
How to

HAVE MORE TIME

Edited by Eric Townsend



This book is one of the "Free Zone – FriScientology" books which were published after the early 1980s turbulent period when many Scientology members were either "excommunicated" (declared suppressive) or left the official Scientology body voluntarily. Therefore it does not have the approval of Scientology's official organisations. It is a sign of joyous freedom from an organisation which had become odious.

It was a period of a good deal of confusion.

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HOW TO HAVE MORE TIME

One of the GET READY FOR LIFE Series

EDITED BY ERIC TOWNSEND

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INTRODUCTION

This booklet is one of a series which is designed to help you get on to better terms with life. That means you being more in control of how things go for you in life, and also how you can relate better to important things in life like family, work and your community.

The principles from which this booklet has been compiled have evolved over many years. They are simple popular truths, more often called commonsense, which somehow have got obscured in the complexities of modern life.

You do not have to worry about the underlying principles at this stage. All you are asked to do is read the booklet and ask yourself - Does what it says make sense? If you want to get onto better terms with life, you are then asked to do certain practical things to apply the points that are being made to your own life.

Some people find this quite hard because we are so used to discussing everything at great length. The process we suggest is to just see if the ideas in the first section seem commonsense to you. If they do, then do the written part at the end of the section. Where it asks you to do something in your life, then do it. Don't spend a lot of time wondering or thinking about it, just do what it says. The only test that matters is whether what you do brings about improvements in your life and happiness.

GENERAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Many people have contributed to the contents of this booklet and the GET READY FOR LIFE series. Some have written sections, some given examples and others inspiration. They are too numerous to mention individually but their contribution to helping others in life is much appreciated and this help is their best testament.

ERIC TOWNSEND
EDITOR.

Also available in this series:

HOW TO BE HAPPY
HOW TO COMMUNICATE BETTER

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BEFORE YOU START

This booklet is made up of words. These are the building bricks of knowledge. If you come to a word you do not feel sure that you understand, you should look it up in a dictionary.

This won't take you long and you can be sure then that you are building your knowledge and understanding with sound bricks.

For example, if you come across the word "recapitulate", you may not know exactly what it means. If you are unsure, you won't be sure about what the whole sentence means and if you are being asked to do something, you won't know what to do!

The dictionary definition of "recapitulate" is: "To go over again". Now you understand what the word means, you therefore understand what the sentence means. You can now carry on confident that you know and understand what is being said.

The main reason that people give up studying something or feel unable to learn about something is because they have come across words in the subject that they do not fully understand.

If the material in this booklet becomes confusing or it is no longer holding your attention, don't go any further. Instead look back from the point where you last felt all right and find the word around there you have not fully understood. The test you can apply to the word to see if you do understand it is, - Can I make up a sentence of my own using that word? Once you have found the

word that is not fully understood, look it up in the dictionary. Then carry on reading from the point where you found the misunderstood word.

A few seconds spent looking up a word in a dictionary can save you minutes or even hours of otherwise wasted time.

HOW TO HAVE TIME

CHAPTER ONE

There are many familiar expressions which relate to time. One of the most depressing is 'Time and tide wait for no Man'.

Why do most people feel they don't manage time as well as they should? Maybe they feel they want or need more of it. Perhaps it is because they feel that they have only a limited amount of time, which is sliding by, and they are not using it to do the things they want. Alternatively they may just feel oppressed by the many things they have to do and feel they never have time to stop and do nothing.

Time is also extremely elastic! Have you noticed how quickly it can go when you are doing something you enjoy? On the other hand, can you think of an occasion when you were stuck somewhere with nothing to do? At those two obvious extremes we can perhaps understand why there should be such a difference but this will not explain the many other circumstances when the speed of time passing seems to vary.

There are many apparent contradictions to do with time. In this booklet we try to show why some of them occur and help you to get into better control of time. In particular we deal with the measure most often used in relation to use of time, that is what we get done in the time.

Other words are frequently used in connection with managing time better. Among these are punctuality and productivity. The most relevant however is efficiency. We say of a person that they are efficient if they are capable of doing what they are supposed to do and doing it reasonably quickly, and certainly by when they say they will do it.

The World Book Dictionary defines 'Efficient' as: 'able to produce the effect wanted without waste of time, energy, etc.'

Have you observed how some people get a lot more done than others? There is an old expression 'If you want a job done give it to a busy man'. While we may wish to update it slightly in a moment, we can immediately see the logic in the statement. People who seem to have a lot of spare time are not usually good at putting it to productive use.

We can be deceived however by the very busy person who doesn't actually achieve much. We must not confuse efficiency with furious activity. There are some people who create a lot of noise and fuss but not a lot comes out of it. There are other people who don't seem to be wildly busy, who can spare you time when you need it, and yet do get a lot done!

Maybe we should restate that expression as 'If you want a job done give it to a busy man who is also efficient'. For the first practical in this booklet you are asked to look around among people you know to find a few examples of each.

This is the first page of the practical part of this booklet.

At the end of each chapter you are asked to answer certain questions. You should write down the answers on a piece of paper, or better still in a note-book.

The purpose of some of the questions may not be obvious immediately. This is because you will use the answers in a later chapter.

Don't jump over the questions without answering them. They will be an important help to you in getting a real benefit from reading this booklet.

Here are the first questions.

1. Can you think of up to three people you know who are always active and busy, but who don't get much done? Write down their names.
2. Think of up to three people you know who do achieve a fair amount without much fuss. Write down their names.

CHAPTER TWO

The efficient person accomplishes much in a short time, with a minimum of wasted time.

The key to efficiency is CONTROL. Nobody becomes efficient however without understanding and using control.

Unfortunately the word 'control' has unfavourable overtones in our society. If you ask a few people what the word control means they will probably mention limits on personal freedom or one person dominating another. This tends to make it an unpopular word to-day.

If you look up the word in your dictionary you will find it also means to direct or regulate things. Thus we need to exercise control over many things to get through the day. When we turn on and off a tap/faucet we are controlling it. This more neutral way of using the word control is more appropriate for our purposes.

Whether you are trying to squeeze three days' housework into the half-hour before your husband arrives home with a client, calculate an intricate job estimate for a waiting customer, or type a ten-page report for a board meeting, you must exercise control. You must control your actions, your materials, your equipment, the communication lines related to the job and, above all, your own thinking.

Efficient production requires that we be able to direct and regulate our immediate environment. And if we're hoping for a rise,

a promotion or greater responsibility, we must demonstrate control of an even wider area.

When a person is barely able to control his own small section of the assembly line, he can hardly complain (although he probably will) if he's not promoted to the foreman's job, which involves controlling the equipment and production of many people.

THE CYCLE OF ACTION

To understand control we start with what L. Ron Hubbard calls the "Cycle of Action". Every task we undertake, from milking the cows to flying an airplane, is composed of three distinct parts:

1. Start
2. Continue
3. Finish

An estate agent starts a cycle by first listing a property; he proceeds to show it to potential customers, and concludes the cycle by making the sale.

We start a fire by building and lighting it, we continue it by adding wood or raking the coals, and we finish the fire by extinguishing it.

This combination of start, continue and finish is the "Cycle of Action". Every activity in life is such a cycle; some are lengthy and involved, such as running your own business; others may be as brief and uncomplicated as the treatment we give a piece of junk mail.

CONTROL

Control is the ability to start, to continue, and to finish.

A capable lorry driver starts his truck moving, changes its direction exactly as needed, and precisely stops it. On one pass, he can back that thirty-ton, eighteen-wheel monster into an alley one inch wider than the lorry itself.

A concert pianist demonstrates superb control over every key on the piano. He strikes the desired note, holds it and releases it accurately to produce inspired music. He executes thousands of such cycles while playing each composition.

Too often the word control hits us with a negative jolt. We hear the words rent control, wage control, price control, all of which generally mean "stop". Stop the rising rents, wages, or prices. Even traffic control signals are sometimes called "stoplights", not "go lights".

The irritated father growls, "Myrtle, can't you control that kid?" and he means, "Can't you stop him?"

But good control comprises much more than stopping.

The person able to start a job, see it through quickly and efficiently, then complete it - demonstrates good control of his work. He's not leaving a trail of incomplete Cycles of Action behind him - a sure sign of inefficiency.

The philosopher L. Ron Hubbard first expressed this idea in his book *The Problems of Work*, published in 1956:

Control consists entirely of starting, changing and stopping. There are no other factors in positive control. If one can start something, change its position in space or existence in time and stop it, all at will, he can be said to control it, whatever it may be.

In today's language it is more appropriate to express the elements of control as 'start, continue and finish' for reasons which will become apparent when we examine these concepts in greater detail.

PRACTICAL

Here are the next questions:

3. Write down three examples of cycles of action similar to those given in the text. List the three parts of each example.
4. Look up the definition of control in your dictionary - write down the part relevant to our purposes. Compare this to the definition in this chapter.
5. Write down three examples of cycles of action where the quality of good control would be evident - e.g. driving a car safely.

CHAPTER THREE

STARTING

Exactly when do we start a cycle?

I have posed this question dozens of times, and nearly always received the same response: "You start something when you get the idea of doing it."

It is true that most undertakings are preceded by planning, but when we only "think" about doing something, have we actually started it?

We all know people addicted to castle-building in the sky, but who accomplish nothing. Arthur intends to write a blockbuster of a novel. Janet wants to take up interior decorating. Michael envisages powering a car with old laundry water. But they only talk about it; we see no action.

So when do we really start a Cycle of Action?

To start, we must begin some motion in the physical universe. Though they may precede it, thoughts are not action. Most of us find it easier to dream about our plans than to implement them.

ABILITY TO START

An efficient person starts without difficulty and continues a Cycle of Action with minimal delay.

Those who experience difficulty with starting either never start (the dreamers we just mentioned), or are compulsive starters who begin

project after project, never to complete any of them. Their enthusiasm wanes. Their attention flits. Their determinism wavers. They only nibble at each task before leaving it.

CONTINUING

While starting is putting something in motion, continuing means keeping something in motion. So the word "continue" in the Cycle of Action means to carry forward. If Billy intends to walk down the street to watch the dog fight, he must start walking and continue walking (changing his position in space) until he arrives. If done briskly and directly, this constitutes efficiency. Should the dogs then turn on him, he would probably return home even more efficiently!

ABILITY TO CONTINUE

A person with problems on this part of the cycle may constantly start things, continue them briefly, but let them fizzle out. He's unable to keep things in motion. If Billy - on his way to that dog fight - slowed down to a stop half-way there, he'd never reach his destination. Nor would he arrive if he turned off in the wrong direction or walked around in circles.

An individual relinquishes control of his cycles when he is easily diverted, slowed down or stopped before he reaches his intended goal.

Percy starts to panel the spare room; he lets himself be detoured to repairing the washing machine, and then to planting new shrubs in the garden. The spare room is forgotten.

Mary begins knitting a beautiful afghan cover for her living room couch, but one day while cleaning the living room for guests, she moves her knitting bag from its accustomed place beside the TV chair. It now moulders quietly in the back of the coat cupboard. She tells herself occasionally, "I'll have to finish that afghan sometime."

Then we find the person who compulsively keeps things in motion, who must change things - whether needed or not. He starts out to build a bookcase, then changes his mind and converts it into a cabinet. He paints it green, but before it reaches the sitting room, he decides to remove the paint and varnish it. While the finish is still tacky, he impulsively saws the legs off and... This endangered piece of furniture may never see full daylight.

A compulsive changer buys a table lamp and returns the next day to exchange it for a wall fixture which is taken back two days later for a refund. On the job, he confuses his subordinates with constantly changing instructions, and he alters the orders given to him. Flitting from project to projet, from friend to friend, from one job to another, the compulsive changer demonstrates little control of his life and environment.

What this person is unable to do is to continue the cycle through to finish. He keeps diverting from the original course so that he can never bring it to an end.

FINISH

Finishing means bringing the cycle to its natural end. Furthermore, it means leaving it finished.

ABILITY TO FINISH

A person in good control of his Cycles of Action recognizes when a job is done, and ends off.

Due to impatience or limpness, however, many people halt their own cycles prematurely.

As a high school student, Fred grasped algebra with no difficulty, but rushed through his homework. Although he understood the concepts, simple mathematical errors resulted in poor marks. A few minutes more spent on each paper could have earned Fred an A in Algebra instead of a C.

We also see compulsive stoppers, whose game is thwarting the cycles of others, rarely starting or creating anything themselves. They may be obvious and noisy about it. The boss yells, "Stop sending me those crazy ideas of yours. I didn't tell you to do it that way." Angry parents shout, "Stop all that running around."

There are less obvious ways to stop someone: Subtle criticism ("I suppose it's all right - if you like purple"), joking ridicule ("Is that a dress you're making or a canopy for the lawn mower? Ha ha. Just kidding, darling"), the apologetic diversion ("I know you're busy, but why don't you leave that report for a while and..."), the pseudo-innocent interruption ("You've just got to

come and look at this"), not to mention advice offered for your own good ("You know, hardly any new inventions ever succeed. I'd hate to see you waste all your time").

A stop is still a stop, whether accomplished with a snarl or a smile.

A compulsive stopper in a management position eventually squashes the creative talents of those beneath him. Saying "no" - his warped version of control - becomes a way of life for him. If not actively criticizing the projects of others, he simply turns down every suggestion, proposal, request, or idea. Uncreative himself, he's playing it safe. By stopping an idea at inception, he aims to save money and minimize his own liability. He presents ample justification, of course, but his negative defence disguises an unimaginative mind. Eventually he destroys morale around him and may curtail the progress and expansion of an entire business.

The individual who absolutely has to control everything in sight is upsetting to all of us and this individual is why we have begun to find things wrong with control.

--L. Ron Hubbard
The Problems of Work

THE MOST COMMON PROBLEMS

Our most common difficulties are: 1) the inability to complete desired actions and 2) the inability to stop undesired action.

An artist, for instance, paints a picture and then returns each day to add a few dabs of

paint here, a splash there, a stroke someplace else; he's unable to end the Cycle of Action of that painting.

The person who fails to finish jobs produces a chaotic environment. Joe's lawn mower lies torn apart in the garage while the grass grows six feet high. The attractive spare room panelling has never been graced by a border trim. His fancy rewiring job crossed a few wires and put both the bedroom and the kitchen outlets on the same line; now every time someone plugs in the electric toaster, the refrigerator turns on, a fuse blows and the bedroom clock stops. He changes the fuse, but hasn't yet bothered to sort out the wiring. (Sometimes he's late for work, after forgetting to reset the clock.) Behind the garage sits a decrepit car that looks like a junkyard reject; it just needs a little fixing - when he finds the time.

Hopelessly optimistic, such a person takes on new jobs with gusto. In the office, his desk is piled high with papers, folders, plans, incomplete projects and half-written reports. He may appear desperately busy, but mindless activity is not efficiency.

TROUBLE WITH ENDING CYCLES

If you belong to the legion of put-offers who would rather trifle than toil, it might help to know that you're not alone. Our most persistent difficulty is the inability to carry on our own cycles to completion.

There's that tantalizing urge to leave some part of the job undone - that last crusty pan lying the sink, the tools still left out on the bench, the few remaining papers on the

desk, the report that needs only a cover page.

Some people claim that they wish to be free from the cycles of action that oppress them, but the prospect of having nothing to do actually fills them with terror. One of the cruelest punishments the Roman Emperors inflicted on their troublesome relatives was to banish them to a small island a few hundred yards long, with nothing to do.

In a work situation a person may be insecure in their job. They may therefore avoid completing cycles of action in order to show how indispensable they are. As they whirl in a bedlam of uncompleted cycles, they have convinced themselves that they are doing a vital, demanding job.

Surprisingly, those who never finish cycles frequently cherish visions of great achievement. They intend to start - as soon as they "find the time." They haven't realized that they could make time by properly controlling Cycles of Action.

The most efficient people keep a clear desk at the office, a clean and orderly home - and they find abundant time for activities they value.

Conversely, the inveterate muddle-makers appear unduly busy. When you examine their output, however, you'll observe that they produce little. That frantic, overworked soul who insists he could develop his earth-rattling invention if he could only find the time, is kidding not only you, but himself.

OVER-PREPARATION

Perpetual preparation is one way to put off starting. A would-be mountain climber could read a hundred books on the subject and collect enough equipment to conquer Mount Everest, but he's not climbing until he sets one of his bulky boots down on the base of the mountain itself.

Insufficient preparation, of course, can sabotage any project, but too often it is the over-prepared person who remains under-accomplished.

CHANGING YOUR MIND

Marybell, whose half-completed afghan now sits in the cupboard haunting her, may realize one day that she simply doesn't want to spend her time knitting. She'd rather refurbish antiques. Here it would be more practical for her to buy an afghan from someone else. In any case, she'd find it tremendously therapeutic to bundle up the beast and sell it at a boot sale or give it to a neighbour.

We can always change our minds.

Consider the unfinished boat gathering dust in Mervin's garage. Donating it to the Salvation Army or offering it to a friend would afford him incredible relief. If he's unwilling to do either of these, he should resume work on that boat today and continue working on it every available minute until its finished.

The person in control of his Cycles of Action has options at each step of the way; He can

start something or not; he can continue it or not; he can stop it or not. The important factor is his causativeness. Is he controlling the cycles or do they control him?

There could be three things wrong with any person and these would be the inability to start, the inability to change, the inability to stop. Insanity, for the most part, is an inability to stop.

- L. Ron Hubbard
The Fundamentals of Thought

PRACTICAL

6. Review the people you know and find individuals who have a strong inclination to be either Starters, Continuers or Stoppers. Write down their names, try for at least one of each.
7. Now go back to the people you selected for the first practical exercise. Review how good you consider they are at handling cycles of action. Write down your conclusions.

CHAPTER FOUR

We have looked so far at poor time management, inefficiency and bad control of cycles of action. Explanations of why things happen rarely bring about any improvement. We must decide if we want to improve our own personal efficiency.

We can guess that it won't be easy to change the habits built up over a lifetime and that constant vigilance will be necessary to avoid sliding back. It does become easier as time passes, and as we start to get the benefits of our efforts.

BECOMING EFFICIENT

Begin by listing all your incomplete cycles. Next to each item indicate whether or not you intend to finish this project as originally planned.

Now dispose of all the projects you don't plan to complete. Throw them out. Give them away. Sell them. Hire someone else to finish them for you. However you do it, get them out of your life.

Next, examine the projects remaining on your list. Assign priorities.

Select "Priority 1" and get to work on it. Don't let unimportant distractions stop you. Complete that project. After it's finished, proceed to the next item on your priority list. Dedicate every available moment to completing the current cycle. Don't take on major new projects until your entire list is ticked off.

You'll enjoy a buoyant satisfaction as you complete those old cycles.

This is the beginning of efficiency: Make that list; assign priorities; complete those unfinished cycles.

PROBLEMS/DIFFICULTIES/DECISIONS

The immediate difficulty one encounters with the above is that it is not easy to confront making such a comprehensive list. There follow some points which may help you to confront this task. If however you feel ready to make a start immediately, go to the Practical section at the end of this chapter and begin.

PROBLEMS AND DIFFICULTIES

We can expect to find some incomplete cycles which have problems attached to them which prevent us (we think) from handling them and bringing them to a conclusion. In examining these it is important to distinguish between a problem and a difficulty.

If part of the roof of my house blows off in a storm and I have to repair it myself, then I have a difficulty, unless I am an experienced roofer. I may have to do things I have never done before, which I will find difficult, but I do not have a problem

For a problem, let us say I have only £100 available and I have two creditors both pressing for full payment of their bills, each of around £100. This time I have a problem. There is no difficulty in writing a cheque, but whose name do I write on it?

For a problem I have to make a decision! For a difficulty I have to make a start!

As you consider the incomplete cycles on your list which are troublesome, establish whether there is really a problem requiring a decision, or is just difficult to do.

PRACTICAL

7. Make your list of incomplete cycles. You can keep it open-ended, that is add on other things as you remember them later. The most important thing is to start that list.
8. Now go through the list again and decide about each item whether you really intend to finish it. Write against those that are not to be continued, how you intend to dispose of them.
9. Next step is to allocate priorities by numbering them 1, 2, 3 etc. You should then decide when and how you are going to carry out your intention to complete these cycles. (If you are doing this course with someone's help, you should discuss your list and priorities with them - it will help to confirm your intentions).

CHAPTER FIVE

The last chapter was quite short in order that you could get on with doing something to help you put more order into your life. Now we can look more closely at the principles involved and then see how they can be applied more broadly in your life.

STOLEN ATTENTION

I once postponed filling out a tax form which was routinely due between the first and fifteenth of the month. For some reason I thought it more difficult than it actually was. I'm not sure what I was waiting for, but there was always the wild chance the world would vanish in a puff of smoke, in which case it would be a shame to have wasted all that effort. But life not only continued, it raced callously toward the fifteenth. And the tax form summoned accusingly from the corner of my desk.

Finally, with reluctance, I picked up the form. I decided to time myself. It took ten minutes!

It was a simple chore, but that innocent tax form had stolen hours of my time. I had been unable to devote undivided attention to my other undertakings. Putting off that ten-minute job undoubtedly cost me several hours of efficient production.

This is a clear example of how attention can be stolen. We may not be doing a particular job that we know has to be done, but it is still taking some of our attention. The more we put it off, the more difficult it seems to get down to it. If it was just one job then

maybe we could carry it, but it is more likely that there are dozens of things all taking some of our attention. Thus we can see the truth of the old saying: 'Procrastination (putting things off) is the thief of time'.

An accumulation of too many incomplete cycles is demoralizing. If you started the day with a list of ten jobs, and ran into one frustration after another - the hardware store was closed, the lawyer you needed to see was away, you forgot to take your cheque book with you - you may surrender to the end of the day feeling discouraged and debilitated.

If a person compulsively takes on more activities than he can complete, he may be headed for a nervous breakdown.

Virginia experienced this in college. She started off her first term with enthusiasm: she joined several societies, won a choice part in a play, and took on a heavy course load. Before long she felt like a juggler trying to keep four dozen oranges in the air at once, while playing an accordion with her feet. One afternoon she lay on the bed crying helplessly. She thought of the essay due in English, Algebra problems to finish, a speech to prepare. She was due at a society meeting before dinner; her boyfriend was going to call and she was scheduled for rehearsal in the evening. "I can't do all this," she wailed.

Realizing she must preserve her sanity, Virginia drastically trimmed down her schedule. She resigned from the societies, dropped one of her classes and cut her dates

down to one a week. She experienced immediate relief. There was still plenty to do, but just enough to be stimulating - not overwhelming.

It's a mistake to presume that any cycle, once started, must be continued, regardless of the circumstances. In some cases persistence is noble, but in others, it may be down-right ridiculous. We do hold the option to change plans along the way.

Unwarranted exhaustion is nearly always caused by a pile-up of incompleted cycles. Little segments of our aliveness linger at all the failure points. We can cure this fatigue by asking ourselves, "What did I intend to do today, that I didn't do?" Make a note of these incomplete cycles, resolve to do them tomorrow and shift your attention to present time.

What does it mean to be in present time? It means giving your total undivided thought to the action you are doing this very moment, with no concern for the future or the past. If you want to clean that living room quickly, forget about all the other tasks you must tackle today. Don't think about what happened last night. Put your interest solely on this ashtray and how to complete the cycle on it.

In the office, don't fret about the phone calls you must make, or yesterday's discussion with the boss. Attend to this piece of paper you're holding.

If you find it difficult to keep your full attention on one cycle, do this little exercise: Pick up a pen. Roll it back and

forth between your hands. Feel its temperature. Be aware of its hardness. Notice its colour. Get a firm grip on it, first with one hand and then with the other. Squeeze the pen as hard as you can, observing the imprint it leaves on your hand. Look at the pen. Study its details. When you are thinking of nothing but the pen - how it feels, how it looks, what impression it is making on your hands - you are in present time.

Now take up the first piece of paper you must expedite, study it, feel it, be aware of its physical properties, observe its message and determine the action required. Take that action. Now. As far as you're concerned, there is only this paper to be handled. Let nothing else rob your attention.

This is the formula for fast, powerful production. You can accomplish any cycle quickly and accurately when you submerge your thoughts completely in that action alone.

When you are not in present time - when your attention is elsewhere - you slow down, make mistakes, have to redo the job. Furthermore, this "absentmindedness" is the primary cause of accidents.

When we say that somebody should be in present time we mean he should be in communication with his environment. We mean, further, that he should be in communication with his environment as it exists, not as it existed.

- L. Ron Hubbard
Dianetics '55

So how can we apply all this in our daily life? Let us start at home!

Ever had the situation of being behind with the housework? Suppose there is washing to be done, groceries to buy and a friend is expected for lunch. You walk into your living room and the place is a mess; you don't know where to start. The tables are covered with half-empty glasses and dirty ashtrays. Children's toys, papers, magazines and books litter the floor. It looks hopeless. You wonder (short of burning the whole house down) what can be done.

Everything, if you know what you're doing.

Pick up something and return it to its appropriate place or restore it to its rightful condition. It doesn't matter where you begin. Take one ashtray, clean it and replace it. Pick up one toy and put it away.

The important point here is to start a Cycle of Action - any Cycle of Action - and carry it through to completion. Engage your mind fully on the one action you're doing, not on all the things you have yet to do.

It is worth repeating the vital point that once you start on each cycle, you see it through to its finish. Don't let yourself be interrupted in the middle of a cycle and don't be tempted to leave it to go on to something else when a difficulty is encountered.

OUT OF SIGHT BUT NOT OUT OF MIND

We saw that an accumulation of incomplete cycles is demoralising. We know that

although we may ignore them, these cycles still take up some of our attention.

Do you have somewhere, where incomplete cycles end up, in your house? It could be the cupboard under the stairs, the garage, loft, basement or a shed.

It is likely that many or most of the items occupying these spaces in your house relate to uncompleted cycles. They represent an excellent opportunity for freeing attention units for use in present time.

You may say that you are actually keeping these things for cycles as yet unstated. Fine, but which came first, the idea for the new cycle or the leftover from the old cycle? Strictly speaking the retained leftover from the old cycle means that cycle is incomplete.

We are all afflicted with the disease of hoarding to some extent. It is difficult to be tough on yourself when it is possible that the leftover piece of drainpipe could be made into a hatstand, with a few minor modifications.

I heard of a man who never threw anything away. Because he was a farmer he had plenty of space to accumulate junk in his outbuildings. He even started to go to auctions and jumble sales to buy more things. He eventually filled all his outbuildings and soon after he died. His wife had everything pulled out of the outhouses, cupboards, cellars and loft. She arranged for an enormous auction to be held and the remaining things to be carted away. This is a sad story but imagine the relief that his wife must have experienced at regaining all that

space and all those attention units.

We may be unwilling to throw things away because they have value to someone. Well find an outlet! If you want them to have a good home give them to a Jumble Sale. Don't wait for the collector to come to you. Look in the paper, there are Jumble Sales every week. Take your things along yourself.

If you feel that you should get some money yourself, load up your car and go to a boot sale. You will be surprised at what people will give money for. Perhaps you should also sell them a copy of this booklet!

PRACTICAL

10. Do the exercise to put yourself in Present Time on pages 22 and 23.
11. Make a list of all the areas in your house where the remains of uncompleted cycles have accumulated. Set yourself some targets on clearing these out.

CHAPTER SIX

A very fruitful area of application of these principles is Work. Most of us feel we could be more productive at work.

We can look first at our own personal efficiency and then at how we work with others.

If your office desk is cluttered with yesterday's work, take care of it now. Pick up one piece of paper and expedite it. Do not put it down again until you have handled it, preferably completed all you have to do with it. If it requires a search through the files, make that search. If a phone call is indicated, make the call. If you must enquire about prices before you can dispatch a report, send the enquiry through and place the unfinished report in a pending file. Do whatever is necessary to complete or at least advance that cycle.

After finishing the cycle on the first paper, pick up the next one. Now give that paper your undivided attention.

I gave this advice to the businessman who complained about an overstuffed in-tray that promised at least six months' work. Furthermore, he had told me, it was growing faster than he could clean it out.

I told him: "Don't worry about everything bulging out of that in-basket. Pick up one piece of paper - any piece - and carry it to its conclusion, doing whatever is necessary. Put all of your attention on that one item. Forget the dozens more waiting for you. You are completing only this one now. When it's done, take up the next sheet of paper."

HANDLE IT ONCE

Here is an important rule of efficiency: wherever possible, handle each item only once.

Often we sit down at our desks, pick up a letter, and think, "Well, this requires looking up something in the files. I'll do it later." We slide the letter aside and take up a memo. But the first letter pulls a little of our attention away from the memo we now have in hand, which necessitates calling Joe for the price of plastic strips. We set that one aside too, still searching for something we can expedite now. We light on that project for the boss, but now we have two other papers pulling at our attention.

If we continue this putting-off procedure, we end up with a chaotic office and a confused mind, as our hands flutter helplessly over a desktop of unfinished paperwork.

OVERLAPPING CYCLES

Of course, not every cycle can be carried to completion in one handling. Perhaps we are forced to wait for the answer to an inquiry, the results of an experiment or an end-of-the-month report. So we must juggle an assortment of long-range projects and shorter-range projects, as well as those that can be disposed of instantly. To maintain efficiency, however, carry each cycle as far as possible in present time; end it for now.

Productive people continually synchronize dozens of cycles. To do this effectively, make good use of lists. Write down all of your current or planned projects. Make separate sheets outlining every step

necessary to complete each one. Keep your lists in a pending file and review them periodically to make certain you have taken every possible action. Follow up regularly on people who may be delaying one of your cycles.

Once you have carried each cycle as far as possible for the moment, dismiss it from your mind. This leaves you free to become engrossed in the next project. The whole idea is to keep yourself, as well as each project, in present time.

BREAK UP A TOUGH JOB

The more difficult and distasteful the job, the more important it becomes to separate it into small, easily-confronted cycles. And, at the successful completion of each cycle, make sure that you take a second or two to mentally congratulate yourself: "That one is over. Done. I did it!"

Whether you are calling on customers or weeding out the turnip patch, don't neglect those acknowledgements to yourself. They help to drain off the fatigue of each step along the way.

Many times in this booklet we come back to the value of keeping lists. It is important not just to make lists but to review them. You can then acknowledge yourself by crossing off each item as you complete it.

WORKING WITH OTHERS

You may well be thinking that it would be very easy to be efficient at work if it wasn't for other people, and you would be

right. However virtually all jobs involve at least some interaction with other people.

People display exactly the same characteristics at work as they do in their personal lives. You will find plenty of compulsive Starters, Continuers and Finishers, and probably they won't see much wrong with their method of operating either. If you are not likely to be able to change them, you can at least use your knowledge to harness their strengths and avoid their weaknesses.

SPECIAL TALENTS

People best at starting things are often creative; they should be placed in design, art, or development. They introduce the ideas for new projects, better products, more efficient systems.

Those best at continuing things function most effectively when occupied with maintaining the building, repairing the machinery, keeping employees happy, or preserving good public relations.

There is even a place for those whose main talent lies in stopping. They perform a police function; they are the inspectors of our society. You need them to control the product quality, the honesty, or the expenditures of a company.

Ideally, each employee (and especially the management) would be equally competent at handling all phases of the Cycle of Action.

The optimum condition would be for everyone from manager down to janitor to be capable of starting, changing and stopping and to

be able to endure being started, changed and stopped. Thus we would have a balanced and relatively unconfused business activity.

- L. Ron Hubbard
The Problems of Work

BEWARE OF THESE

Employees proficient at only starting, only changing, or only stopping, require constant supervision. Turned loose, they would shift the emphasis of a business out of proportion. They would start too many new projects, or keep certain out-dated practices going too long, or stop so many functions and ideas that the business would soon cease running.

You may not be in a position to control these people but you can work around them. There are in addition variants to beware of.

We read earlier about the compulsive stopper who can't tolerate good ideas making progress. These people are often to be found at or close to the top of large organizations! This can be because they built up the organisation in the first place but are too insecure to let the ideas of others have a chance. More usually they are just insecure in their ability to do their own job. They therefore don't like others to be too successful, including their subordinates, as it may reflect badly on them.

Remember that the Stopper is not consciously aware of his insecurity or the actions that stem from it. He is also quite capable of being a very pleasant and apparently co-operative person, as this is more helpful

to his survival than obvious antagonism or open destructiveness.

Sometimes he doesn't have the authority to stop an idea outright so what can he do? He can slow it down by dragging in all sorts of other considerations. Often this seems positive and helpful, but it can wear out the initiator until he lets the idea die. Alternatively this person will come along and suggest a few 'improvements'. These can upset the whole original concept and cause many hours of wasted work.

If you are uncertain if a person is a secret stopper, have a look at what they themselves have initiated lately. In a large organisation new ideas and genuine improvements come from a very few people!

TOUS CA CHANGE, TOUS C'EST LA MEME CHOSE
(Everything changes but still stays the same)

Earlier in the booklet we chose to use the word 'continue' rather than 'change' for carrying on with a cycle of action. This is because change in a work situation is more frequently associated with a change of mind about how things should be done. In large organisations changes in the way old things are done take place with breath-taking frequency, without much improvement resulting. This is not a new phenomenon, there is a quotation by a Roman Legion commander complaining about constant change of system!

We trained hard...but it seemed that every time we were beginning to form up in teams we would be re-organised. I was to learn later in life that we tend to meet any new situation by re-organising and a wonderful method it can be for creating the illusion of progress while producing confusion, inefficiency and demoralisation".

CAIUS PETRONIUS, A.D. 65

These sort of changes are not improvements. They are best described by the old expression 'Change for change's sake'. It would be more accurate to describe them as stopping an old continuing cycle and replacing it with a new start.

Thus beware the compulsive changer, who appears to offer improvements. He will often encourage you to throw out the old working method to replace it with an untested supposed improvement. Once you can spot him you can treat his proposals with appropriate caution.

CONTROLLING OTHERS

The primary function of any good executive is to control the cycles of others.

The essence of controlling others is permitting them to control their own cycles. The tyrant who insists on blind obedience, who demands that employees be robots, who refuses to delegate authority, is bound to fail. You can't follow someone around and continually dictate his every action; it would be utterly inefficient. Teach each person to do the job you expect of him, make sure he understands it, then turn him loose.

He will make mistakes, but he'll learn. If he is basically competent, you'll be free to put your attention on other matters.

A person in poor shape resents any effort to control him or induce him to handle his own cycles. His life, his job, his surroundings reflect his incompetence, and his production is close to zero.

What you must do is judge the capacity of each person to handle cycles simultaneously. A person in good shape can be given a large area of independent responsibility, involving many different cycles. Another may only be able to handle one cycle at a time. It is no good ignoring this fact and giving him several because you will end up with nothing!

PRIORITIES FOR OTHERS

Those under your jurisdiction function more efficiently when they understand the relative importances of the jobs you expect them to do. Recently I devised the following list of priorities as a guide for my new secretary:

1. Invoice and expedite all orders.
2. Answer any routine correspondence (queries, catalogues, price lists).
3. Transcribe letters, if any.
4. Do any special assigned job.
5. Work on any incomplete mailings.
6. Transcribe manuscript tapes, if any.
7. Make up address plates for new names.
8. Do filing (once a week).
9. Work on any current long-range projects.
10. Work on job description book.

Any request for a non-routine job (make a new file, order supplies, type up a list, call a

customer) is placed in her basket with a number attached - usually Priority 4. If I need a special report typed immediately, I assign a higher priority - perhaps Number 2. This means that only the day's orders would take precedence.

She is thus able to start, change and stop her own cycles within the framework of these priorities. By using written instructions and the priority list, unnecessary communication and misunderstandings are avoided. We seldom interrupt each other's cycles.

You can devise similar lists for your children, a club or committee member, your cleaning person, or any employee.

All families, offices or groups function more smoothly when agreed-upon priorities are used as guidelines.

PRACTICAL

12. Make a list of the main people you work with. Now go back over that list and assess whether they are more inclined to be Starters, Continuers or Finishers.
13. Now identify any covert stoppers who you encounter in your work. Consider how you can minimise their influence on your work and taking up your time. Write down your conclusions.

CHAPTER SEVEN

When Richard Denny used to tour Britain with Leadership Development Ltd., he used a story to illustrate a very important principle.

'A few years ago Charles Schwab who was President of a steel company in the United States was talking to an efficiency expert name Ivy Lee.

Lee was telling Schwab how his firm's services could help him to manage his company better. The president broke in and said "I'm not managing now as well as I know how. What we need is not more knowing but doing; not knowledge but action.

"We know what we should be doing now, if you can show me a way of getting it done in the time available, I'll gladly listen and pay you anything you ask."

Lee said "Fine, I have a system. It will take me approximately twenty minutes to explain it to you, but it will increase your action by 60%. I want you to convince yourself of it and then get your men to use it."

A few weeks later Ivy Lee received a cheque for \$25,000, in those days that was about £10,000, with a note saying that from a monetary standpoint this was the finest lesson he had ever learnt.

Charles Schwab later took his company on to be the fifth largest independent steel company in the United States. He also later became one of only two men who at that time were paid a salary of \$1,000,000 a year.

It was a very very simple idea that Lee explained to Charles Schwab that particular day - and it was this.

At the end of each day, either just before we're leaving our office or when we arrive home, but at the end of a day, write down the six most important things to be done the following day.

Step two is to number them in their order of importance, and that is the important bit. Many of us, of course, decide what we're going to do the next day but the important part is to number the items in their order of importance. Then, when you go into the office the following day, start at number one until it is complete. Then go on to number two, until it is complete, and then on to number three until it is complete.

This way we have a plan that makes us achieve and handle the most important things each day. If by the end of that day you are unable to complete that list, there is no other way you could have got more done!

A simple idea but it's the simple things that create success - a combination of simple little ideas.

We have looked at how this vital principle can be used at work and in the home. It can and should be applied in any other areas in which you are active, community work, on committees, teaching, fund raising, even gardening!

One very rewarding area of application is in the bringing up of children.

In managing children, you don't burden them with several cycles at one time. Don't bawl at your son, "Clear the table, put away your toys and, for goodness sake, change that mangy T-shirt." If he has heard too much of this sort of thing, he will mutter incoherently, ignore you completely and walk out of the room. Give him one thing to do at a time. Let him complete that cycle before asking him to do another.

Be sure to acknowledge his completion of each cycle by saying "Thank you," or "You did a good job," This totally ends it - for him and for you. As the child gets older, write out lists of tasks you want him to do and let him complete them on his own.

If you ensure that a youngster carries out his own Cycles of Action well, he won't resent good control. He will be able to follow orders and get things done. He will develop certainty in controlling himself, as well as others.

YOU CONTROL TIME

We frequently permit our energies to be wasted on those activities that make the noisiest and most persistent demands; thus we find our days cluttered with mundanities and no time left for the enterprises of deepest interest.

Commencing some favourite pursuit invariably works like a magnet: the phone jangles, the doorbell buzzes, fourth cousins drop in, your secretary breaks a leg, the four-year-old is sick, the plumbing develops a leak and everything but a herd of antelope charges through the place.

It's easy to succumb to numb indifference and abandon the whole thing.

Don't.

Plan the time, and especially the environment, in which you wish to accomplish an important project. Announce to everyone that you are unavailable between certain hours. I tell my family, "If the house catches fire and if my room's going too, you can interrupt me. Otherwise, I'm unavailable." Ignore the phone, doorbell, voices, noises and any small explosions in the vicinity. Let the world struggle along without you for a while.

HAVE YOU GOT IT ON YOUR LIST?

For many years I kept my lists in a big Date-a-Day diary. Because it was not very portable, it was rarely to hand when I needed it. Then someone gave me the tip of a small notebook that would fit into a pocket or handbag.

Today I use a refillable notebook. This enables me to change the order of the pages, to retain long term lists and to throw away those that are finished with. I use it not just for work but for domestic cycles, ideas, all sorts of things. Without it I consider myself like a ship without a rudder.

You will have to find the system that suits you. If you want to gain control of your life and your time, sooner or later you will have to accept the need to PLAN YOUR LIFE AND LIVE YOUR PLAN.

PRACTICAL

14. Make a list of the things you want to get done tomorrow and allocate priorities as in the Ivy Lee story. Carry through the list tomorrow in the way recommended by Ivy Lee.
15. Include on the list setting up a routine to carry on some method of planning your time for subsequent days.

CHAPTER EIGHT

You may be feeling this is all rather hard work! You may just want to have a bit more time to yourself or a bit of time to do nothing.

Fine! There is nothing wrong with those ambitions but to achieve them one must put order and control in on the rest of one's life.

Neurosis and psychosis of all classes are entirely inabilities to start, to change or to stop.

- L. Ron Hubbard
The Fundamentals of Thought

Don't be neurotic. Be efficient!

If you find your job or your environment is too confused, clean up all your old, unfinished cycles, devoting full attention to each current project. Select one Cycle of Action and complete it. Then take another. As you do this, the confusion disappears. Empty out that in-tray, attack that cluttered desk, purge that chaotic basement, wade through that bulging cupboard.

While you're slogging your way through the mess, don't ignore what may be mankind's biggest (if unheralded) breakthrough - the waste basket. If you know down deep in your heart that you'll never finish that course in Making Your Own Coat Hangers, toss it out.

Don't rush - you'll fall all over yourself. If, however, you handle each action in present time, you automatically develop speed

and you'll accomplish ten times more than the frenzied soul who's jumping around like a cat chasing a butterfly. Inefficiency, accidents, equipment breakdowns and faulty products all result from our failure to control the Cycle of Action in present time.

Disorder robs our attention and destroys our space. It's hard to get things done; we find ourselves wanting to leave. So if your office looks as if it should be condemned, begin by restoring order. The efficient person lives and works in clean, uncluttered surroundings.

Once you've established order and disposed of that nagging collection of unfinished cycles, go treasure-hunting through your neglected dreams and dig out those ideas that promise rich rewards.

You do have time for them now.

GET READY FOR LIFE

This booklet is one of a series of very practical booklets which are designed to help people get onto better terms with day to day living.

HOW TO HAVE MORE TIME explains some of the reasons why many of us feel under so much pressure in our daily lives. It then goes on to give practical guidance about how to change things for the better.

This means getting the reader to take back control of how things go in life and helping him or her to relate better to family, friends, work and the community.

The principles explained in this booklet are deceptively simple. They have evolved over many years and are widely known. Somehow they have often been lost sight of in the apparent complexity of modern life.

If the reader takes the time and trouble to apply the simple practical steps outlined in the booklet they should experience considerable benefit.

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