

The Productivity Project

Chris Bailey

A discussion guide for the Simple Scrapper Book Club.

QUOTE // “My approach has always been one of striking a balance between carving out more time and energy for the things that are meaningful to me, and accomplishing more.”

QUESTION // Q1. Do you look at productivity with this sense of “balance”? If so, have you always?

QUOTE // The most productive people work at a pace somewhere between the monk and the stock trader—fast enough to get everything done, and slowly enough so they can identify what’s important and then work deliberately and with intention.

QUESTION // Q2. What’s your typical pace when it comes to your everyday life, your outside work if you have any, and your scrapbooking?

QUOTE // Your effort toward taking control of your time, attention, and energy will be fruitless when you don’t first take stock of what tasks are the most valuable and meaningful to you.

QUESTION // Q3. Do you find that scrapbooking competes for a spot on your “valuable and meaningful” list?

QUOTE // The biggest lesson I learned from this experiment was just how important it is to deeply care about your productivity goals, about why you want to become more productive.

QUESTION // Q4. Do you want to become more productive in your scrapbooking? If so, why?

QUOTE // Despite your best intentions, you don’t have as much time, energy, or attention as you would like. Or perhaps you procrastinate (Part Two of the book), spend too much time on low-impact tasks that get thrown your way (Part Three), don’t spend your time intelligently (Part Four), feel overwhelmed (Part Five), are constantly distracted and can’t focus (Part Six), or don’t properly cultivate how much energy you have (Part Seven). From what I’ve experienced, that is perfectly normal.

QUESTION // Q5. Assuming you are “normal,” which of these is your biggest challenge when it comes to being productive in scrapbooking?

QUOTE // Without becoming aware of how you currently spend your time, it’s hard to reflect on whether you’re acting in ways that match up with what your values and highest-impact tasks are.

QUESTION // Q6. Have you kept a time log before? If so, what did you learn? If not, what might you think it would show?

QUOTE // And there are six main task attributes that make procrastination more likely. Those are whether a task is one or more of the following: • Boring • Frustrating • Difficult • Unstructured or ambiguous • Lacking in personal meaning • Lacking in intrinsic rewards (i.e., it’s not fun or engaging)

QUESTION // Q7. What task related to memory keeping are you most likely to procrastinate on? Which reason(s) do you think that is?

QUOTE // Externalizing your tasks and writing them down is a powerful way to free up mental space and get organized. Performing a “brain dump” not only reduces stress and helps you focus, it also motivates you to action.

QUESTION // Q8. Do you write down what you need to do in your scrapbooking?

QUOTE // If you want to become more productive, managing your time should take a backseat to how you manage your energy and attention.

QUESTION // Q9. What’s one thing you can try in the coming week to better manage your energy and attention?

QUOTE // Investing in your productivity is a worthwhile goal, but life is too short to not be kind to yourself in the process.