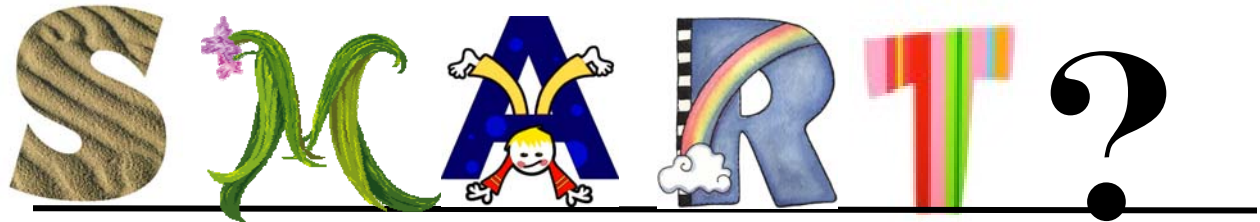




Meritus
Behavioral
Health

GETTING BACK ON TRACK AFTER THE HOLIDAYS

Is Your Goal.....



 SPECIFIC

 MEASURABLE

 ACHIEVABLE

 RESULTS ORIENTED

 TIME-DEFINED

Prioritizing Information



This Morning

This Afternoon

Tomorrow

Organizing Your Time

To be better organized is to a step toward more effective time management. Here are twelve suggestions to structure your time and focus your attention on creating the life of your choice.



1. **Purchase an organizer.** Find one that includes daily, weekly, and monthly calendar and use it.
2. **Post copies of your written values, goals, action plans, and self-contracts in places where you will often be reminded of them.** Use brightly colored paper and ink to catch your eye. Try keeping a copy in your organizer or on a wall calendar or your bathroom mirror or any other place that you look frequently.
3. **Make sure that your list of daily goals and your calendar reflect your long-term, medium-term, and short-term goals.** If you want to be physically fit and relaxed, schedule time each day for exercise and for practicing relaxation techniques. If spending quality time with a loved one is high priority, block off regular time on your calendar to do this and include that time on your daily to-do list. If you arrange your schedule of activities on a weekly or even monthly basis, you will find that you have time to work on all your important goals.
4. **Plan for efficiency.** Combine activities that can be done at the same time, such watching your favorite TV show while exercising, ironing, or washing dishes, sequence activities to save time. Match tasks to your varying energy levels. Although you can usually predict your energy level at different points during the day and plan accordingly, occasionally you will run out of steam earlier than anticipated. If so, you may want to reschedule activities that require energy and alertness to at time when you can perform them with maximum efficiency.
5. **Minimize time wasters.** Cut back on TV, telephone interruptions, drop-in visitors, unproductive meetings, ineffective delegation of responsibilities, crises, activities, that lack direction, and overly ambitious goals. Plan ways to avoid as many predictable time wasters as possible, but be realistic enough to schedule some time for unexpected interruptions.
6. **Learn to say no.** set limits on how much you are willing to do for others. If you have difficulty with this start working on assertiveness.
7. **Make a list of things to do when you're waiting.** Good candidates include doing a relaxation exercise, planning tomorrow's list of goals, reviewing your priorities and goals, reading a book, or filing your nails.
8. **Set aside several short periods each day for quiet time.** Use this time to practice your deep relaxation techniques. This will help you stay in touch with what is most important to you, rather than rushing faster and faster in response to others' demands.
9. **When you are performing a high-priority activity, focus your full attention on it.** Make a list of your usual distractions and plan how you can block each one of them. For instance, if you often find yourself daydreaming when you should be working, schedule in a visualization session or some other way of using your imagination during one of your quiet times.
10. **Arrange your environment to support your values and goals.** If your priorities require focus and concentration, make sure that you have a quiet room or corner available for reading, writing, practicing deep relaxation, or just thinking through your plans.
11. **Don't waste time on decisions that involve equally attractive or inconsequential alternatives.** If you find yourself in a quandary over choices like this, just flip a coin and go with the winning call.
12. **Reward yourself for improving your time management.** One of the greatest rewards of effective time management comes from not having to rush to accomplish the important things in your life. By prioritizing and planning your activities, you can choose to move through your day at a more leisurely pace.

7 Benefits of Gratitude That Will Motivate You Year-Round



Gratitude may be one of the most overlooked tools that we all have access to every day. Cultivating gratitude doesn't cost any money and it certainly doesn't take much time, but the benefits are enormous. Research reveals gratitude can have these seven benefits:

1. **Gratitude opens the door to more relationships.** Not only does saying “thank you” constitute good manners, but showing appreciation can help you win new friends. Thanking a new acquaintance makes them more likely to seek an ongoing relationship. So whether you thank a stranger for holding the door or you send a quick thank-you note to that co-worker who helped you with a project, acknowledging other people's contributions can lead to new opportunities.
2. **Gratitude improves physical health.** Grateful people experience fewer aches and pains and they report feeling healthier than other people. Not surprisingly, grateful people are also more likely to take care of their health. They exercise more often and are more likely to attend regular check-ups with their doctors, which is likely to contribute to further longevity.
3. **Gratitude improves psychological health.** Gratitude reduces a multitude of toxic emotions, ranging from envy and resentment to frustration and regret. Gratitude effectively increases happiness and reduces depression.
4. **Gratitude enhances empathy and reduces aggression.** Grateful people are more likely to behave in a prosocial manner, even when others behave less kind. People who are more grateful are less likely to retaliate against others, even when given negative feedback. They experienced more sensitivity and empathy toward other people and a decreased desire to seek revenge.
5. **Grateful people sleep better.** Writing in a gratitude journal improves sleep; spend just 15 minutes jotting down a few grateful sentiments before bed, and you may sleep better and longer.
6. **Gratitude improves self-esteem.** Gratitude increased athlete's self-esteem, which is an essential component to optimal performance. Other studies have shown that gratitude reduces social comparisons. Rather than becoming resentful toward people who have more money or better jobs – which is a major factor in reduced self-esteem- grateful people are able to appreciate other people's accomplishments.
7. **Gratitude increases mental strength.** Research has shown gratitude not only reduces stress, but it may also play a major role in overcoming trauma and resilience. Recognizing all you have to be thankful for – even during the worst times of your life – fosters resilience.

We all have the ability and opportunity to cultivate gratitude. Simply take a few moments to focus on all that you have – rather than complain about all the things you think you deserve. Developing an “attitude of gratitude” is one of the simplest ways to improve your satisfaction with life.