

Chapter 3:

Ward Off Those Time-Sucking Vampires and Discover Hidden Pockets of Time You Didn't Know You Had

Take a deep sigh of relief, because this chapter's tips will provide you with a fist full of garlic to ward off those people and dreaded tasks that suck away at your time like a thirsty vampire. These ideas are rooted in Eastern cultural perceptions of time--quite different from your average Franklin Covey Time Management course. Choose one of three simple tips to wipe clean hours of wasted time each day and re-inspire a more youthful buoyancy in your everyday routines.

Welcome to the third important topic of the Clutter-Clearing, Performance Boosting home study program.

I recently returned from Bali, an island in Indonesia, where – like the other places I've lived and traveled in Asia – the cultural perception of time is rooted in the idea that each moment is the destination and everything is perfect now.

Now... yes, naturally... the people in Bali still have plans and dreams – they still work to educate and improve themselves to live a better life and earn enough money to send their most precious resource – their children – to school.

But they do not view time as a limited commodity that must be carefully portioned out to a select set of priorities.

Instead, life flows from following their own set of practices that are linked with the observation of the natural cycles – the turning of the seasons, the cycle of new moons and full moons, the daily cycle of the sun rising and setting – and along the way, commemorating important life events with traditions and ceremonies that honor man's *participation* in time—but not *control* of time.

When you view time as a fixed pie that can only be cut into so many pieces, then you begin to dread certain activities – and even certain people – because it feels like they are sucking away at your time like a thirsty vampire.

And while it's unlikely that I'll be able to completely change your personal or cultural construct of time by the time you finish reading this chapter, I do know that the 3 tips I'm about to share with you will act like a fist full of garlic to ward off whatever is draining away your time like a thirsty time-sucking vampire.

And maybe – just maybe – you'll begin to notice a bigger, more profound shift in your own perception of time.

Here we go.



And maybe for you, it's less about TV and more about spending less time checking email or surfing the web or playing video games or even keeping up with tens or hundreds of friends and colleagues on social media sites like Facebook, LinkedIn, or Twitter.

Now, before I go on, I invite you to pause a moment and notice: how does the idea of plugging in less make you feel? Anxious? Relieved? More stressed? Excited? Just take a moment to notice what emotions arise in you at the idea of plugging in less.

Making the choice to spend hours a day connected to electronic media and devices is the #1 time-sucking vampire to beware of.

One of the negative side effects of watching too much TV, for example, is you engage less often with the *real* human beings in your life.

You also become more and more disconnected from your body wisdom—an idea we talked about in the second chapter of this workbook.

And, spending hours of time in front of any light-emitting screen, such as your TV, laptop, computer monitor or Smartphone, makes it harder to fall asleep because the light not only makes you more alert but also suppresses the release of melatonin, an important hormone that makes you sleepy. This creates a challenging and harmful cycle of being more tired and less productive during the day...

...all of which negatively affect your performance at every level.

If you choose to experiment with this tip after reading this chapter, I invite you to consciously pre-determine a set amount of time you will watch TV – or check email – or whatever your #1 time-sucking vampire is. And, to turn off the TV or other device at least one hour prior to bedtime.

It's important to pre-determine the amount of time you'll spend in front of that screen *before* you turn it on or plug it in to prevent you from starting that cycle that causes you to spin and get dragged down into that black hole of wasted time, being disconnected, and exhausted.

And then observe how this positively affects your:

- Perception of time AND your
- Ideas about what's possible in life AS WELL AS
- Your Quality of sleep
- Daytime productivity and energy AND MAYBE EVEN YOUR
- Personal and Professional Relationships

Okay. Let's turn to today's 2nd tip



Think about it: what have you been putting off? Dragging your feet about? What are you hemming and hawing and going back and forth about?

Here's the simple solution:

- Either DO IT and move forward
- or
- Decide to DROP IT and let it go.

You know this already: you waste minutes, hours, days, months – and sometimes even years of your life – holding on to decisions.

And this time-sucking habit of procrastination holds you back from realizing your full and amazing potential.

So, right now, I invite you to put on paper the 1, 2, or 3 things you have been procrastinating – and then take a deep breath, tune into your body wisdom and ask yourself; are you ready to just DO IT and move forward? Or, is it time to free-up your time, your energy, your potential, and decide to DROP IT and let it go?

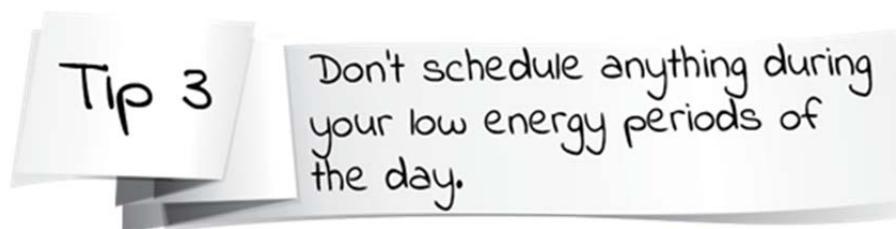
By making this conscious choice – to DO IT or LET IT GO – the clarity you have and the energy behind it will help to bring into your awareness and your life *all* that you need to move forward.

Most likely, what your body wisdom tells you to do will move you closer to your true vision, your real passion in life, and help you shake loose more of the “shoulds” and “should nots” that we talked about in chapter one.

Isn't it time to Procrastinate Less and free yourself from the chains of stagnation?

For those of you who choose to experiment with this 2nd tip, I look forward to hearing from you about what results and what unfolds in your life.

Lastly, let's turn to this chapter's final tip, which will connect you more deeply to what many of the Eastern cultures – and other cultures around the world—have observed and respected about time over thousands of years. Here it is:



If you don't already know what your low energy periods are, then perhaps this week you'll experiment with this tip and keep track of your energy highs and lows.

But, for most people, the mid-afternoon period after lunch – specifically from 2-4 PM – and for some it stretches from 2 PM to 6 PM – is the lowest energy period of the day.

This is why many cultures observe the equivalent of a siesta—or mid-day rest. Some of my clients have discovered that this mid-afternoon period is the best time to set-aside work, step away from your desk, and go for a walk or light jog – to give the thinking-mind a break – and get the blood flowing.

Maybe you already know it's useless to try and work after dinner—but you struggle with that sense of urgency inside you that compels you to still try.

The fact is, whenever you personally experience low energy periods during your daily cycle, it's best to honor that—rather than push through it or caffeinate yourself for a short-term boost.

Ultimately, by not scheduling anything during your low energy periods, you'll discover that your overall presence of mind, as well as your mental focus and clarity, will improve, resulting in much greater productivity and performance in a shorter amount of time. That's right, **by *not* scheduling anything during your low energy periods, you will get more, higher-quality work done in a shorter amount of time.**

You will then have more free time, you'll feel lighter and more satisfied, and you'll soon be moving through life with a more youthful buoyancy that is incredibly attractive to others around you.

And, for many of my clients, this buoyancy, productivity and attractiveness translates to more business and generally getting more of what you truly want out of life.

All right. To recap, here are the 3 tips designed to ward off those time-sucking vampires to boost your overall performance. And here they are again:



Tip #1: watch less TV
Tip #2: Procrastinate less
Tip #3: Don't schedule anything during your low energy periods of day

YOUR NOTES:

What ideas resonated most with you?

What realizations did you have about your own life?

Which tip will you implement and experiment with this week?

What will you do?

What might prevent you from trying it out?

What can you do to simplify your approach?

What else can you do to be successful in your experimentation?

Who can support you?

How will you know you've been successful with your experiment?

NOTE: You will be most effective if you choose just one tip to experiment with at a time