

## How to maximize this gift of time

### Description

If you're like me you have a hard time sitting still. I love going to work, getting into my car, making phone calls as I commute, days in meetings, discussions, problem-solving, nights going out, going shopping, cooking, eating, drinking, traveling, exploring, watching movies, playing sports. I think if I keep myself busy enough I won't have to reflect if I'm doing the right things, I can tell myself I'm too busy to think but it must be good if I'm filling my day right?

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Now, since the world is on house arrest and we all suddenly have to stop the noise, what the hell are we supposed to do with all this time. Talk to each other? Be grateful? Find your purpose? Youâ€™re shitting me, right?

Now that we canâ€™t really go anywhere, everyone is going for walks. Itâ€™s like the first scene in Walking Dead when Rick Grimes wakes up from his coma and finds all the zombies shuffling outside randomly with blank stares. We all lost our distractions simultaneously and now have wayyyy too much time on our hands.

How many of us have told ourselves, â€œonly I had more time forâ€? Well wish granted! Careful what you wish for!

Now I know this time is really stressful for some who will battle this virus, but most of us will be staring at our 4 walls and slowly go crazy. The reality is we distract ourselves often because weâ€™re afraid to face what we could do better with our time. Instead of reading, we watch Big Bang Theory. Instead of exercising, we have a chocolate sundae. Instead of talking to our spouse, we check social media. Instead of reviewing our business strategy, we micromanage our team to feel important. Instead of meditating in the morning, we hit snooze on the alarm. Instead of talking to our kids, we throw them into an activity.

I am taking this extra time and quietness, to reflect on a few things, and also to practice habits. Here is my list of reflections, and of habits Iâ€™m focused more on, now that Iâ€™ve run out of excuses. Itâ€™s a great time to reconnect with your spouse, kids, family members and have more often real conversations.

## Start Taking Care of You

Ok, this is gonna hurt, but get up off the couch, wipe the chip crumbs off your stained sweatshirt, and get moving! There really are no more excuses for checking in with yourself and feel better about who you are.

- Meditation â€œ not only good to get into the habit, but it helps slow the thoughts that are churning like, what am I doing with all my time, and when is this all going to be over, etc.
- Exercise â€œ Not only feels good after, but Iâ€™m building my overall health and ability to battle a virus if I get it!
- Journaling â€œ A place to reflect and focus the bag of squirrels in your head
- Reading â€œ I have a backlog of books Iâ€™m burning through now!
- Cooking new stuff â€œ made [this](#) last night, was yummy
- Learn a new language â€œ (mein name ist Sean!)

In terms of reflection, with a little quietness, itâ€™s a good time to take stock of your career, aspirations, bucket list of things to do when your prison time is over, relationships you want to strengthen and relationships you want to distance yourself from (i.e., toxic ones), your PFE (purpose for existing). Create a list of people, events, and things in your life that youâ€™re grateful for.

## Start Taking Care of Others

Now is the time to empathize with everyone around you. If you're feeling uncertain, confused or anxious, chances are many around you are too. Step one of taking care of others is to be less of a douchebag yourself! Pause before reacting, Listen before speaking, be compassionate to someone who's having a rough time.

Look for especially at-risk family, friends, and coworkers, and do what you can to encourage them to be safe and create better chances for them. You can do things like:

- Find a way for at-risk coworkers to work from home, or for your at-risk employees send them home with pay; or enough to keep them going through this if the government isn't helping
- Stop visiting your grandparents or parents! I know you miss them but pay attention to the statistics and stay away from old people. If you are older, isolate! Facetime, Duo, Zoom, etc. are great ways to replace Sunday night dinners.
- Donate your time to charities and organizations that help health care workers in this crisis.
- If your business has masks, gloves, suits that can be used in health care, give them away.
- Maybe stop going to the beach, having parties, eating at restaurants, getting on a crowded subway, etc. Please?

## Reconnect with your family, you know those other annoying beings in the house?

We can all get wrapped up in our own stuff going on, but this is a really special opportunity to get closer to your closest family. Whoever you've been imprisoned with, get to know them better.

Dust off the old Risk, Monopoly and crib boards. Play Just Dance together (no filming allowed though!). Watch movies. Talk. Learn more about what's happening in your kids' lives.

Reassure your kids that you will get through this and check in with their emotions. Everyone is going to feel stressed and also going stir crazy so it's important to help them make sense of this and also make sure everyone's mental health is ok.

And don't forget to encourage everyone to take care of themselves too. Give them space, make sure its ok to "get away" from each other from time to time. Because after a while that whistling noise your wife's nose makes is going to get realllly annoying.

## Don't make it about you "Lead

"In every crisis, doubt or confusion, take the higher path " the path of compassion, courage, understanding and love."

*Amit Ray*

"Great occasions do not make heroes or cowards; they simply unveil them to our eyes. Silently and imperceptibly, as we wake or sleep, we grow strong or weak; and at last some

crisis shows what we have become.â€•

*Brooke Foss Westcott*

Itâ€™s so easy to get caught up in the hysteria of the moment and focus on how this is affecting you. But if youâ€™re a leader, now is the time to reveal your character. Be a confident and positive guide for your team. Show them how to face uncertain times with courage, and hope. Call a regular telecon or videoconference to maintain ties with the team. Create a slack chat room or group message to keep talking with each other. Communicate with confidence that we will persevere through these strange times. One of the most important roles as a leader remember, is to enroll your team into a vision. Now, more than ever, you need to communicate a vision. In some ways its easier, because we all have a global crisis to rally around. Every organization can focus its efforts on navigating through these times. Be confident, be bold, be compassionate, and above all be genuine and you will be astounded at how well your team bonds and succeeds when at the end of this crisis.

## **Gratitude heals a lot**

[Science](#) shows that gratitude can heal a lot of what ails you through these quarantining days. If you journal, take a part of it to note what you are grateful for. I like writing 3 things Iâ€™m grateful for every day. Then take one person and thank them for what they mean to you and what they give you.

It will really lift your spirits even on the worst stir-crazy days!

## **Go Easy on Yourself**



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The last and most important recommendation is to forgive yourself. Stressful times are going to bring out some bad habits, and less than positive reactions from you. Own them, be accountable, but also forgive yourself. There will be days when you don't get out of your pajamas. There will be days when you binge-watch the entire Season 5 of Vikings. It's ok. The moment you realize you need to pick yourself up, let go of your bad habit and get up. Some days will be better than others. So we can't expect now that we have more time at home that all our bad habits can be washed away in a week.

Remember we only have a finite amount of time in this world, and we can't change what is happening to us from external sources. All we can do is choose what to do about it. Reset your intention to be a leader through all this. Be a leader to your team, to your family, to your community, to yourself.

I'm convinced this world crisis will help many people reset their priorities in life, create a world that is more grateful for the time we have, and help us aspiring leaders to be better at it! I hope this helps you.

**Category**

1. Uncategorized

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