Find the Calm in the Eye of the Storm

Nowadays, life comes at you pretty fast. Everyone’s got engagements, responsibilities, and deadlines that require attention. You tweak this and that, you multitask, get up earlier and work later thinking that you can get ahead of these tasks and duties. Even though we know it’s impossible to finish it all, we push ourselves to the very limits to get everything complete.

Meanwhile, the ubiquitous technology in our lives fights for our attention. Random websites pull us in with clickbait and we can be reached all the time via call or text; we distract ourselves with the river of a social media newsfeed.

It’s time to slow down. Although that may not be as simple as it sounds, there are several methods to resetting your body, mind and spirit. The best way to find your calm is to stop.

*Start with a morning meditation*. This could be a yoga routine at sunrise or sitting on your porch and journaling with a cup of coffee. Or maybe you like to go for a run in the morning. Even the act of making your bed look nice in the morning can jumpstart you for your day. Anything, really, that brings your “Responsibility Ship” to a full stop. By starting your day with a meditative action, you set the pace and the flow for the rest of your day’s activities, giving you the strength to endure them. For some terrific ideas on quieting your mind, try reading Lorane Gordon’s article in Soulful Living (Find it here: <http://www.soulfulliving.com/take_leave.htm>).

Second, think of your tasks as “*Just a bit now, nothing all at once*.” Do the task that is right in front of you, and then move on. If something seems to difficult, break it down into smaller parts. And take short breaks frequently, as this will help ease your body and mind between activities.

Also, *limit the number of tasks* on your list, if you can. Take Drew Carey, for example. He lives by a popular mantra, invented by David Allen in his book Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity. Carey is quoted saying that Getting Things Done “taught him how to adhere to specific next steps rather than abstract larger goals” (From Brain Pickings: <https://www.brainpickings.org/index.php/2012/02/09/willpower-to-do-list/>). In other words, it can be daunting to stare at a list of twenty tasks, when three of the twenty are all you really need to complete today.

Finally, *turn off everything* that could possibly distract you. This is difficult. We’ve got text messages on our cellphones and Facetime on our tablets, lifestyles to Pin, quotations to Tweet, Netflix to watch, people to Snapchat with. Even twenty years ago, the focus of our lives had nothing to do with an online presence or being available 24/7. The key is to turn off notifications, and to remind yourself that you don’t need to check Facebook right now – save it for the end of the day.

The real lesson here is to slow down, breathe, and *take in each moment*. Don’t worry if your mind wanders, this happens to everyone regardless of the activity they pursue (See this TED talk by Matt Killingsworth: <http://www.ted.com/talks/matt_killingsworth_want_to_be_happier_stay_in_the_moment>). The key is to anticipate happiness! See the respite in the eye of the storm as sweet relief from the tempest.

Find the calm. It’s always there, waiting for your ship to come to full stop. Waiting to remind you of your presence in the universe, your purpose in the here and now. Don’t avoid it: stop what you are doing and take the time to smell the roses. You’ll be surprised at how the universe responds.