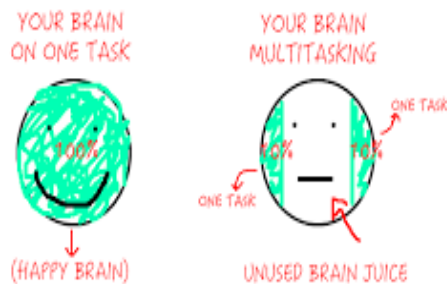


Wishing You
**A HAPPY
CHINESE
NEW YEAR**
GONG XI FAT CAI

BE TIME WISE – January 2017

THE MYTH OF MULTITASKING



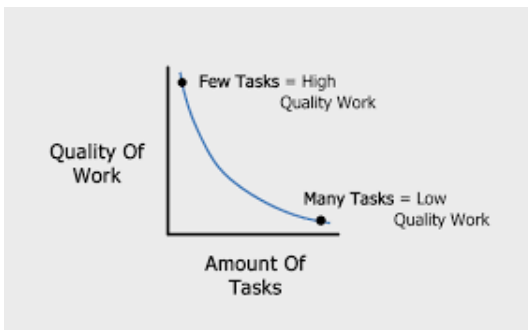
THE MULTITASKING MYTH

We all do it: Texting while walking, sending emails during meetings, chatting on the phone while cooking dinner. In today's society, doing just one thing at a time seems downright luxurious, even wasteful.

Research shows that it's not nearly as efficient as we like to believe, and can even be harmful to our health. Here are 12 reasons why you should stop everything you're doing - well, all but one thing - and rethink the way you work, socialize, and live your life.

YOU'RE NOT REALLY MULTITASKING

What you call multitasking is really task-switching. Moving back and forth between several tasks actually wastes productivity, because your attention is expended on the act of switching gears - plus, you never get fully "in the zone" for either activity.



IT'S SLOWING YOU DOWN

Contrary to popular belief, multitasking doesn't save time. In fact, it will probably take you longer to finish two projects when you're jumping back and forth than it would to finish each one separately. The same is true even for behaviours as seemingly automatic as driving: In a 2008 University of Utah study, drivers took longer to reach their destinations when they chatted on cell phones.

What tends to save the most time is to do things in batches. Pay your bills all at once, then send your emails all at once. Each task requires a specific mindset, and once you get in a groove you should stay there and finish.

YOU'RE MAKING MISTAKES

Experts estimate that switching between tasks can cause a 40% loss in productivity. It can also cause you to introduce errors into whatever you're working on, especially if one or more of your activities involve critical thinking.

IT'S STRESSING YOU OUT

When University of California Irvine researchers measured the heart rates of employees with and without constant access to office email, they found that those who received a steady stream of messages stayed in a perpetual "high alert" mode with higher heart rates. Those without constant email access did less multitasking and were less stressed because of it.

And it's not only the physical act of multitasking that causes stress; it's the consequences, as well. "If you do poorly on an exam because you studied while watching a baseball game on TV, that can certainly trigger a lot of stress - even self-esteem issues and depression."



YOU'RE MISSING OUT ON LIFE

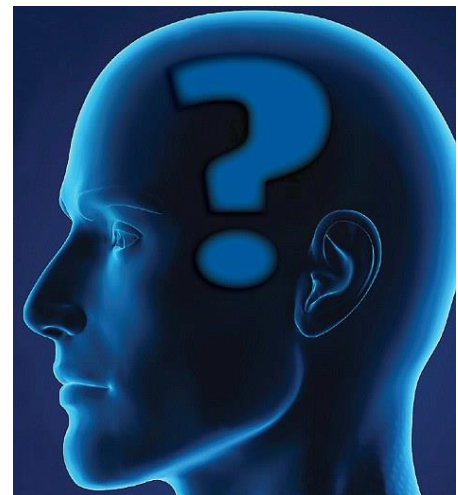
Forget seeing the forest for the trees or the glass half full - people who are busy doing two things at once don't even see obvious things right in front of them.

Specifically, 75% of college students who walked across a campus square while talking on their cell phones did not notice a clown riding a unicycle nearby. The researchers call this "**inattention blindness**," saying that even though the cell-phone talkers were technically looking at their surroundings, none of it was actually registering in their brains.

YOUR MEMORY MAY SUFFER

It makes sense that if you try to do two things at once, read a book and watch television, for example, then you're going to miss important details of one or both. But even interrupting one task to suddenly focus on another can be enough to disrupt short term memory, according to a 2011 study.

When University of California San Francisco researchers asked participants to study one scene, but then abruptly switched to a different image, people ages 60 to 80 had a harder time than those in their 20s and 30s disengaging from the second picture and remembering details about the first. As the brain ages, researchers say, it has a harder time getting back on track after even a brief detour.





IT'S HURTING YOUR RELATIONSHIPS

A couple is having a serious talk and the wife says 'Oh, let me just check this message.' Then the husband gets mad, and then he decides to check his messages and communication just shuts down.

One recent study from the University of Essex even shows that just having a cell phone nearby during personal conversations, even if neither of you are using it, can cause friction and trust issues. "Do your relationship a favour and pay your partner some exclusive attention for 10 minutes - "It can make a big difference."

IT CAN MAKE YOU OVEREAT

Being distracted during mealtime can prevent your brain from fully processing what you've eaten, according to a **2013 review** of 24 previous studies. Because of that, you won't feel as full and may be tempted to keep eating - and to eat again a short time later.

Experts recommend that even people who eat alone should refrain from turning on the television while eating, and to truly pay attention to their food. Eating lunch at your computer? Slow down and take a break from the screen to focus on each bite.



YOU'RE NOT ACTUALLY GOOD AT IT

You may think you're a master multitasker, but, according to a 2013 University of Utah study, that probably means you're actually among the worst.

The research focused specifically on cell phone use behind the wheel, and it found that people who scored highest on multitasking tests do not frequently engage in simultaneous driving and cell phone use, probably because they can better focus on one thing at a time.

Those who do talk and drive regularly, however, scored worse on the tests, even though most described themselves as having above average multitasking skills.

IT'S DAMPENING YOUR CREATIVITY

Multitasking requires a lot of what's known as "working memory," or temporary brain storage, in layman's terms. And when working memory's all used up, it can take away from our ability to think creatively, according to research from the University of Illinois at Chicago.

"Too much focus can actually harm performance on creative problem-solving tasks. With so much already going on in their heads, multitasker often find it harder to daydream and generate spontaneous "a ha moments."



I ♥ O.H.I.O.

YOU CAN'T OHIO

No, not the state! Psychiatrists and productivity experts often recommend **OHIO: Only Handle It Once**. "This is a rule of thumb for many people with ADHD, but it can also be practiced by anyone who wants to be more organized. "It basically means if you take something on - don't stop until you've finished it."

The problem with multitasking, though, is that it makes Only Handling It Once a near impossibility - instead, you're handling it five or six times. "If you're going to stick to this principle, you need to be disciplined and plan out your day so that when a distraction arises or a brilliant idea occurs to you, you know that there will be time for it later."

IT CAN BE DANGEROUS

Texting or talking on a cell phone, even with a hands-free device, is as dangerous as driving drunk, yet that doesn't stop many adults from doing it, even while they have their own children in the car.

It's not just driving that puts you at risk for the consequences of multitasking either. Research also shows that people who use mobile devices while walking are less likely to look before stepping into a crosswalk. And in one study, one in five teenagers who went to the emergency room after being hit by a car admitted they were using a smartphone at the time of the accident.



10 SIMPLE WAYS TO RE-ENERGIZE YOUR MORNING ROUTINE

HOW CAN I IMPROVE MY MORNING ROUTINE?

Keep it simple, make it fun

Here are 10 quick and easy tips for starting your day with more energy: 7 to practice in the morning, and 3 to practice at night.

FIRST: TIPS TO PRACTICE IN THE MORNING

TIP #1. MAKE IT SUPER SIMPLE BY WAKING UP JUST 15 MINUTES EARLIER



The biggest benefit is to give yourself a *little extra buffer of time* to adjust to the day. It's not that hard to do. If you usually wake up at 7am, set your morning alarm to 6.45am. Keep this schedule for one week. If that works and you're feeling good about it, the following week set your alarm to another 15 minutes earlier, this time for 6.30am. There's a lot you can do in that extra half hour you have, so why not use it?

TIP #2. CUSTOMIZE YOUR ALARM TO BOOST ENERGY AND FOCUS

Create an alarm that is right for you. Pick a ringtone that's unusual but not irritating, or set your alarm to vibrate mode for a more subtle sound. Make a recording of your voice saying a positive message - then save it as your alarm tone. Queue up some music that you find uplifting and energizing, and schedule it to play when you need to wake up.



TIP #3. SET A CALM TONE TO THE DAY WITH MEDITATION



Researchers say that when we meditate early, we sleep better at night. Meditating can also help you deal better with all those random thoughts that occupy you throughout the day (including anything that stresses you out as soon as you open your eyes) and that may contribute to your feeling rushed and overwhelmed.

TIP #4. PREP YOUR WORKSPACE

Before starting your day, make sure you have everything ready for the work you'll need to complete. This applies to your computer, books, reference materials (bookmark them in your browser or write notes that you'll have handy on your desk), your daily plan (a checklist of tasks you need to complete), a bottle of water at your desk, an energy snack (a power bar, banana, or a fruit and nut mix).



TIP #5. DO A SUPER SHORT WORKOUT



Pick a super short and targeted workout to help your body wake up and prepare for the day ahead. The benefit? You're more likely to keep the habit if it's something more manageable (as opposed to promising yourself you'll hit the gym for two hours in the afternoon, which is harder to do). Here are some ideas for a 10-15-minute wake-up session: a morning yoga routine, a 15-minute boot camp session, or a set of sun salutation poses.

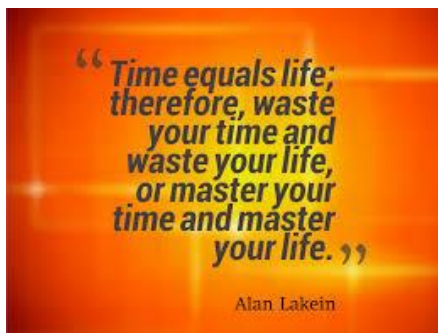
TIP #6. EAT SOME BRAIN FOOD

Don't work on an empty stomach. Have a small breakfast that will fill you up, give you energy, and improve your brain's cognitive function.

An egg or two - Eggs are a powerful mix of B vitamins (they help nerve cells to burn glucose), antioxidants (they protect neurons against damage), and omega-3 fatty acids (they keep nerve cells functioning at optimal speed). Cook, scramble or make them into an omelette with some spinach and mushrooms.



TIP #7. BECOME THE MASTER OF YOUR TIME



When you're ready to start working, use a timer to divide up your work into manageable increments to allow your brain to focus in a more targeted and effective way. Try the **Pomodoro technique**, which consists of 25-minute blocks of time, followed by 5-minute breaks. When you're done with one segment, step away from your desk and give your brain a chance to rest: go outside for a short walk, grab a cup of coffee or tea, have a snack to increase your energy levels.

NEXT: TIPS TO PRACTICE AT NIGHT

TIP #8. SET A BEDTIME ALARM ON YOUR PHONE TO GO OFF 30 MINUTES BEFORE YOU NEED TO SLEEP, which will signal to you that you need to finish up any activities you're working on.

Be sure to have a bedtime alarm go off every day of the week, including weekends.

TIP #9. GET AWAY FROM ELECTRONICS (SUCH AS YOUR COMPUTER AND TV) IN THE HOUR BEFORE BEDTIME

Instead, listen to a podcast on a topic you find interesting, queue up some relaxing music and listen with your eyes closed as you're sitting on the couch, or read a book to stimulate your imagination.



TIP #10. HAVE A CUP OF HERBAL TEA (WITH NO CAFFEINE), SOME WARM MILK WITH HONEY, OR A MAGNESIUM SUPPLEMENT (EITHER TABLET OR POWDER FORM) AROUND THE TIME YOUR ALARM GOES OFF



These warm drinks can help you feel sleepy and more relaxed.

WHY SOFT SKILLS MATTER?

Making Sure Your Hard Skills Shine

To get and keep a job, you typically need a repertoire of technical skills. Dentists need to know how to fill cavities. Secretaries need to type 100+ words per minute. Accountants need to be certified.



Beyond the technical skills, though, which dentist do you go to? - The one who is pleasant and takes time to answer your questions, or the one who treats you like a number in a long line of numbered mouths?

Which secretary do you retain when times are lean? The one whose attitude is positive and upbeat, and who is always willing to help; or the one who is inflexible and has a hard time admitting mistakes?

Likewise, think about accountants. The one who has a great work ethic and encourages his colleagues is the one who will, most likely, excel in his position and organization.

In these situations, and all the others like them, *it's the soft skills that matter.*

While your technical skills may get your foot in the door, your people skills are what open most of the doors to come. Your work ethic, your attitude, your communication skills, your emotional intelligence and a whole host of other personal attributes are the *soft skills that are crucial for career success.*

With these soft skills you can excel as a leader. Problem solving, delegating, motivating, and team building are all much easier if you have good soft skills. Knowing how to get along with people and displaying a positive attitude are crucial for success.

The problem is, *the importance of these soft skills is often undervalued*, and there is far less training provided for them than hard skills. For some reason, organizations seem to expect people know how to behave on the job. They tend to assume that everyone knows and understands the importance of being on time, taking initiative, being friendly and producing high quality work.

Soft Skills Vs Hard Skills

Hard Skills

- Measurable or technical skills
- Things done in the Workplace
- Primarily Solitary

Soft Skills

- Immeasurable Skills Dealing with Mental Make-Up
- Ability to deal with other people at the Work Place
- Predominantly Gregarious

SELF DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR

The TOPIC for February 2017

Proven Tactics to Spark Productivity in the Workplace

Date

February 7th, 2017

Venue

Banker's Club Kuala Lumpur
(Amoda Building)
Jalan Imbi
(Opposite Berjaya Times Square)



Time

6pm - 8pm

Timely Inspiration



“He who sits and plans every night for the next day’s work and follows the plan the next day, has in his hands a string which will guide him through the maze of the busiest life you can ever imagine. But when he leaves the plan and the use of time is left to chance, chaos will soon take place.”

In order for you to be successful, you should focus on achieving your success goals. Do not allow setbacks to deter you. Recognise what you need to achieve to enjoy your success and realise that these are the crucial elements necessary to achieve the personal success you want.

Decide what personal success you want to achieve and define your personal vision of these success goals. Adopt the quantum leap approach to success and avoid taking your own sweet time. You don't want a lack of motivation to delay your success. Lastly, believe that you will achieve success and go for it!

(Extracts from "How long can you wait for results")



WHAT ARE YOUR VALUES?

Deciding What's Most Important in Life

How would you define your values?

Before you answer this question, you need to know what, in general, values are.

YOUR VALUES ARE THE THINGS THAT YOU BELIEVE ARE IMPORTANT IN THE WAY YOU LIVE AND WORK

They (should) determine your priorities and deep down, they're probably the measures you use to tell if your life is turning out the way you want it to.



When the things that you do and the way you behave match your values, life is usually good – you're satisfied and content. But when these don't align with your personal values, that's when things feel... wrong. This can be a real source of unhappiness. This is why making a conscious effort to identify your values is so important.

How Values Help You

Values exist, whether you recognize them or not. Life can be much easier when you acknowledge your values – and when you make plans and decisions that honour them.

If you value family, but you have to work 70-hour weeks in your job, will you feel internal stress and conflict? And if you don't value competition, and you work in a highly competitive sales environment, are you likely to be satisfied with your job?

In these types of situations, understanding your values can really help. When you know your own values, you can use them to make decisions about how to live your life, and you can answer questions like these:

- What job should I pursue?
- Should I accept this promotion?
- Should I start my own business?
- Should I compromise, or be firm with my position?
- Should I follow tradition, or travel down a new path?

So, take the time to understand the real priorities in your life, and you'll be able to determine the best direction for you and your **life goals**!

Tip:



Values are usually fairly stable, yet they don't have strict limits or boundaries. Also, as you move through life, ***your values may change***. For example, when you start your career, success – measured by money and status – might be a top priority. But after you have a family, work-life balance may be what you value more.

As your definition of success changes, so do your personal values. This is why ***keeping in touch with your values is a lifelong exercise***. You should continuously revisit this, especially if you start to feel unbalanced... and you can't quite figure out why.

As you go through the exercise below, bear in mind that values that were important in the past may not be relevant now.

Defining Your Values

When you define your personal values, you discover what's truly important to you. A good way of starting to do this is to look back on your life – ***to identify when you felt really good, and really confident that you were making good choices***.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE TIMES WHEN YOU WERE HAPPIEST

Find examples from both your career and personal life. This will ensure some balance in your answers.

- What were you doing?
- Were you with other people? Who?
- What other factors contributed to your happiness?

STEP 2: IDENTIFY THE TIMES WHEN YOU WERE MOST PROUD

Use examples from your career and personal life.

- Why were you proud?
- Did other people share your pride? Who?
- What other factors contributed to your feelings of pride?



STEP 3: IDENTIFY THE TIMES WHEN YOU WERE MOST FULFILLED AND SATISFIED

Again, use both work and personal examples.

- What need or desire was fulfilled?
- How and why did the experience give your life meaning?
- What other factors contributed to your feelings of fulfillment?

STEP 4: DETERMINE YOUR TOP VALUES, BASED ON YOUR EXPERIENCES OF HAPPINESS, PRIDE AND FULFILLMENT

Why is each experience truly important and memorable? Use the following list of common personal values to help you get started – and aim for about 10 top values. (As you work through, you may find that some of these naturally combine. For instance, if you value philanthropy, community and generosity, you might say that service to others is one of your top values.)



Accountability

Accuracy

Achievement

Adventurousness

Altruism

Ambition

Assertiveness

Balance

Being the best

Belonging

Boldness

Calmness

Carefulness

Challenge

Cheerfulness

Clear-mindedness

Commitment

Community

Compassion

Competitiveness

Consistency

Contentment

Continuous Improvement

Contribution

Control

Cooperation

Correctness

Courtesy

Creativity

Curiosity

Decisiveness

Democraticness

Excellence

Excitement

Expertise

Exploration

Expressiveness

Fairness

Faith

Family-orientedness

Fidelity

Fitness

Fluency

Focus

Freedom

Fun

Generosity

Goodness

Grace

Growth

Happiness

Hard Work

Health

Helping Society

Holiness

Honesty

Honour

Humility

Independence

Ingenuity

Inner Harmony

Inquisitiveness

Insightfulness

Intelligence

Perfection

Piety

Positivity

Practicality

Preparedness

Professionalism

Prudence

Quality-orientation

Reliability

Resourcefulness

Restraint

Results-oriented

Rigor

Security

Self-actualization

Self-control

Selflessness

Self-reliance

Sensitivity

Serenity

Service

Shrewdness

Simplicity

Soundness

Speed

Spontaneity

Stability

Strategic

Strength

Structure

Success

Support

Dependability
Determination
Devoutness
Diligence
Discipline
Discretion
Diversity
Dynamism
Economy
Effectiveness
Efficiency
Elegance
Empathy
Enjoyment
Enthusiasm
Equality

Intellectual Status
Intuition
Joy
Justice
Leadership
Legacy
Love
Loyalty
Making a difference
Mastery
Merit
Obedience
Openness
Order
Originality
Patriotism

Teamwork
Temperance
Thankfulness
Thoroughness
Thoughtfulness
Timeliness
Tolerance
Traditionalism
Trustworthiness
Truth-seeking
Understanding
Uniqueness
Unity
Usefulness
Vision
Vitality

STEP 5: PRIORITIZE YOUR TOP VALUES

This step is probably the most difficult, because you'll have to look deep inside yourself. It's also the most important step, because, when making a decision, you'll have to choose between solutions that may satisfy different values. This is when you must know which value is more important to you.

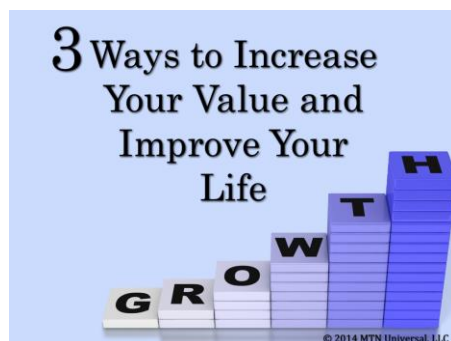
- Write down your top values, not in any particular order.
- Look at the first two values and ask yourself, "If I could satisfy only one of these, which would I choose?" It might help to visualize a situation in which you would have to make that choice. For example, if you compare the values of service and stability, imagine that you must decide whether to sell your house and move to another country to do valuable foreign aid work, or keep your house and volunteer to do charity work closer to home.
- Keep working through the list, by comparing each value with each other value, until your list is in the correct order.

VALUES
Are you living yours?

STEP 6: REAFFIRM YOUR VALUES

Check your top-priority values, and make sure they fit with your life and your vision for yourself.

- Do these values make you feel good about yourself?
- Are you proud of your top three values?
- Would you be comfortable and proud to tell your values to people you respect and admire?
- Do these values represent things you would support, even if your choice isn't popular, and it puts you in the minority?

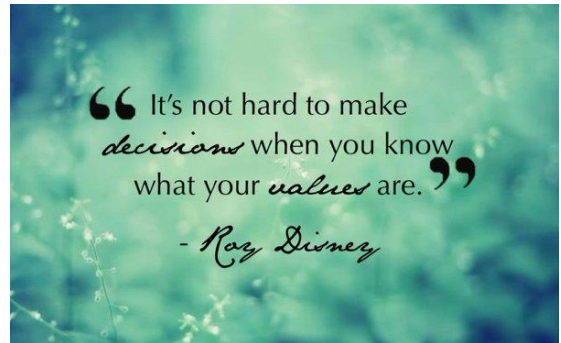


When you consider your values in decision making, you can be sure to keep your sense of integrity and what you know is right, and approach decisions with confidence and clarity. You'll also know that what you're doing is best for your current and future happiness and satisfaction.

Making value-based choices may not always be easy. However, making a choice that you know is right is a lot less difficult in the long run.

Identifying and understanding your values is a challenging and important exercise. Your personal values are a central part of who you are – and who you want to be. By becoming more aware of these important factors in your life, you can use them as a guide to make the best choice in any situation.

Some of life's decisions are really about determining what you value most. When many options seem reasonable, it's helpful and comforting to rely on your values – and use them as a strong guiding force to point you in the right direction.



NEWS AT VENTRAX

We are into our 31st year, the SDS January 2017, was actually the 361st session!

SDS January 2017 - "How to Start Managing Your Money"?

There is no magic in managing your money. YOU have to learn to save 10% of what you earn every month! It has to be made a HABIT. Here are a couple of reasons why you should save.....

i. Become Financially Independent



This may mean being able to take a vacation whenever you want to, leaving work and going back to school to switch careers, starting your own business or investing in someone else's start-up, helping family members, taking on a lesser paying job that is more personally satisfying than financially beneficial, or a big one these days - retiring when you want to rather than working because you have to.

Financial independence isn't the same as being rich, but not having to depend on receiving a

certain pay cheque can sure make you feel rich beyond your wildest dreams! Having savings that you can rely on is what it takes to become “rich,” no matter how you define it.

ii. Buy a home

The bank won't lend you money to buy a house unless you have a down payment, and you are not allowed to borrow a down payment. You must have this money saved up or have someone give it to you - and not lend it to you. Your down payment needs to be at least 5% of the purchase price of the house, and then the bank will consider lending you the other 95%.



iii. Get Out of Debt



If you ever want to get out of debt, you have to have some money saved. Sounds ironic, doesn't it? However, the credit cards are never going to get paid off if you have to keep using them for every “emergency” that comes along. Even if you are an awesome planner, stats show that half of us experience at least one totally unexpected expense each year (and half of those will be unexpected car trouble).

iv. Unforeseen Expenses

What will you do if your car needs some major repairs? Do you have \$500 to \$3,000 on hand? What if your house needs some repair, or it is discovered that you are living in a building that leaks? You can't always count on the bank to lend you money for all of these things. It is much better to anticipate a worst case scenario and have some money saved.



v. Emergencies

As much as we hope that emergencies won't happen, we all know that they do. A family member can develop a health issue, you might need to make an emergency trip, you may have a car accident or breakdown, severe weather could flood your basement or crack your pipes, or you may have to fly to a loved one's funeral. Any of these emergencies can be expensive, and we all know that we will likely encounter some sort of emergency from time to time. So why not be prepared rather than potentially become another victim of an emergency.



Unfortunately, people tend to equate time with money without realising that the need for money is a trap in vague disguise. Many are caught up in a mad rush to make a fast buck. At the same time, many regard having free time as being unproductive.

Pause for a moment and ask yourself this: Is this the quality of life that you live? Many elderly people on their dying beds have told the younger ones not to live their lives in frivolous pursuits as they have done before. But realistically has anything changed? Are you living the life that you want? Do you yearn for a better quality of life?

To define a better quality of life is challenging as there is no one straight forward definition. It does not necessarily equate to money nor does it mean that one has to have a lot of material possessions. *You could simply term a better quality of life as changes that take place in one's life which increase the quality of that person's life to make it more meaningful and worthwhile to live.*

In order to do this, you must have sufficient time to do all that you need and want to do. And if you want to enjoy one of the luxuries of having enough time – time to rest, time to make things happen, time to think things through, time to get things done, and to do them well, then there is only one way. Take enough time to think and plan things in order of their importance.

You must have the desire to want to have a better quality of life or at best you will be merely contented. Now don't misunderstand me – it is perfectly alright to be contented. However, you must be willing to accept the consequences of being contented. Being contented means you need, or want nothing else!



Dr Venga Kalachulu

reflections

“Life isn't about finding yourself. Life is about creating yourself.”

George Bernard Shaw