



Stop Telling Yourself to Eat Less and Exercise More: The WISE Approach to a Happier & Healthier You

How to Find the Time for That Important Project

Almost everyone has some important project they can't seem to get to. Maybe it's starting a blog, writing a book, or launching a new business initiative. You just can't seem to find the time to tackle it.

Whenever I speak on the topic of Platform, the first question I always get in the Q&A is this: "How do I make time for building a platform? I am so busy; I don't know how I could possibly add one more thing to my schedule."

I totally get it. My calendar is jam-packed too. But this belief—and that's what it is, a belief—also keeps us from making the progress we'd like to see.

Here are seven steps for getting unstuck and finding time for those important projects:

1. Accept Reality

You only have 168 hours a week—the same as everyone else, including presidents, captains of industry, and the homeless man you passed on the way to work. Time is finite. You can't borrow, beg, or steal more of it.

Starting and finishing that important project is not about time management as much as it is about priority management. It's not so much about efficiency as it is about courage.

The question is this: How important is this project compared to everything else in your life?

2. Get off your but

No, not your butt, your but—that excuse that keeps you mired in the status quo.

- "I could do it, BUT I just started a new job."
- "I could do it, BUT I just don't have the energy."
- "I could do it, BUT I have small children."

In order to move forward, you have to accept responsibility for where you are now. Your current situation is the result of choices you have made—not all bad, by the way, but yours nonetheless.

The question is this: Are you ready to make new choices? Yes or no. (It's okay to choose No. Just be intentional.)

3. Set a clear goal

The momentum begins to shift when you chose a different destination. The way to turn a dream into a goal is to put a due date on it. This one act will often create the urgency you need to get going.

And while you are at it, make the goal S.M.A.R.T. You can read more about that, in "The Beginner's Guide to Goal-Setting."

The question is this: What do you want? Can you clearly articulate it? Can you see it?

4. Understand what's at stake

This is perhaps the most important ingredient in finding the time for that important project. You have to connect why your why.

The way to overcome inertia (or keep going when you want to quit) is to understand clearly what you gain if you do your project and what you lose if you don't.

The question is this: Why is this important to you? Write down your reasons as a series of bullets. Keep them handy—you're going to need them.

5. Schedule time on your calendar

This is where the rubber meets the road. What gets scheduled gets done. You literally have to block out time on your calendar to focus on your project. It won't happen otherwise.

I literally set these up as appointments with myself. If anyone else looks on my calendar, they see that I am busy—and I am busy. I have set aside this time to work on my project.

The question is this: When will you set aside time to begin? Or re-start? Or finish?

6. Keep your commitments

Too often, we sacrifice the important on the altar of the urgent. We can always do it later, right? Wrong. The key is to honor your commitment to your project as though it were an uber-important meeting with an uber-important person.

I just faced this again today. Someone wanted to book an appointment with me when I had scheduled time to work on my pet project. I said, "No, I'm sorry. I can't meet then. I already have a commitment." I didn't provide any detail. My response was enough. And guess what? We found another time.

The question is this: Do you really want to get this project done or not? Are you brave enough to say No to other demands, so you can say Yes to this?

7. Make time to celebrate

Honestly, I am not very good at this. I'm better than I used to be, but no where near where I want to be. As a recovering Type-A personality, as soon as I check something off, I refocus on the next objective. Ultimately doesn't serve me or the people I work with well.

It's important not only to acknowledge what you have accomplished but thank the people who helped you. Otherwise, you wear out your team and eventually yourself. (Don't ask me how I know this.)

Yes, it really is possible to find time for those important projects you want to accomplish. You just have to be intentional and use the right strategy.