

The Stewardship of Time

24 October 2018

Good Use of Block Scheduling

Msgr. David L. Toups
Rector's Conference

The Privilege of Scholastic Work

σχολαζω

“To have leisure time or spare time, to be at leisure, have nothing to do.”

(Liddell and Scott, Greek-English Lexicon, 9th edition, p. 1747)

In former times, only those who were not working had leisure time for learning how to read and be educated.

How many did not go to college because they had to go to work or have a family?

Compliments of Msgr. Bosso's Greek Class

Foundations

- Eccl. 3:1 - “A Time for Everything”
- Eph. 5:16 - “making the most of every opportunity”
- Stewardship of time because time is a gift
- Gratitude and responsibility should be our response - we have this time because of the generosity of people of God
- Accountability to the people of God
- Acceptance (limits of time, activities, ourselves)

Shared by Fr. Higinio

New SVDP Schedule

- Blocks of time in the afternoons and evenings
- Use all time well even open hours in the mornings
- We do not want to promote workaholism, but good and prudent use of time precisely so as to be well balanced.
- Thus having time for both leisure and fraternity as well!

Tranquility in Quadrant 2

| STEPHEN COVEY'S TIME MANAGEMENT MATRIX | | |
|--|---|---|
| | URGENT | NOT URGENT |
| IMPORTANT | Quadrant 1 Crisis Pressing Problems Projects with Deadlines | Quadrant 2 Relationship Building Planning Recreation |
| NOT IMPORTANT | Quadrant 3 Interruptions Some Phone Calls Some Mail Some Reports | Quadrant 4 Busy Work Some Phone Calls Some Mail Time Wasters |

It Happens!

- Quadrant 1
- But we will never function in Q 2 if we don't try!
- Example of preparing this conference
- Examples from Parish Life
- Know how to shift gears and shift blocks
- Sometimes you will feel like you are going backwards!
- God is the Master and Lord of all time...Trust!!!

Schedule your life

- “If you fail to plan, you are planning to fail!”
 - Benjamin Franklin
- Schedule everything while you are learning: prayer, class, appointments, exercise, family time, projects (due dates: papers, homilies, talks, etc.), homework, leisure, holidays, retreats, vacations
- Planning prevents the “perfect storm”
- Keep stress level low by working out of Q₂
 - Raising your stress tolerance ([Dr. Emily Cash](#))
 - Anxiety can paralyze our productivity
 - Prioritize!

- Chart out deadlines
- Block out prep time
- What are your “working hours”?
- Set good boundaries for yourself
- Rule of Life and consistency is important
- Be intentional
- Do so daily, weekly, monthly, annually
- Use Outlook, Gmail or iCal – whatever works for you

Annually

- Look at Seminary/Parish schedule for the year and place in your schedule
- Then schedule:
 - Retreat
 - Continued Education
 - Meetings/Boards
 - Vacation/Family time
 - Etc.

- Examples of completing projects – plan ahead!
 - My STL and STD – goals and benchmarks
 - Homilies/Talks
 - Articles
 - Censor Librorum
 - Use the blocks given and sometimes even our breaks
- Don't use your afternoon/blocks of time for:
 - 2 hour nap!
 - Netflix
 - Gaming
 - Use wisely and prudently
 - But also schedule downtime!

Importance of Deep Work:

**DEEP
WORK**



Practical advice from the faculty:

- 5/25 Rule (Warren Buffet and Dr. Mary Froehle)
 - The Buffet rule is partly associated with Buffet because he is such an expert about thinking in terms of the long term. The idea is it takes investment, daily investment in going deep. And you don't see the rewards right away, so it can, I suppose, feel like wasting time. But if you don't regularly put in that time, day after day, over time, you won't see the rewards. [...] It concerns me that otherwise time management to accomplish the things you are required to becomes seen just as a means to get to Quadrant IV mindless activities because there isn't a sense of value in engaging in important things just because they are of value to you, not because they are required.

- Fr. Llane Briese:

- In prayer, I've determined what are my potential "working hours" and have prepared a weekly chart that maps them out. I schedule prayer, exercise, meals, recreation, and sleep outside of these working hours, so as to keep balanced. Every Saturday, I look at my long-range calendar and generate a schedule for the week to come: I fill in meetings, classes, appointments, and everything else. All the other hours stay blank. As the week proceeds, I fill in each blank with what I actually did during the time so as to ensure I (1) didn't get stuck—spend too much time on something and (2) didn't get distracted—end up wasting time instead of working. I also keep a list of all my current projects for each area for which I am responsible along with its due date: each class, QEP, formation team, nonresident students, and others. With this project list, I select which task to do based on how much time I have available at a given moment and will sometimes (when I'm really busy) schedule time for specific time-sensitive projects. In short, everything is driven by priorities discerned in prayer and mapped out through long-, medium-, and short-range scheduling.

- Fr. Steve Olds:
 - May I mention something about this concept of “blocks of time”/”deep work”? It seems to me a rare blessing which folks will rarely get in the life of the parish - unless, there is the intentional scheduling of it. However, I find that if the block of time is approached as a time to savor the task beyond a kind of “get it done” efficiency it becomes more fruitful. This is genuinely a contemplative approach that helps intensify our ability to recognize the Lord in the very work.
- Dr. Carol Razza:
 - In response to the block scheduling, I set an appointment with myself. When I was working on my doctorate I would set at least two times a week aside for study or projects due and if I caught up with my work I read ahead. The important thing is to be present, don't skip the appointment times because you don't think you need them.

- Sr. Mary Roberta Connors, FSE:
 - FSE Principles of the Creative Process
 - Preparation
 - Incubation
 - Illumination
 - Verification
- Fr. Remek Blaszkowski:
 - The good stewardship of our time provides for greater productivity and time for leisure without feeling guilty or overwhelmed.

- Fr. Alfredo Hernández:
 - What can I say about blocks of time? It is important to schedule time in order to do what you need in order to think deeply and get any significant research done. I certainly learned of this with my doctoral research. It was important to be able to close my door and say: “Alicia, I am a doctoral student now.” At the same time, the words of St. Vincent de Paul about not becoming or feeling “upset or guilty because you interrupted your prayer to serve the poor,” come to mind here. It is important to block off times for serious study, and yet the needs of ministry will often get in the way, and that just needs to be offered up to God. This balance is very important to maintain for healthy study and healthy ministry. Our Patron’s words could be paraphrased: “Do not become upset or feel guilty because you interrupted your study to serve those who need you.”

Create A Quiet Place to Work



Importance of Silence

- Don't be afraid of silence!
- Silence is healing in and of itself
- Enter into the mystery you are studying – let it sink in and savor it
- Move in to a place of zero receptivity for a few hours every afternoon or evening while doing deep work
- Silence is important for genuine integration.

- Fr. John Horn, SJ:
 - Fruitfulness of Silence in order to do deep work.
 - Formation documents highlight “silence” as one of the most important elements of formation.
 - Intentional times of solitude where one learns to face loneliness and have it transformed in silence by the Father’s love.....brings the future priest alive like little else can. I think it is why Jesus in his humanity frequently sought out times to be alone with the Father in prayer.
 - Joseph Pieper wrote: “A man needs liberation, this presentiment of the final and utmost stillness, almost more than he needs bread, which is indispensable and yet insufficient” (*On The Virtues of the Human Heart*, 11).

- Spirituality of Study:
 - Fr. Nicholas Cachia: “Spirituality of the desk”
 - Wood of the desk connected to the wood of the Cross
 - Butt in chair! All for Jesus and his people!
 - Rector’s conference on Consecrated Study
 - Your vocation right now = called by God to study for the people of God!

Varia:

- Have priorities.
- Have a plan for the day / week / month
- Have a List with the things we have to do. Be realistic about how long each item will take to complete.
- Evaluating how we are using the time.
- Give a time to everything: praying, studying, leisure, resting, sleeping (enough), for ourselves.
- Yes = commitment, responsibility. Yes means Yes.
- Learn to say NO.
- Remove distractions.
- Focus
- Equilibrium: extremes are not good.
- Doing what works for you!

Saint Bonaventure

Shared by Sr. Bernardone Rock, FSE:

First, therefore, I invite the reader
to the groans of prayer
through Christ crucified,
through whose blood
we are cleansed from the filth of vice –
so that he not believe
that reading is sufficient without unction,
speculation without devotion,
investigation without wonder,
observation without joy,
work without piety,
knowledge without love,
understanding without humility,
endeavor without divine grace,
reflection as a mirror without divinely inspired wisdom.

(The Soul's Journey into God, Prologue, Article 4)