

Schedule "White Spaces"

To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under Heaven. Ecclesiastes 3:1

Too much of anything, even good things, is just that – too much! Regardless of how social you are – or how much you love spending time with others – there is something magical and peaceful about looking at your calendar and seeing white space, unplanned-for-time. "White space" is time for you to catch up, or to do nothing at all. Creating blocks of time in your calendar where absolutely nothing is planned contributes to a feeling of peace, the feeling that you have enough time.

If you wait for everything to get done before you allow time for yourself, you'll rarely, if ever, find it. Instead, your calendar and schedule will miraculously fill up with your own commitments, as well as with the needs and requests of others. Your spouse will have things for you to do, your kids (if you have them) will have no trouble firing requests at you, as will the neighbors, your friends, and family. Then there are the social commitments – some you love, others agreed to out of obligation. Many other requests, of course, come at you from work as well as from strangers such as telephone solicitors and salespeople. It seems that everyone wants and gets a piece of your time. Everyone, that is, except you.

The only solution seems to be to schedule time for yourself with the same degree of respect and commitment that you would schedule an appointment with your doctor or best friend. You make an appointment and, short of an emergency, you keep it!

The procedure itself is very simple. You look at your calendar and schedule (in pen) time for yourself. You need to cross out a block of time, where you don't allow anything to be formally scheduled.



As I look at my own calendar, I'm noticing that I have time for myself scheduled this Friday between 1:20 and 4:30 p.m. There is *nothing* scheduled during that time and, short of an emergency, nothing will be. This means that when someone asks me to do something during that time block, a radio show wants an interview, someone wants me to call, a client needs my help, whatever, I can't do it. I've already got plans! And those plans are with myself. Later this month, I have an entire day blocked out. This too, is sacred time, and I can almost guarantee that it won't be filled up.

As you can imagine, this takes some getting used to. What I realized, however, was that I was worth it – and so are you.

This white space time has become one of the most important scheduled activities on my calendar and is something I have learned to protect and value. This doesn't mean my work is any less important to me, or that my time with my family isn't still the most important activi

