available.

5. Delegate

There is that "D" word. Delegating means assigning the responsibility for a task to somebody else. That signifies you no longer have to do the task, nor do you have to remind somebody else to do it. Being able to delegate some tasks is a way of freeing up some of your time for the jobs that only you are able to do. As somebody else learns to do a job, do not be tempted to take over if they are not doing it quite right. You have to learn that "done" may be "good enough."

6. Think in terms of buying time

There's an intimate relationship between time and money, where one can often be substituted for the other. The more hectic your schedule, the more reasonable it is to buy time by selecting goods and services that save you from investing time. Paying somebody to mow your yard or transport your kids to baseball practice are examples of purchasing time. What are some of the additional ways you are able to or do buy some time?

7. Learn to work with your biological clock

People have a peak time of day when their energy is at its highest and concentration at its best. Determine which time of day is your peak performance time and plan your work accordingly. Keep meetings and routine tasks for other parts of the day when you have the choice. What part of the day is best for you to do a task that takes real concentration?

8. Break down big jobs into manageable pieces

One of the sources of procrastination is that some tasks can seem too overwhelming to even begin. Learn to break down a large task into manageable pieces and then begin with a piece you know you can handle. The most challenging step on major undertakings is often the first one. Besides, you will have a greater sense of satisfaction as you complete each individual portion of the task and this can keep you motivated to the end. Think of a major task you have ahead of you. How could you break it down into manageable pieces?

9. Work on overcoming procrastination

Once you recognize that you are procrastinating, the next step is to begin overcoming this time-wasting habit. In addition, procrastination is a habit, a habitual way of dealing with tasks you find distasteful or that make you fearful of failure. When you see that you are procrastinating, make an appointment with yourself to take the first step toward completing the task. Determine exactly what that first step will be and then set a specific time in the near future to begin the work.

10. Reward yourself

Celebrate when a major task is completed or a major challenge is met. One of the problems with a hectic life is that you can be so busy that you fail to notice the completion of a major piece of work. You just move on to the next job without celebrating your previous success. This failure leads to focusing on what is still left undone instead of enjoying what has already been accomplished. Set up a reward system for yourself that serves as both a motivator to get certain difficult tasks done and an acknowledgment that you are making effective use of your time. Be it a bubble bath, two chapters in your new book, or a phone call to a friend, acknowledge your accomplishment by rewarding yourself.

Chapter 3:

Beating Procrastination

Synopsis

If you have found yourself putting off important tasks repeatedly, you're not alone. In fact, many people procrastinate to some degree. The key to controlling this destructive habit is to recognize when you begin procrastinating, understand why it happens, and take active steps to manage your time better. In a nutshell, you procrastinate when you put off things that you should be focusing on right now.

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Beating Procrastination

If you've found yourself putting off important tasks over and over again, you're not alone. In fact, many people procrastinate to some degree. The key to controlling this destructive habit is to recognize when you begin procrastinating, understand why it happens, and take active steps to manage your time better. In a nutshell, you procrastinate when you put off things that you should be focusing on right now.

How to Overcome Procrastination

Follow these steps to deal with and control procrastination:

Step 1: Recognize that you are Procrastinating

If you are honest with yourself, you probably know when you are procrastinating. Here are some useful indicators that will help you know when you are procrastinating:

- Filling your day with low priority tasks from your To Do List.
- Reading e-mails several times without starting work on them or deciding what you are going to do with them.
- Sitting down to start a high-priority task, and almost instantly going off to make a cup of coffee.
- Leaving an item on your To Do list for a while, even though you know it is important.
- Regularly saying "Yes" to unimportant tasks that other people ask you to do, and filling your time with these rather than getting on with the important tasks already on your list.

- Waiting for the “right mood” or the “right time” to tackle the important task.

Step 2: Adopt Anti-Procrastination Strategies

Procrastination is a habit – a deeply ingrained pattern of behavior. That means that you will not just break it overnight. Habits only stop being habits when you have persistently stopped practicing them, so use as many approaches as possible to maximize your chances of beating procrastination. Some tips will work better for some people than for others, and for some tasks than others. Sometime you may just need a fresh approach to beat procrastination.

These general tips will help motivate you to get moving:

- Make up your own rewards. For instance, promise yourself a piece of tasty flapjack at lunchtime if you have completed a certain task. In addition, make sure you notice how good it feels to finish things!
- Ask someone else to check up on you. Peer pressure works! This is the principle behind slimming and other self-help groups, and it is widely recognized as a highly effective approach.
- Identify the unpleasant consequences of NOT doing the task.
- Work out the cost of your time to your employer. As your employers are paying you to do the things that they think are important, you're not delivering value for money if you're not doing those things. Shame yourself into getting going!
- Aim to “eat an elephant beetle” first thing, every day!

Remember: the longer you are able to spend without procrastinating, the greater your chances of breaking this destructive habit for good!

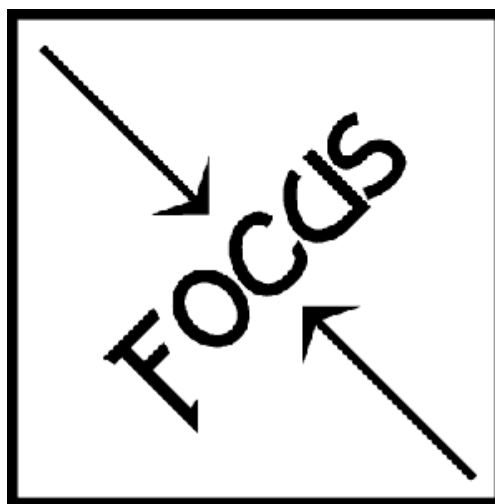
Chapter 4:

Tips for Staying Focused

Synopsis

Some might say it is because we do not have the necessary will power to accomplish what we set out to do. Some say it is because we are too busy or too overwhelmed to take action on our resolution. My guess is it could be any of those things, but it is more likely that you have just started down a path without your compass and you have started to lose your way.

Rather than rattling off a list of things, you "should" do for whatever reason, sit down and think about what it is you really want to achieve and set a solid intention for accomplishing your goal. I also suggest that you focus on only one or two intentions at a time. No matter what it is that you would like to achieve, setting an intention can and will set you on a course for success.



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Here are 5 top tips to finally achieving your goal:

Tip 1 Get clear. In setting an intention, you're making it clear to yourself and to other people exactly what you plan to do. Define the definition of what accomplishing your goal would be. For instance, you know you've reached your goal of improving your management skills when you consistently feel more satisfied with your ability to deal with tough situations and motivate your staff. You may even get that promotion you have been after!

Tip 2 Realize that an intention comes in several sizes and every large goal is filled with intentions big and small. With follow through, each intention will ultimately lead to success. For instance, if your resolution is to improve your management skills, your first intention

may be to speak with your company to find out what skills and traits you may want to focus on.

Tip 3 do not let confusion overwhelm your intention. You may have lots of passion about your resolution, but passion without a plan is wasted energy and will eventually fizzle out. Setting an intention to take a step towards your goal each day will keep you on the right path and help to clear away confusion.

Tip 4 Use your resources. Ask for what you want and need from other people. When you clearly state your intention and your request of other people, you have the opportunity to gain a partner and a cheering section. For instance, if you look up to somebody's management style, ask him or her for tips and possibly even support. Chances are they will be flattered and very willing to share advice.

Tip 5 Be accountable. Choose your resolutions carefully by deciding what really interests you. You might ask somebody you trust to help keep you accountable. Nevertheless, nothing can take the place of honoring your intentions to yourself. You will be amazed at how your self-esteem and sense of accomplishment will increase when you achieve your goals.

Chapter 5:

Work Less Accomplish More

Synopsis

If you are feeling overworked, overwhelmed or just plain over it, the following time-management tips can help you maximize your productivity so you are able to accomplish more.



Work Less Accomplish More

If you are feeling overworked, overwhelmed or just plain over it, the following time-management tips can help you maximize your productivity so you are able to accomplish more.

Separate Work from Home

Between responding to personal emails, instant messaging and fielding cell phone calls from your kids, it can get very hard to stay focused on the tasks. Therefore, when you're in the office try to concentrate on your work as much as possible. Then when you're at home, you can really deal with your issues there without distraction. You'll wind up having better quality time both places. Separating your work duties from home-related ones will allow you to keep your mind on work when you're there and, in turn, procrastinate less, feel less overwhelmed and accomplish more.

Establish boundaries and stick with them

While it is always great to try to make everybody happy all the time, it is just not possible in a workplace ruled by the irrefutable laws of time and space. Learn when to say no. There are times when it's right to go beyond the call of duty on the job. For Instance, when it is a real emergency, then I do not mind staying late or going out on a limb. However, that's different from just letting people dump their last-minute work on your desk so they can make it home early. While you need to do your work, you also need to take care of yourself and know your job's boundaries.

Get Organized

Time spent hunting for files or lost phone numbers could be used for making progress on your to-do list. Good organizational structures are essential in any time-management plan. Spend a few moments at the end of everyday answering voicemails, and emails. It always helps to be organized and not let messages pile up. It will always save you time. Sticky notes posted on your keyboard can help you remember the most important task that need to be done throughout the day. Everyone has their own system for being organized. Try these tips. They may just add a couple of minutes to your day along with your routine you already practice.

Make Time for Yourself

Any well-constructed to-do list has to include some time for relaxing and centering yourself, or you might wind up too stressed out to do anybody any good.

Hard work = Resistance and is the opposite of flow.

First off, no one likes to "have to" do anything. When you say I "have to" pay my bills, so I "have to" work hard to get the money. Already you are able to sense the despair and powerlessness in the very idea of "having to" do something you naturally resist. When you "have to" do anything, you're in a state of resistance. You are fighting the natural flow by pointing yourself upstream, resisting. After a few decades of this resistance, you are able to see how some individuals eventually burnout, lose their perspective, lose joy, create sickness and ultimately lose life itself. No, having to work hard to get what we want

isn't the answer. Grinding away at something is the root cause of all disappointments in life. Turn this idea around.

Discover and pursue your path of least resistance.

What do you love? I mean really love! What do you like to "play at"? What are you effortlessly good at? What activity excites you to an extent that when you're engaged in it, you actually lose your awareness of time? Think about these questions deeply. Within this idea of "play" is the seed of joyous, easy, relaxed, natural, lazy creation. There's no working when you're engaged in an activity you feel you were born to do. If you have an idea that you love to play with, do you force yourself to play with it? Of course not. You are naturally drawn to it. You're lovingly engaged in it. Things are easy. There's no work involved and the results of your creation seem almost heaven-sent.

Your whole life must reflect what you're naturally drawn to do. It is essential to accomplishing your heart's desire. Do not trade one more second of your precious life energy working hard at achieving your goals. Discover your greatest gifts that have been with you since the day you were born and use them to create value in a simple and relaxed way! Everything you need to create your success is already within you.

Any useful idea that has elevated the life experience of individuals has come about because people would like to avoid having to do hard work. All our innovations throughout history have been created to make life easier and better. Hard work is counter-productive to the direction of growth and life expanding. Hard work shuts off the flow of creative, inspired energy. Hard work isn't in alignment with the

laws of creation. You're made of the same stuff and this natural law applies to you wittingly or unwittingly. You'll never become healthy, wealthy and wise:

- keeping your nose to the grindstone
- pushing the ball uphill
- working your fingers to the bone
- going to a salt mine
- spending the day with a slave driver

There's an easier, lazy, do nothing way to create the life you have always desired. You must engage yourself in what you love, play and have fun with. Play with everything. If it is not fun, and feels like hard work, you're decreasing your potential for creating massive success in your life. Align your focus and attention to only that which you love. Then find partners who love doing the activities you resist doing. When you put it all together, you will take a quantum leap in your power to create what you desire.

Chapter 6:

Equanimity

Synopsis

What is equanimity?

Philosophy teaches us to bear with equanimity the bad luck of other people.

Merriam-Webster defines equanimity as an evenness of mind under stress - a habit of mind that's rarely disturbed under great strain; a controlling of emotional or mental agitation through will and habit; a steadiness when facing strain.



Equanimity

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Merriam-Webster defines equanimity as an evenness of mind under stress - a habit of mind that's rarely disturbed under great strain; a controlling of emotional or mental agitation through will and habit; a steadiness when facing strain.

Equanimity is a practice, most often discussed in Buddhist and Sufi traditions. Equanimity is the base for wisdom and freedom and for compassion and love. Few individuals are capable of expressing with equanimity opinions that differ from the prejudices of their social environment. Most individuals are even incapable of forming such opinions.

What does equanimity look like?

Equanimity is the capacity to stay neutral, to observe from a distance, and be at peace without getting caught up in what we observe. It is the capacity to see the big picture with understanding and without reacting, for instance, to another's words, ideology, perspective, position, premise, or philosophy. Essentially, we take nothing personally; refuse to be caught up in the drama our own or other peoples.

Equanimity allows us to "stand in the midst," of conflict or crisis in a way where we are balanced, grounded and centered. Equanimity has

the qualities of inner peace, well being, vitality, strength, and steadfastness. Equanimity allows us to remain upright in the face of the strong winds of conflict and crisis, such as: blame, failure, pain, or disrepute - the winds that set us up for suffering when they begin to blow. Equanimity protects us from being "blown over" and helps us stay on an "even keel."

How do we develop equanimity?

There are numerous mind/body qualities that support the development of equanimity. One is integrity. Do-ing and be-ing in integrity supports our feeling confident when we speak and act. Being in integrity fosters an equanimity that results in "blamelessness," feeling comfortable in any setting or with any group without the need to find fault or blame. Another quality that supports equanimity is faith (not necessarily a religious or theological faith) - a faith based on wisdom, conviction or confidence. This type of faith allows us to meet challenge, crisis or conflict head on with confidence, with equanimity. A third quality is that of a well-developed mind a mind that reflects stability, balance and strength. We develop such a mind through a conscious and consistent practice of focus, concentration, attention and mindfulness. A well-developed, calm mind keeps us from being blown about by winds of conflict and crisis.

A quality that supports equanimity is seeing reality for what it is, for instance, that change and impermanence are an unpleasant fact. We become detached and less clingy to our attachments. This means letting go of negative judgments about our experience and replacing them with an attitude of loving kindness or acceptance and a compassionate matter-of-factness. The more we become detached, the deeper we experience equanimity. The final quality is letting go of

our need to be reactive so we can witness, watch and observe without needing to get caught up in the fray, the winds - maintaining a consistent relaxed state within our body as sensations move through.

Equanimity, thus, has two aspects: the power of reflection and an inner balance, both of which support one to be mindful, awake, aware and conscious. The greater the degree we are mindful, the greater our capacity for equanimity. The greater our equanimity, the greater our ability to remain steady and balanced as we navigate through the rough waters and gusty winds of change, challenge and conflict.

What happens when we are out of balance lacking equanimity?

In our everyday physical world, when we lose our balance, we fall. In our emotional world, we stuff our feelings and emotions, deny them or contract around them. Or we identify with a particular thought, feeling or emotion, hold on to it rather than allow it to flow through us or pass like a cloud in the sky. The middle ground is equanimity - the state of non-interference.

Equanimity allows for a deeper, more fulfilling experience.

As we develop our capacity for equanimity, we can begin to notice when we drop into a "state of equanimity." Being aware of our experience, we can explore the state and this practice will lead to more frequent and deeper states of equanimity. What we find with such practice is that people, events, and circumstances that once caused us to be reactive no longer have any "charge" and we are more and more able to let go and feel less "bothered." We suffer less.

Chapter 7:

Using Affirmations

Synopsis

If you use affirmations, make it a point to use them frequently and do not stop using them even if your situation is getting better. The more you use affirmations, the better the situation. There are affirmations for every type of situation; priorities, procrastination, focus, and serenity are just a few. Here are some affirmations that may help you throughout your day.



Affirmations

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Prioritizing

- I am entitled to live a calm life, full of joy and order.
- I set realistic goals, remembering that my first priority is myself.
- I schedule tasks at the right pace for me.
- I proactively decide what tasks I should do first and which are more important.
- I take something off my schedule before I add one on.
- I make time for anything new that I bring into my life.
- I find no need to hoard my time on one specific thing.
- I am able to delegate the tasks that I cannot - or should not - be doing.
- I make time for play and rest and do not allow myself to work non-stop.
- I accept my progress because it is at my own pace.
- I know that my patience, tolerance, and efforts help me learn and grow to be a stronger version of me.
- I am gentle with my efforts, knowing that my new way of living requires much practice and patience.

Procrastination

- I take the action and leave the outcome up to God.
- There is no try, only do.
- My desire to get on with things is stronger than my desire to procrastinate.
- Procrastination is my enemy.
- I take action towards my goals daily.
- I enjoy the success of finishing a task.
- I choose to start this task with a small, imperfect step. I will feel terrific and have plenty of time for play!
- I look forward to getting things done.
- Among everything I do I love working the most.

Focus

- I am alert and attentive at all times.
- I am always focused on what I am doing.
- I am attentive and observant throughout my day.
- I am aware and present at all times.
- I am calm and focused in all that I do.
- I am completely absorbed in the present moment.
- I am completely focused on what I am doing.
- I am easily absorbed by all that I do.
- I am fascinated and involved in every task I perform.
- I am focused and relaxed in all that I do.
- I am fully focused and present in all interactions with others.

Serenity

- I have Peace of mind at all times.
- No matter what I am faced with I will remain calm.
- I have inner peace.
- My mind is always in a calm loving place.



Wrapping Up

Generally, when we make progress in life it is because life presses on us to move forward. Seldom is it because of our own conscious choice and initiative. Over the long course of our lives, such forced advancement occurs in unpredictable ways, sometimes through happy, but often through unhappy experiences. Surely, this is not the most effective way to progress in life.

Yet that is the way the overwhelming majority of us progress in life. We call such inefficient, unpredictable, life-meandering progress. However, with this book and these tips we can consciously change our behavior without the added stress.

We can have balance and success in life. In addition, we can get our priorities in line and keep them there. What is stopping you from grabbing those extra minutes and hours in your day? The only answer is, you! So get out of your way and start accomplishing more by doing less!