

ACCOMPLISH MORE IN A DAY

Unfortunately there are still only 24 hours in a day, even when we really need 26 or 30. Managing time better is everyone's goal. Here are some ideas to consider that may help you accomplish more in a day.

BREAK UP THAT MILE LONG "TO-DO" LIST. Break up your list into "A" items which must-absolutely-must-get-done tasks; and "B" items which are things you'd like to get done. Tackle the "A" items first. The sooner these are done, the easier other projects will be to complete.

LEARN TO DELEGATE AND DON'T BE TOO PICKY. If you have children, assign them tasks to accomplish. They will benefit in multiple ways. They will learn that they are part of a family unit and that everyone must pitch in for the common good. They will gain a sense of pride at accomplishing a task. They will learn life skills. Now consider the "too picky" aspect. Have a reasonable standard about the level to which the task should be accomplished. Remember to praise all participants and, when necessary, redirect attention to the tasks at hand.

ESTABLISH A WEEKLY TO-DO LIST. This week long overview allows you to group errands and tasks so that you consolidate automobile trips to particular areas of your community rather than several times a week. Or perhaps you'll only need to vacuum once a week instead of every other day.

USE MEAL PREP AS A ONE-ON-ONE TIME WITH YOUR CHILDREN. Fixing dinner or Sunday breakfast doesn't take focused concentration, so you are free to chat. Because your attention is divided, the atmosphere is more relaxed and your children will not feel like they are being interrogated. Finally, you are teaching your child another life skill. Car pools and folding clothes are similar activities that create a positive experience. Try a sock throw just for the fun of it!

WORK ON ONE PROJECT AT A TIME UNTIL IT IS COMPLETED. If the task is particularly large or distasteful (i.e., cleaning out your PTA office drawers or boxes) organize larger tasks into mini-projects (i.e., one box or drawer at a time). Interruptions are one of the biggest time wasters. Momentum is lost every time a task is stopped and it must be regained before we're operating at peak efficiency again.

MAXIMIZE MINI-TIME BLOCKS. Break up your to-do list into 10-minute, 20-minute, 30-minute, etc., tasks, so you can quickly identify tasks to be completed as your schedule permits.

SCHEDULE SOME FUN. Everyone needs a fun activity or personal time to reenergize. Schedule 15 minutes a day or an hour a week for a special relaxing event. Reward yourself. Credit yourself five additional minutes of fun for each completed "A" item.

LOOK TO TOMORROW. At the end of each day, either at work or at home during the 5:00 news, take a few moments to review the accomplishments of the day and prioritize tomorrow's list. This simple step will help you enjoy your evening and you'll get a good night's rest without worrying about tomorrow's schedule.