

MASTER YOUR

TIME

MASTER YOUR

LIFE

The Breakthrough System to
Get More Results, Faster, In
Every Area of Your Life

BRIAN TRACY



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INTRODUCTION

DIFFERENT KINDS OF TIME

Do ye value life? Then waste not
time, for that is the stuff out of
which life is made.

—BENJAMIN FRANKLIN



This is a great time to be alive. There have never been more opportunities to do more things and to achieve more of your goals in all of human history than there are today.

You can live longer and better today than any other generation before you. Modern advances in medicine and healthcare are enabling more people to live to age eighty or ninety—or even one hundred—than ever imagined possible.

But with all these great opportunities for success, prosperity, long life, and happiness, you are probably feeling like most people: too much to do and too little time.

Because of the explosive growth of information, technology, and competition, the rate of change has accelerated almost beyond your capacity to keep up with it.

Today we need a new way to think about time, especially the different times of your life.

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We find that each activity and responsibility in your life requires you to take a different approach to time if you want to get the best results from everything you do.

You need one kind of time for setting goals and deciding what you really want in life and another type of time for setting priorities, focusing on high-value tasks, and getting things done.

You need one type of time for interacting, communicating, negotiating, and administrating and another type of time at home with your family and your most important relationships.

The different types of time are often like oil and water; they don't mix very well together.

Any attempt to use the wrong type of time in the wrong area for it will lead to frustration, failure, and ineffectiveness.

THE QUALITY OF YOUR LIFE



The quality of your life is largely determined by the quality of your time management. But time management is really personal management, life management. It is management of yourself. If you don't control your time properly, it is difficult for you to control anything else.

INTRODUCTION: DIFFERENT KINDS OF TIME

Fortunately, the richest, most successful person in the world has the same twenty-four hours per day that you have. The difference between successful people and unsuccessful people is that successful people, sometimes with less potential and fewer opportunities, often accomplish vastly more than others because they use their time in a better and more effective way.

Your highest paid, most important skill is your ability to *think*, both before you act and while you are acting. It is your ability to choose what is more important and what is less important.

Psychologists tell us that your level of *self-esteem*—how much you like and respect yourself—is the key measure of how happy you are in any area of your life. The key to high self-esteem is a feeling of *self-efficacy*—the confidence that you can master your life, achieve your goals, perform your tasks, and get the results that are expected of you and that you expect from yourself.

Your most valuable financial asset is your *earning ability*. This is your ability to get results that people will pay you for. This again is largely determined by how you use your time when you are working and before and after your work.

Thomas Edison once wrote, “Thinking in the hardest work there is, which is why most people would rather die than think.”

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The way you think about time and the various possible ways you can use your time largely determine your effectiveness and the quality of every part of your life.

STOP AND THINK



Most people live in a *reactive-responsive mode*. When something happens around them, they react and respond immediately, automatically, unthinkingly, becoming slaves to the moment or to the latest ring on their smartphone or computer.

The key to taking full control over your time and your life is for you to *stop and think* before you react and respond. It is for you to identify the kind of time and behavior that is required of you at each moment, and then for you to respond appropriately to that situation.

British historian Arnold Toynbee won the Nobel Prize for his masterful twelve-volume work, *A Study of History*. This series of books traces the rise and fall of twenty-three great civilizations or empires over twenty-five hundred years. Toynbee found that there was a predictable cycle that an empire would go through, from its early beginnings through to its collapse.

Toynbee proposed the idea of the “challenge and re-

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sponse theory of history.” He showed that each great civilization started small, sometimes as a single tribe or village, and by repeatedly responding effectively to external challenges, usually from warring tribes and other human enemies, the group continued to grow and expand until it dominated large land masses.

The Mongol Empire, for example, the largest land empire in history, started with three people—Temüjin; his mother, Bortai; and his young brother—after another Mongol tribe had wiped out their village. From that humble beginning, Temüjin, who later became known as Genghis Khan, “The Perfect Warrior,” spread the Mongol Empire from the Sea of Japan across China, India, much of Russia, and the Middle East, all the way to the Mediterranean and the Danube.

YOUR CHOICES AND DECISIONS ARE EVERYTHING



It is the same with you and your life. As long as you respond effectively to the continuous challenges of daily life and work, you continue to grow smarter and more capable and move toward the fulfillment of your full potential.

More than anything, your success in both the short and the long term is largely determined by the way you

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respond to the inevitable and unavoidable difficulties and challenges of daily life. This is called your *response ability*, your ability to respond effectively to the non-stop and conflicting demands on your time.

In this book, you will learn a series of the best time usage and time management principles ever discovered, the same time management techniques and strategies practiced by the most successful and happy people in our society.

By practicing these methods and techniques, you will take full control over your time and your life, and achieve more in the next year or two than most people accomplish in several years or even in a lifetime.

When you become more thoughtful about your current situation and learn the most effective way to deal with different events, at different times, with different approaches, you will think with greater clarity and will respond with greater confidence than ever before.



STRATEGIC PLANNING AND GOAL SETTING TIME

There is one quality that one must
possess to win, and that is
definiteness of purpose, the
knowledge of what one wants and
a burning desire to achieve it.

—NAPOLEON HILL



One of the most important types of time is the time you spend thinking, deciding, and planning how to achieve the things you really want in life.

The biggest single waste of time is setting off without clear, specific goals. Many people waste their most productive years responding and reacting to whatever is going around them and working to achieve the goals of other people, instead of taking the time to become absolutely clear about what it is that they really want for themselves.

There is a saying: “Before you do anything, you have to do something else first.”

Before you set off on the great adventure of life, you have to decide where you want to end up. The good news is there have never been more opportunities to achieve your goals than there are today. But only you can decide what you want.

What is the difference between the rich and the

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poor? One explanation is that about 85 percent of wealthy people have one big goal they work on all the time. Only 3 percent of poor people have one big goal, and they work on it occasionally, if at all.

THE 1 PERCENT VERSUS THE 99 PERCENT



Today, there is great controversy over the difference between the 1 percenters and the rest of us. The claim is that the 1 percenters own or control more wealth than everyone else put together. However, that statistic is inaccurate.

The real difference is actually between the top 3 percent and the other 97 percent. Because most people start off with little or nothing, the real question ought to be, How did the 3 percent, who started with nothing, become so successful in the course of one or two generations?

The answer is simple. The top 3 percent have clear, written goals and plans that they work on every day. They know exactly who they are, what they want, and where they are going. They have a blueprint, a road map, that guides them faster and with ever-greater accuracy toward achieving the health, happiness, wealth, and prosperity that most people strive for all their lives.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND GOAL SETTING TIME

As a result of having clear written goals, they waste far less time than the average person. People with written goals and plans earn and accumulate, on average, ten times as much as other people with the same levels of intelligence and education.

CLARITY IS EVERYTHING



There is a story of a hunter who goes to the edge of the woods, closes his eyes, and shoots his rifle into the forest. He then turns to his friend and says, “I sure hope something good runs into that!”

That is how too many people live their lives. They throw themselves at life, like a dog chasing a passing car, seldom catching anything. Most people go through their lives without goals, doing the best they can and just hoping something good will happen to them. But hope is not a strategy. It is a recipe for failure, if not disaster.

For you to maximize your time, to enjoy the greatest quantity and quality of riches and rewards, you need to take time regularly to think about your goals, especially when you’re experiencing turbulence and rapid change. You need to become intensely goal oriented. Setting goals, making plans, and organizing your life around

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the things you really want to do and have are the greatest time management tools of all.

Goal setting and personal strategic planning require that you step back and take some time off, away from interruptions and distractions. You then answer several key questions to ensure that what you are doing on the outside is consistent with the person you are on the inside and in harmony with what you really want to achieve.

LOOK INTO YOURSELF



The first question you ask is, Who am I? Your answer to this question reveals your self-image, the person you think you are. Because your outer behaviors are always consistent with the way you see or describe yourself on the inside, this answer tells you a lot about yourself.

The sign over the Temple of Apollo at Delphi in Ancient Greece said, “Man, know thyself.” This is the starting point of wisdom.

Socrates said, “The unexamined life is not worth living.” Unless you carve out time regularly to examine your life and make sure that you are clear about your goals, and that they have not changed, you will become reactive-responsive, acting impulsively, and often doing what other people want you to do.

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND GOAL SETTING TIME

Begin this goals analysis by realizing that you are unique and potentially *extraordinary*. There has never been, nor ever will be, anyone exactly like you: Be yourself; everyone else is already taken.

You are a special and complex combination of knowledge, experience, education, talents, abilities, interests, emotions, desires, and fears. In addition, from infancy onward, you have had a complex series of experiences that have shaped you into the person you are today.

You have special strengths and abilities and have been born with the capacity to be absolutely excellent at something, and maybe several things. Your great responsibility to yourself, and to others, is to find that special mission that you have been put on this earth to accomplish. You must clarify your vision, your life's purpose, your heart's desire.

DO WHAT YOU REALLY LOVE



One of your great jobs in life is to find something you really love to do and then to put your whole heart into becoming absolutely excellent at doing that one thing.

Throughout your adult life and career, you need to ask and answer a series of questions. Your answers will

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change over time and with experience. You must be clear about your answers each time you address these questions and must be willing to change your responses as you get more information.

Begin by assuming that you have no limitations. Imagine that you could wave a magic wand and make your life ideal in every way. Ask yourself:

1. What do I *really* want to do with my life?
2. What do I *really, really* want to do with my life?
3. What do I *really, really, really* want to do with my life?

The third time you ask this question, with “really, really, really,” is the key. It forces you to dig deep into yourself, moving past the superficial answers regarding money and success, and often gives you the answer you have been seeking. This is how you begin to unlock your full potential.

PERSONAL STRATEGIC PLANNING



Successful companies invest a lot of time and money developing strategic plans for their businesses. These are the carefully thought out goals and plans they use

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND GOAL SETTING TIME

to achieve greater success and profitability in competitive markets.

You need a strategic plan as well, a *personal* strategic plan, to ensure you accomplish the very most in the shortest period of time, making the fewest mistakes along the way.

Personal strategic planning focuses on four basic questions, which you should ask regularly:

1. *Where am I now in my life?* What have you accomplished so far? How much are you worth financially? What kind of family life do you have? What is your level of health and fitness?
2. *How did I get to where I am today?* What were the choices and decisions you made in the past to create your present life? What has been most responsible for your success to date? What has been the reason for your setbacks?
3. *Where do I want to go in the future?* Idealize and imagine a perfect future. Project forward five years and imagine that your life was excellent in every way. What would it look like? How would it be different from your life today?

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4. *How can I get from where I am to where I want to be? What are all the different things that you could do, starting today, to create your perfect future?*

Clarity is your best friend. Personal strategic planning requires, first, that you set clear, written goals and, second, that you carefully examine the various strategies you can implement to achieve them.

Most people want to earn a lot of money doing something they enjoy and ultimately achieve financial independence. But only a small percentage of people will achieve this common goal. Why is this?

FIRST-GENERATION WEALTH



There are more than ten million millionaires in the United States alone, and more than 80 percent of them are self-made. In the world, there are almost two thousand billionaires, about 66 percent of whom are self-made as well. These are all individuals who started with nothing and achieved their financial success in one working lifetime, if not sooner. Why not you?

There are many different ways for you to achieve

STRATEGIC PLANNING AND GOAL SETTING TIME

your goals of high income, financial independence, or even wealth.

One high road to financial success is entrepreneurship, the ability to start and build your own successful business. Today, it is easier to start a business and get started offering a product or service than ever before. It takes less than twenty-four hours for you to register your business, set up a website, and start operating.

Many people become financially independent by specializing and becoming absolutely excellent in their fields, working for another company, and being paid very well. They go to work for someone else and work their way up, earning more and more over the years.

Fully 10 percent of millionaires are professionals, such as doctors, lawyers, architects, accountants, and engineers. They worked very hard for a long time, did excellent work, got great reputations, and were eventually paid very well.

You can choose the path of entrepreneurship and business building or you can choose to work for another company, especially a company with great potential that is just getting started. You can specialize and become excellent at what you do. You can be a big success in many different ways.