

Hello there and welcome. How are you doing today? How is life treating you? I hope that you are having a fabulous day. Meaning that the world the people, places, and the things around you are lining up, and for lack of a better word behaving in the way that you want them to. I hope that that is the case. And more importantly, I hope that you are creating a fabulous day. And that no matter what is in front of you that you are able to shift your mind and your emotions to be the very best version of yourself.

Now I'm starting off with that because I was just practicing that. I just came in from inside. And over Memorial Day weekend, we created a beautiful Memorial Garden for my dad, and it has wind chimes and flowers and a little statue in there. And we put a fence around it to keep the little puppies from digging in there. And I was just out on the back porch and heard me barking and she was barking because she was fenced in inside my little Memorial Garden.

And so, I wasn't having a fabulous day because she was not in alignment with what I wanted. But then I very quickly, and I don't always do that was able to see the humor in it and was thinking about her spirit and my dad's spirit connecting and I just created great around that. And so, I was just kind of giggling as I was sitting down to talk about this topic and thinking about the difference between having and creating.

And I am so excited that you are here for the second part of our time optimization mini-series. And by many, I mean very many, there's two parts. This is the second part. And we're talking about how to optimize your time, as in how to manage your mind around time and how to actually manage your time. And so, I was thinking about that in terms of what is how do we organize ourselves? How do I organize this garden and put a fence around it? How do we organize our time? And then how do we manage it when things do not go according to plan?

And in the last podcast, in part one, we really zeroed in on taking the time to witness how you think and how you feel about your time. And this is extremely important because often we dive right into what we're going to do we dive into the time management skills and logistics and the procedures without really understanding the value of what I was calling the mind mechanics and how we can witness our own mind around time. And that's what I was doing with Emmy. And that's what we are going to do around time. And in the last podcast, we dove into the phrase, there's too much to do and not enough time to do it. And yes, that is true, there is more to do than there is time to do it, for some of us. And it's also not true, it's a big lie to say that we have no control over what we will do or no control over our time. And often when I hear, or I say there's too much to do and not enough time to do it. Or there's too much going on in my life that's

interrupting my time. And I am believing that I am a victim to my time and that if things out there would just change, then I would be able to get everything done, then I would have you stressed out about time. And that is a victim mentality.

So, part one was about taking a step back taking time to see how your mind works around this concept of time and how we think about it. And if we take our time, that's the title of this podcast, take your time to do that then you can see on a deeper level, the time does not change. The world does not change but how we use it is what we can change. And that time scarcity mindset isn't about time at all. It's about us and how we think about time, it's about us and the decisions that we make about our time or the decisions that we don't make about our time.

So, the last podcast was really focused in on the mind mechanics and this one is going to be a little bit more about time mechanics. And if you have not already, I highly encourage you to go back and listen to the first part of taking your time because no matter what systems you use or purchase, if you are not managing your mind, then you cannot manage your time. And the key underlining concept here has to do with deciding. It has to do with choosing ahead of time to decisively plan your life and that is mind mechanics. And what we are doing was we are integrating that with time mechanics and time mechanics is more about, okay, what do I have to do? And how do I fit it into my schedule? And how do I organize all of this?

And there are multiple ways of managing your time, there are a lot of solutions and systems out there. There is the One Minute Manager, Dale Carnegie has a phenomenal time management system. There are planners, there's the Passion Planner, and then Michael Hyatt has an amazing planner and a system that he uses. And there are apps out there, there are habit tracking apps, there are calendar apps. I actually just started using an app recently. Let me look here on my phone, it's called Strides. And I really like it, it's got a nice little reminder system, it's easy to use, I think that there's a small fee to be able to integrate it within your desktop, and then also with your iPhone. So, I'm using that and playing around with that.

And so, for sure, you also want a system that works for you. And I will say that the system or the toy that you use is less important than you actually using the system. And there are some fundamental logistical concepts that I think every time management system needs to have in place no matter what calendar or app or process, you're using. And the fundamentals allow you to organize and plan your time while also having a strong awareness of your mind. And that is key. And specifically, knowing how you decide how you make decisions ahead of time is critically important. Because that is what we are doing with time management, you're deciding ahead of

time, how you will use your time.

And I want you to keep this at the forefront of your mind because as you start planning your days, you are going to notice resistance. And a lot of it, we resist making decisions ahead of time we resist thinking about what we are going to do on purpose. And oftentimes we decide not to plan because it's easier to just put off decisions until we have to make them because there's some risk and decision making. And one of the risks is FOMO. The fear of missing out and I especially noticed this with younger family members. I think that texting and rapid communication has made it so convenient for us to change our plans at the last minute. And it has also made it much easier to not commit to not decide to just play it by ear. And we do that with our own time as well. We like to have the freedom to do what we want to do when we want to do it and to see what's going on in that moment and how we're feeling. And if we decide ahead of time, exactly what we're going to be doing, then that means that maybe we'll miss out on something else. Or maybe we won't be able to be spontaneous. And often I believe people mistake spontaneity for freedom. We think that if we plan ahead, then we will be restricted. And that is a thought. That is part of the mind mechanics, and we want to be aware of that resistance to planning.

Another reason that we don't want to plan or think ahead of time, is because sometimes we have a hard time following through. And we think hey, if we don't make the plans, then we can't set ourselves up for disappointment. And it's very interesting, because when I am working with someone, and we have gone through what they really want, and what are their results, and then we get to the point where it's time to commit to a protocol. And I call it a protocol on purpose so that we can think about our plans as a science experiment. And to generate a little bit of a curious mind versus you've got to do this or you're in trouble mind, when we get to that point in the planning, there can sometimes be a shift in the energy. It can be uncomfortable to commit to a future action, because they have experienced what it is like to have a best intention of what they're going to eat, or how much they're going to drink or when they're going to go to sleep or how much time they're going to spend on a particular project. And then when that point in time comes along, and they don't follow through for one reason or another, it can be extremely disappointing.

This reflects not so much of an issue with time or even an issue with food or alcohol or pleasure or procrastination. But it's really about an issue with honoring our commitments to ourselves, having our own backs at a particular point in time. Which is so cool, because this is why time and the way that we manage it helps us to level up it helps us to practice following through on what we said we were going to do. This is self-leadership.

And you probably would not dare to show up 30 minutes to a meeting or to totally blow somebody off. Often, we respect other people and their time and treat other people much better than we treat ourselves. And that is one of the reasons having an accountability partner is so useful. We don't want to disappoint other people; we don't want to have them think less of us. But we do it to ourselves a lot. And the cool thing is that when you start running your life and paying attention to your time and treating yourself as the most important person and respecting yourself, then you are honing meta skills like discipline and competence and resiliency and focus. And, most importantly, you're learning to trust yourself.

Oftentimes, when I start working with someone, they are frustrated, because they are so on top of it with their other commitments and their other relationships. But they have a really difficult time respecting their own relationship and their own commitment. And they're really just frustrated with themselves and their schedule and their lives and feel like it's kind of slipping through their fingers. And they feel like what they're doing is ridiculous. Like, how hard is it for me to follow through and to get my time under control.

And if that is you, I would like to offer the idea that you probably have been trained, as we say, in the army to eat last, to sacrifice your needs. And that concept is tightly interwoven into the idea of how important it is to have awareness over your troops, or your colleagues or your employees or your family, and to have situational awareness. And that is a key leadership skill and trait. The trick is to remember that yes, others may need to eat first, but that you also need to eat as well. And if you are planning properly, you can care for them and leave them and do the same for yourself.

The other thing that happens is that the lion grazes a little bit, and we can use responsibility for others, and all the things that we need to get done as a crutch or as an excuse to not follow through on the things that we know that we need to take care of when it comes to ourselves. And the first leadership principle in the military is to know thyself, and to seek self-discipline. So proper time mechanics helps you to know when it is time for you to follow through, and to practice following through for yourself and for others. And I love the idea that a plan on a calendar isn't just something to do at a particular time. It's also a place for you to be, and not just physically, but also mentally and emotionally. It allows you to notice who you are being in that moment. It's a date on your calendar with yourself as well as with other people. It's a date for you to practice the art of follow through.

And then another reason that people feel resistance to planning is because they don't know, they don't know what kind of food will be at the airport, they don't know how long the meeting will

take. They don't know how long it will take to write this new type of proposal. They don't know what the situation will be like when they walk into the meeting, or when they walk into work on a given day. And in the Healthy Leader Inner Circle, we're talking about optimizing time this month. And one of the ways that we're discussing how to optimize time is by creating time. And one of the ways that we create time is by spending less time in certain states of mind. And one of those is this area of confusion, and indecision, and not knowing. Those are some of the most common emotions we experience when we're thinking about time and feeling like there's too much to do, and not enough time to do it, or wondering what we should do first. And when we're in that space, it prevents us from making decisions and taking actions and it feels very disorganized and heavy. And it resists planning, it makes us feel like we are stuck. And we end up just standing there as time continues to march on. And so all of that is time wasting activity. And so, we practice being aware of those, among other time-wasting activities and eliminating them. And then we can literally create more time.

So be aware of this resistance. It's totally understandable. But do not use this resistance as an excuse to not plan. When you take your time and are conscious for planning, you're going to notice resistance. No, it's totally normal. Your brain is wired to stay comfortable. It can feel uncomfortable to make decisions ahead of time, especially if you're already making decisions all day long. And you don't want to make any more or you feel like you might be restricting your spontaneity or your freedom. And even on some level, if you are used to being overwhelmed and indecisive about time, it's comfortable for your brain. The discomfort of the stress around time is something you've gotten used to its natural or a given to be stressed about time. And it does not have to be that way.

Just as part of your brain will resist. You also have a prefrontal cortex. You have this amazing supercomputer that you can use ahead of time to plan so that when it comes time to do the task, you can just notice your brain not wanting to do it and say sorry, it's already been decided we're just going to go and do what we planned.

So, as I said earlier, there are multiple ways to plan your time. And no matter what process you use, I recommend that there are three things that you do consistently. And they are all based in one time management technique called time blocking. Now, time blocking is the number one-time management skill. And it is basically a methodology of using your calendar to block everything that you need to do within a specific timeframe and to reserve that time in your calendar. And then when you complete that, work that one-time block, then you just move on to the next one. Now, this is not rocket science. And in fact, you have probably heard about it. And

many people even though they know that this is a great thing to do, they don't do it. Why? Because of all those things that we just talked about. But actually, reserving time in your calendar is the key piece. This is basically akin to taking your to do list and projects and putting them on your calendar.

So, the very first step to time mechanics is time blocking. And what I want for you to do is to block one hour per week, it could be Sunday, or Monday morning or Friday afternoon, or whatever works for your schedule. To block your entire week, take one hour, block it right now, and decide when you're going to block out your week, think about the best time for you. And then put that in your calendar. The reason you want it to go into your calendar is because your calendar has time in it. When you do this, you are basically forced to confront something called planning fallacy. And planning fallacy is something that I would venture to guess all of us have until we are consciously planning our time. And that is that we have trouble making realistic plans. We underestimate the time that we need to complete an activity.

I am really good at this. I especially do it when I am creating when I'm creating a presentation or a webinar or a podcast. And what I tend to do is underestimate the research time, I love my work, I love getting the newest and latest information and reading. And I can really get off track. And when I do that, I end up pushing other things on my calendar to another time slot. Do you guys do this? When we misjudge, we fail to meet our deadlines. And we end up having to reschedule a bunch of other tasks to finish the original project. So, this is where time blocking comes into play. We have to decide ahead of time, how much time it's going to take and exactly what you will be doing.

So, for me, I will say I'm going to take 30 minutes to research the industry, 60 minutes answering specific questions around challenges for that particular group, another 30 minutes outlining the talk or the webinar or something like that. I have to do that when I'm creating otherwise, I get lost. Now I have a plan. And when I do that, I have a sense of urgency, the clock starts, it's time to go. And it's not just this do it now I'm doing some research. It is an organized block of time, and I am way more productive when I organize that research and don't get lost going down rabbit holes.

I cannot tell you how many executives have said to me that when they started time blocking, they realized how much time they wasted doing other things that they don't really need to do. They'll say, oh client, so and so's from Missouri, I wonder how close he lives to my cousin, let me look that up. Or let me take a minute and check the stock market or Facebook or whatever. And so,

when you block your time, we're also learning how to focus.

So right away, blocking is about purposely spending your most valuable resource consciously and deliberately. And you end up creating more time for yourself. Because you get things done more quickly. You are on the clock, you have a sense of urgency, you are focused, and your planning is much more realistic. And then the next time you need to finish something you know how to properly block your calendar.

Now I like to take this process and organize it around the relationships that we talked about in part one. These are your primary relationships, your private, personal, and professional and to block your time by how much you want to spend on each one of those. And so, my recommendation is to start with just one day with 1 24-hour time block. And think about how much time you want to spend in the private relationship, the one that you have with yourself, and then your personal and then your professional. Generally, people start with their professional lives and they go backwards. My recommendation is to block your private time first the time that you need as a human being to feel your best and to be your best. This is you leading yourself first and modeling for the people that you lead what it means to truly take care of yourself.

So, what does it mean to block private time? It means blocking how you fuel, rest, and move your mind and body so that you can perform at your very best and I recommend Just starting with sleep, because sleep is one of the very first things that I see leaders give up. I was just reading an article from Harvard Business Review on the link between effective leadership and sleep and it was mind blowing. And one of the things that stuck out to me was the study that said that after about 17 hours of wakefulness, so let's say you get up at 5am, and then it's 10pm, your performance on a range of tasks is equivalent to that of having a .05 blood alcohol level. That's close to the legal drinking limit. So, after that much time away, chances are you think you're being productive. As you're returning those emails, you think you're okay to drive, you really are not. And that is sobering. And Ariana Huffington calls, lack of sleep, the new smoking, she also has a fantastic article on that.

So, block your sleep, and then block your meals, the way that you're fueling your body and what you're going to eat, put on there, lean proteins and veggies, put that on your calendar. And then block your movement, if it's getting up to stretch from your desk, or if it's exercising in the morning or the evening, block all of that first. And then also block your hobbies, and meditation and anything else that you know that you need to be doing to be your best self. And then I'm also going to ask you to think about blocking out nothingness. Nothingness is basically just like it

sounds, doing nothing, not thinking about anything. And the reason I want to talk about this is because it's been coming up with a lot of leaders recently, and we've been calling it creating space, just creating space in your day. And that's the space to literally do nothing. Now, it could be you are waiting in line, or you are driving a car or staring out a window or listening to the wind or just putting your feet up on your desk or just breathing. When you create time, when you create the space to just give your brain a break, you are literally shifting into a different brain state.

Now, sometimes our brains do this all by themselves. Do you know when you are starting to zone out and daydream a little bit? I love that state, it just feels so good to just be there to not really be thinking about anything in particular, it's very relaxing. Now the way that you can plan for this is to say I am going to sit in my car for a few minutes before I go into work. Or before I go back home at the end of the day. One of my clients is going to do it while she is checking her blood pressure at the beginning of the day, she wants to do that. So, I'm going to put the blood pressure cuff on after five minutes of sitting there and doing nothing, she's just going to sit there and be. Not try to solve a problem not look at email, she's just being there. Someone else just told me that they're going to do it, as they're walking from meeting to meeting, that normally they are on the phone or checking email as they're walking through the city. And instead of doing that they are putting their phone away. And then just being aware of what is going on in the world around them and taking in what is happening and just witnessing life and just being there.

Now, for many leaders doing nothing is often seen as blasphemous. Because we measure our worth by how much we are getting done it are we being productive every single minute. And we are all very discouraged from wasting, quote unquote, time. But doing nothing is in fact, a prerequisite at times, to tapping into an important part of your brain, like your memory, your creativity, problem solving, healing, you're making connections that you cannot make when you are highly focused. We are so addicted to our overscheduled lives that oftentimes we find stillness and quiet, difficult to be in. We are always trying to find useful or productive activities to fill the space. And neuroscience is showing us that when we slow down or disengage from action and let our minds wander that our brains don't go on pause but are actually doing the opposite and encouraging an extremely rich inner life that is going on through what's called the default brain. And even though you are not actively doing something, the brain remains extremely busy. It's making connections and integrating thinking and accessing memories and doing just amazing things. So, block time for some nothingness as well.

So always, always, always block your private time and how you care for your mind and your body first, because as you've heard me say before, when you're leading yourself, you can lead others so

much better. And then you can decide how much time you want to spend in your personal relationships. How much time do you want to spend with your kids, your spouse, your family, and your friends? And then how much time will you spend in your professional arena.

I recommend that you do that for one day and plan one day your normal and optimal workday and see how you're spending that \$24,000 as we referenced in the last podcast that 24 hours of time. Now for sure different days will be different. When you travel, you may have only 30 minutes with your personal relationships, talking on the phone or texting, and then 14 hours in your professional relationship is going to vary. But just make sure at the beginning of each week, you plan, and block accordingly know exactly how you will be spending your time.

Now another concept around time blocking that is often missed is planning for distractions. As I said earlier, we sometimes don't plan because we don't know we feel like our plans are going to get disrupted. So why plan in the first place? And this can sound like I don't know, what kind of food will be at the airport or how long a meeting will take or how long it's going to take to write the proposal. I don't know what the client is going to do. I was just working with a group, and they were talking about feeling like they are in constant triage. They are understaffed, overworked, and the clients are not happy. And they are simultaneously taking on more projects and more work. And it feels impossible, absolutely impossible to do everything. So, they are in a constant state of stress in terms of their day, and they aren't planning their workdays because they're planning for chaos. And to say that, again, they aren't planning their workdays because they're planning for chaos. And that's a huge distinction. If you are not planning, then you are letting something else plan your day. And that includes distractions, and that feels like chaos and out of control and hopelessness.

So instead plan for those distractions. You know what your general distractions are. Look at your typical week and see how much time you spend responding to external needs, when things come up when someone on your team or a client has questions. Or maybe there's a specific department that always has their information to you at the very last minute and every week, you have to spend extra time with them. Or maybe there's somebody in particular, that you spend extra time with explaining something. So, think about what you complain about. Think about your disruptors, or what makes you late or what you don't like, and then plan for it. Because those disruptions are a part of your week, and so planned for them.

I'm working with someone who has blocked out her Wednesday and Friday mornings completely. She does that so that when she does get interrupted, she knows that she has eight hours blocked

out to transfer whatever else she had planned to do on those other days. So, for instance, if she is working on a client proposal Tuesday afternoon, and one of our salespeople comes in and knock, and they need assistance, she pauses, she transfers her current project that she's working on to Wednesday. And then she says come on in, I've got 20 minutes or whatever. This is a game changer. This is planning for distractions, and it's prioritizing and triaging before the emergency or the event occurs. I cannot tell you how many people have said that they feel better about their time, because they have planned for those distractions in those disruptions.

And you can also plan for the unknown. You don't know how long a proposal will take write down the steps. Give yourself the best guests that you can add some bonus hours to the end of it. And then be curious in witness how much time it actually takes. If you don't know what they are serving for a dinner, then what's your plan? Do you eat ahead of time? Are you planning to just go hungry? Do you call ahead and ask? How are you going to plan for the unexpected or the unknown? You do this all the time in your work and so you can do it in your life. It just takes you taking the time to think about it and to plan for it.

And then finally, I also recommend that you block time for what I call a book-ending your day how you start and end your day. For sure, give yourself time at the beginning of the day to do what it is that you need to do to set yourself up mentally, emotionally, and physically. Now for some that means working out others it's praying or doing a meditation. In fact, I have a great meditation that we use with our Healthy Leader Inner Circle that I'd be happy to share with you, you can click on a link below or you can email me that link will take you to hello@thewellness.coach and I'd be happy to share it with you.

The point is to take time, at the beginning of your day to start your day on your terms. There's an extremely famous book called *The 5am Club* by Robin Sharma. And it's fantastic. I will also include a link to that. And it's based on morning routines and how you can maximize your productivity. And I believe that it's less about the time that you wake up, whether it's 5am 7am 9am and more about the time that you create at the start of the day for yourself, no matter when you wake up. And then at the end of the day, take just even a few minutes to review how things went, how you followed through how long things took, and again to be curious and to gain wisdom from how you spent your day.

So, time mechanics is about blocking your time. Take one hour per week to do just that. To plan down to the hour. Organize your 24-hour time blocks around your most important relationship areas starting with you first. Plan space for you to be in nothingness. Bookend your days, start your

day on your terms. And then be curious about how your day went to gain wisdom. And make sure that you plan for distractions and disruptions and let go of confusion. By being decisive and giving your plan your best guess. Time blocking is simple. It is easy to do and oh boy, it is easy not to do. Which is why understanding how you think about time is so important. Time management is self-leadership. It's all based in making strong decisions ahead of time and being aware simultaneously of your natural resistance to the planning to follow through and set yourself up for success even in the midst of that time mechanics and mind mechanics equals time optimization.

So go forth and optimize your time and let me know how it is going for you. And if you'd like to be on our waiting list for the up-and-coming Healthy Leader course that's coming out as well as the Healthy Leader Inner Circle, shoot us an email and get on that waitlist we are limiting the number of leaders and if you are truly dedicated to leveling up, and to enjoying your time and feeling fulfilled in the midst of a highly scheduled life, then join us there.

In the meantime, take your time, enjoy this life planet so you can be free and feel free. I want you to know that the more that you plan the freer you will be because you will be able to deliver the results that you want, and you will feel more in control of your life, and you actually will have more time.

Hey there if you are ready to take your wellbeing ness to the next level. Come visit thewellness.coach where I've got lots of free resources and make sure that you type in thewellness.coach (not .com) and I will see you there.