

TED 如何掌控你的空闲时间

题目: How to gain control of your free time

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When people find out I write about time management, they assume two things. One is that I'm always on time, and I'm not. I have four small children, and I would like to blame them for my occasional **tardiness**, but sometimes it's just not their fault. I was once late to my own speech on time management. We all had to just take a moment together and **savor** that **irony**.

当人们发现我写 关于时间管理的文章时, 他们都会假设两件事: 第一, 我永远都准时, 但我并不是。我有四个小孩, 我偶尔将迟到归咎于他们, 不过有时候真的不是因为他们。我有一次在去我的一个关于时间管理的演讲时迟到了。我们都需要一点时间去好好地体味一下这有多么讽刺。

The second thing they assume is that I have lots of tips and tricks for saving bits of time here and there. Sometimes I'll hear from magazines that are doing a story along these lines, generally on how to help their readers find an extra hour in the day. And the idea is that we'll shave bits of time off everyday activities, add it up, and we'll have time for the good stuff. I question the entire premise of this piece, but I'm always interested in hearing what they've **come up with** before they call me. Some of my favorites: doing **errands** where you only have to make right-hand turns. Being extremely **judicious** in **microwave** usage: it says three to three-and-a-half minutes on the package, we're totally getting in on the bottom side of that.

第二, 人们总是假设我有很多关于 如何节省时间的贴士和技巧。有时候我听说一些杂志 在写这方面的故事, 通常都是关于教读者如何 在一天中获得额外一个小时。基本思路就是从日常的 每个活动中挤出一点时间, 加起来, 然后我们就有时间去做 更有意思的事情了。我对这个说法持保留意见, 不过我还是愿意听听 他们在找我之前有什么想法。我最喜欢的几个是: 只完成那些只需要右转的事; 在用微波炉时, 要极度审慎: 当食物包装上面写了3到3.5分钟时, 我们要挑时间最短的那个。

tardiness

n. 迟到; 拖延

savor

v. 品味;

n. 味道

irony

n. 讽刺

come up with

想出

errand

n. 差事

judicious

adj. 明智的;
判断正确的

microwave

n. 微波炉

And my personal favorite, which **makes sense on** some level, is to DVR your favorite shows so you can fast-forward through the **commercials**. That way, you save eight minutes every half hour, so in the course of two hours of watching TV, you find 32 minutes to exercise. Which is true. You know another way to find 32 minutes to exercise? Don't watch two hours of TV a day, right? 我个人最喜欢的是，录下你最喜欢看的电视剧，然后你就可以跳过广告了。其实在某个程度上，还是挺有道理的。这样，你每半个小时就可以挤出八分钟。那么你葱用来看电视的两个小时中，可以挤出32分钟锻炼的时间。倒的确是这么回事儿。你还知道其他可以找到32分钟锻炼时间的方法吗？不要每天都看两个小时电视就行了，对吧？

make sense on
有道理

commercial
adj. 商业的
n. 广告

Anyway, the idea is we'll save bits of time here and there, add it up, we will finally get to everything we want to do. But after studying how successful people spend their time and looking at their schedules hour by hour, I think this idea has it completely **backward**. We don't build the lives we want by saving time. We build the lives we want, and then time saves itself.

backward
adj. 向后的

总之，就是要在各处都省点时间，加起来就有时间做我们想做的事了。但在我了解成功的人如何分配时间，并看过了他们的时间表后，我觉得这个想法是完全本末倒置的。我们不是通过节省时间来打造我们想过的生活。我们应该先建立我们想要的生活，时间就会自然而然节省出来。我来解释一下。

Here's what I mean. I recently did a time diary project looking at 1,001 days in the lives of extremely busy women. They had **demanding** jobs, sometimes their own businesses, kids to care for, maybe parents to care for, community **commitments** -- busy, busy people. I had them **keep track of** their time for a week so I could add up how much they worked and slept, and I interviewed them about their strategies, for my book.

demanding
adj. 费力的

commitment
n. 奉献；承诺

keep track of
跟上进度

我最近有个时间日记项目，观察最忙碌的女士生命中的1001天。她们工作繁忙，有时候是自己的生意，有时候要照顾自己的孩子，或者是照顾父母，还有服务社区等等——都是一些很忙的人。我让她们记录了一星期的行程，计算她们工作和睡觉的时间，为了我的书，我还采访了解了她们的常用策略。其中一个被我研究过时间表的女士，

One of the women whose time **log** I studied goes out on a Wednesday night for something. She comes home to find that her water heater has broken, and there is now water all over her **basement**. If you've ever had anything like this happen to you, you know it is a hugely damaging, frightening, sopping mess. So she's dealing with the immediate **aftermath** that night, next day she's got **plumbers** coming in, day after that, professional cleaning crew dealing with the ruined carpet. All this is being recorded on her time log. **Winds up** taking seven hours of her week. Seven hours. That's like finding an extra hour in the day. 在一个周三晚上出去了一趟，回家发现她的热水器坏了，地下室都被水淹了。如果你也遇到过这种事儿的话，你会知道眼前的景象多么令人崩溃和沮丧。于是那个晚上她立刻着手处理，第二天她找了一个水管工，第三天找了专业的清理人员来处理损坏的地毯。所有这些都算在了她的时间表内。总共花了她一周中的七个小时。七个小时。这就等于一周七天每天都要挤出一个小时。但是假如你在这一周刚开始时就问她，

But I'm sure if you had asked her at the start of the week, "Could you find seven hours to train for a **triathlon**?" "Could you find seven hours to mentor seven worthy people?" I'm sure she would've said what most of us would've said, which is, "No -- can't you see how busy I am?" Yet when she had to find seven hours because there is water all over her basement, she found seven hours. And what this shows us is that time is highly **elastic**. We cannot make more time, but time will **stretch** to **accommodate** what we choose to put into it.

“你能在这周抽出七个小时来参加铁人三项吗？”，“你能在这周抽出七个小时指导七个有潜力的人吗？”“我确定她会像大多数人一样，说，”怎么可能，你看不出我有多忙吗？”但是她最后不得不抽出七个小时，因为她的地下室都被水淹了，她挤出了这七个小时。这件事告诉我们：时间是有弹性的。我们不能创造更多时间，但是时间会自己调整去适应我们选择去做的事情。所以时间管理的关键就是

log

n. 日志

basement

n. 地下室

aftermath

n. 后果

plumber

n. 水电工

wind up

结束

triathlon

n. 铁人三项

elastic

adj. 有弹力的

stretch

v. 拉长；变大

accommodate

v. 迁就；提供住宿

And so the key to time management is treating our priorities as the equivalent of that broken water heater. To get at this, I like to use language from one of the busiest people I ever interviewed. By busy, I mean she was running a small business with 12 people on the payroll, she had six children in her spare time. I was getting in touch with her to set up an interview on how she "had it all" -- that phrase. I remember it was a Thursday morning, and she was not available to speak with me. Of course, right?

对待最重要的事情应该像对待那个坏了的热水器一样。要做到这一点，我要借用我采访过最忙的人的话。她经营着一个小企业，请了十二名员工，空余时间她还要照顾六个孩子。我联系上了她，想要采访她关于她是怎么做到“无所不能”的。我记得那是一个星期四的早晨，她没时间和我说话。当然了，她很忙。但是她没时间和我说话的原因是，

But the reason she was unavailable to speak with me is that she was out for a hike, because it was a beautiful spring morning, and she wanted to go for a hike. So of course this makes me even more intrigued, and when I finally do catch up with her, she explains it like this. She says, "Listen Laura, everything I do, every minute I spend, is my choice." And rather than say, "I don't have time to do x, y or z," she'd say, "I don't do x, y or z because it's not a priority." "I don't have time," often means "It's not a priority." If you think about it, that's really more accurate language. I could tell you I don't have time to dust my blinds, but that's not true. If you offered to pay me \$100,000 to dust my blinds, I would get to it pretty quickly.

她去远足了。因为那是春季一个美丽的清晨，所以她去远足了。这样的她让我变得更感兴趣了，当我最终联系上她时，她说：“听我说，劳拉，我做的所有的事情，我花的每分每秒，都是我的选择。”所以与其说，“我没有时间做这个，这个，或者那个。”她会说：“我不做这些事情因为这些不是我的首要任务。”“我没有时间”的意思通常是“那不是我的首要任务”。其实你想想，那的确是更准确的说法。我可能会告诉你我没有时间清理百叶窗，但那不是真的。假如你愿意付我10万美金让我给百叶窗除尘，我会马上去做。

the equivalent of
相当于

payroll
n.工资名单

intrigued
adj.感兴趣的

catch up with
联系上；赶上

priority
n.优先权

dust
n.沙尘

blind
adj.失明的；
未察觉的

Since that is not going to happen, I can **acknowledge** this is not a matter of lacking time; it's that I don't want to do it. Using this language reminds us that time is a choice. And granted, there may be horrible consequences for making different choices, I will give you that. But we are smart people, and certainly over the long run, we have the power to fill our lives with the things that deserve to be there.

acknowledge
v.告知；承认

既然那不可能发生，我可以说不是因为时间不够，而是不想做。这么说提醒了我们，时间是一种选择。我会告诉你，当然，不同的选择有时候会带来可怕的后果。但是我们都是聪明人，从长远来看，我们有能力去选择一些值得做的事，来填补我们生命中的时间。那么我们应该怎么做呢？

So how do we do that? How do we treat our priorities as the equivalent of that broken water heater?

我们要如何像对待那个坏了的热水器一样对待我们的首要任务？首先，我们需要找出哪些事最重要。

Well, first we need to figure out what they are. I want to give you two strategies for thinking about this. The first, on the professional side: I'm sure many people coming up to the end of the year are giving or getting annual performance reviews. You look back over your successes over the year, your "opportunities for growth." And this serves its purpose, but I find it's more effective to do this looking forward. So I want you to pretend it's the end of next year. You're giving yourself a performance review, and it has been an **absolutely** amazing year for you professionally. What three to five things did you do that made it so amazing? So you can write next year's performance review now.

absolutely
adv.完全地

我想给你们分享两个技巧。第一个，从职业的角度来说：我相信许多人在年底的时候会发出或者收到年度绩效审查。你回头看看这一年的成功和“成长的机会”。这的确起到了它的作用，但是我发现往前看会更有效。我想让你们把这当做下一年的年底。你在给自己做年度绩效审查，在专业方面，这一年的表现非常出众。是哪三到五件事使这一年变得如此出众？你现在就可以写明年的绩效审查。

And you can do this for your personal life, too. I'm sure many of you, like me, come December, get cards that contain these **folded up** sheets of colored paper, on which is written what is known as the family holiday letter.

你也可以在个人生活方面这么做。我相信你们许多人，包括我，在十二月，都会收到这种夹着彩色纸的卡片。上面写着“家庭假日信件”。

Bit of a **wretched genre** of literature, really, going on about how amazing everyone in the **household** is, or even more **scintillating**, how busy everyone in the household is. But these letters serve a purpose, which is that they tell your friends and family what you did in your personal life that mattered to you over the year. So this year's kind of done, but I want you to pretend it's the end of next year, and it has been an absolutely amazing year for you and the people you care about. What three to five things did you do that made it so amazing? So you can write next year's family holiday letter now. Don't send it.

听起来像是一个挺悲惨的文学题材，谈论家里每个人有多了不起，或者更精彩点，家里每个人有多忙。但是这些信有它们的用处，它们告诉你的朋友和家人 你这一年里做了什么对个人生活有意义的事。那么今年快要结束了，我想让你假装这是明年的年底，对你和你在乎的人来说，这都是无与伦比的一年。哪三到五件事让你这一年表现如此出色？其实你现在就可以写 明年的家庭假日信件了。先不要发出去。

Please, don't send it. But you can write it. And now, between the performance review and the family holiday letter, we have a list of six to ten goals we can work on in the next year.

真的，不要发出去。但是你可以写。现在，有了绩效评估和写给家人的信，我们就有了六到十个 明年可以努力的目标。

fold up
折叠

wretched
adj. 悲惨的

genre
n. 体裁；类型

household
n. 家庭；家务

scintillating
adj. 妙趣横生的

And now we need to break these down into **doable** steps. So maybe you want to write a family history. First, you can read some other family histories, get a sense for the style. Then maybe think about the questions you want to ask your relatives, set up **appointments** to interview them. Or maybe you want to run a 5K. So you need to find a race and sign up, figure out a training plan, and **dig those shoes out** of the back of the closet. And then -- this is key -- we treat our priorities as the equivalent of that broken water heater, by putting them into our schedules first. We do this by **thinking through** our weeks before we are in them.

我们需要先把他们分成可行的阶段性任务。或许你要写一个家族传记。首先，你可以读读别人的家族历史，了解一下大概的风格。然后可以想象你要问亲戚的问题，约定和他们见面谈话的时间。或者你想要参加一个五千米的短程马拉松。你需要先找一个竞赛报名，再做一个培训计划，从衣柜底下翻出你的运动鞋。然后——这是关键——我们将我们的首要事件视为那个坏掉的热水器，将它们优先放入我们的日程表里。我们要在事情发生的几周前就先想好。

I find a really good time to do this is Friday afternoons. Friday afternoon is what an **economist** might call a "low opportunity cost" time. Most of us are not sitting there on Friday afternoons saying, "I am excited to make progress toward my personal and professional priorities right now." But we are willing to think about what those should be. So take a little bit of time Friday afternoon, make yourself a **three-category** priority list: career, relationships, self. Making a three-category list reminds us that there should be something in all three categories.

我发现周五的下午最适合处理这事儿。周五的下午是被经济学家称为“低机会成本”时间。我们大部分人不会在周五下午想着，“我要朝我的个人和职业生涯的首要事件迈进了，所以很兴奋。但是我们愿意去想那些事是什么。所以在周五下午花一点时间，为自己做一个分成三类的首要事件的列表：事业，人际关系，个人。这样的三项分类列表提醒了我们每一个类别都应该有一些事。

doable

adj. 可行的

appointment

n. 约会；任命

dig out

挖出

think through

充分考虑

economist

n. 经济学家

three-category

三项分类

Career, we think about; relationships, self -- not so much. But anyway, just a short list, two to three items in each. Then look out over the whole of the next week, and see where you can plan them in.

事业，我们经常考虑； 人际关系，个人—— 很少会想。无论如何，只要一个短短的列表， 每个都包含两到三件事。 它们会帮助我们看清下周， 如何在下周计划这些事情。

Where you plan them in is **up to you**. I know this is going to be more complicated for some people than others. I mean, some people's lives are just harder than others. It is not going to be easy to find time to take that poetry class if you are caring for multiple children on your own. I get that. And I don't want to **minimize** anyone's struggle. But I do think that the numbers I am about to tell you are **empowering**.

你可以决定如何计划。这可能对一些人来说会比较困难一点。 我的意思是，有些人的 人生就是比较复杂。 如果你自己有好几个要照顾的小孩， 想要找时间去参加诗歌班一定不容易。 我懂。 我不想轻视任何人的困难。 当是我觉得我接下来要说的数字 是会改变你的想法的。

There are 168 hours in a week. Twenty-four times seven is 168 hours. That is a lot of time. If you are working a full-time job, so 40 hours a week, sleeping eight hours a night, so 56 hours a week -- that leaves 72 hours for other things. That is a lot of time. You say you're working 50 hours a week, maybe a main job and a **side hustle**. Well, that leaves 62 hours for other things. You say you're working 60 hours. Well, that leaves 52 hours for other things. You say you're working more than 60 hours. Well, are you sure?

我们每周都有168个小时。24乘以7是168个小时。 这是一段很长时间。 假如你有一个全职的工作， 一周是40个小时， 每晚睡八个小时， 一周是56个小时， 我们有剩下72个小时来做其他事情。 这是一段很长的时间。 假如你说你每周工作50个小时， 比如一份全职和一份兼职。 这样你还是60小时去做其他的事情。 假如你说你每周工作60个小时， 你还是有52个小时去做其他的事情。 你说你每周工作超过60个小时， 你确定吗？

up to you
一切由你

minimize
v.减少

empower
v.授权

side hustle
兼职； 副业

There was once a study comparing people's **estimated** work weeks with time diaries. They found that people claiming 75-plus-hour work weeks were off by about 25 hours.

曾经有一个研究对比了人们估计的工作时间，和实际的工作日记。他们发现那些表示工作超过75小时的人，有25小时的误差。

estimated
adj.估计的

You can guess in which direction, right? Anyway, in 168 hours a week, I think we can find time for what matters to you. If you want to spend more time with your kids, you want to study more for a test you're taking, you want to exercise for three hours and volunteer for two, you can. And that's even if you're working way more than full-time hours.

你可以猜到这个误差是多了还是少了吧？无论如何，在一周的168个小时里，我觉得我们总可以找到时间做我们想做的事。如果你想花时间陪陪你的孩子，或者准备你即将到来的考试，你想锻炼两三个小时或者做两个小时志愿者，你都可以的。

So we have plenty of time, which is great, because guess what? We don't even need that much time to do amazing things. But when most of us have bits of time, what do we do? **Pull out** the phone, right? Start deleting emails. Otherwise, we're **puttering around** the house or watching TV. But small moments can have great power. You can use your bits of time for bits of joy. Maybe it's choosing to read something wonderful on the bus on the way to work.

pull out
退出

putter around
闲逛

即便你的工作时间远超过法定时间。所以我们有时间，这很好。但是你知道吗？我们根本不需要那么多时间去完成一个大目标。但当我们有一点空闲时间的时候，我们会做什么？拿出手机，是吧？开始删除邮件。或者在家里闲逛，看电视。但是每个不起眼的时刻都潜力无限。你可以用零星的时间，来获得零星的快乐。比如说在去上班的公车上读一些精彩的东西。

I know when I had a job that required two bus rides and a subway ride every morning, I used to go to the library on weekends to get stuff to read. It made the whole experience almost, almost, enjoyable. Breaks at work can be used for meditating or praying. If family dinner is out because of your crazy work schedule, maybe family breakfast could be a good substitute.

当我以前的工作需要我 每天早上乘两趟公车 和一趟地铁的时候，我周末会去图书馆找东西来读。这几乎，几乎让我的生活更丰富了。工作间隙的休息时间可以用来冥想或者祷告。如果你因为工作忙 而不能吃家庭晚餐，试一下家庭早餐。这就是看着一个人所有的时间，

It's about looking at the whole of one's time and seeing where the good stuff can go. I truly believe this. There is time. Even if we are busy, we have time for what matters. And when we focus on what matters, we can build the lives we want in the time we've got.

然后找到什么时候可以做想做的事。我真的相信，我们都有充分的时间。就算我们很忙，我们仍然有时间去做重要的事。当我们关注在重要的事上时，我们可以用所拥有的时间 创造我们想要的生活。

meditate

v.冥想；沉思

schedule

n.时间表

substitute

n.代替品

focus on

专注于