

MIND MATTERS: SLOWING DOWN

“Experiment with doing nothing. As impossible as this may seem, the rewards are rich.” – Don’t Sweat the Small Stuff... calendar quote

Ahhh...’tis the season to be overworked, overstressed and otherwise completely whacked out. It is during this season that I rediscover my desire to please everyone all the time and wear myself out in the process.

Sound familiar?

There’s rushing here and buying there, and of course, worrying about what to get everyone, and oh...should I wait until it goes on sale? Am I spending too much? What if I don’t spend enough...what if they get me something nicer? On and on and on it goes...until we’re exhausted, frustrated and totally stressed out.

This year, though, I want you to take the advice in the quote above. Try doing nothing. Pick a time each day to stop your thinking and your planning. Sit down and do nothing. See what happens.

Now, let me guess...the “nothing” time is making you crazy. There’s still so much to do! There’s the laundry, the groceries, the decorating, the kids....(I chuckle here—my friends in college called me “SMTD”—“So Much To Do”.) Are you an SMTD, too? Does this season bring out the crazy person inside, turning your calm resolve into frenzied overdrive?

Somewhere I saw this quote, “We’re addicted to having no time because we don’t know what to do with it once we get some.” If you’re always filling your time and not giving yourself the opportunity to experience downtime, you’re losing yourself. “Beingness” is that quiet part of yourself that exists independent of your busyness. To start to be, you must learn to not do...to slow down...to take those daily few minutes of nothing time and joyfully spend it on yourself.

Your busywork will always be there. Unfortunately it doesn’t go away. But, if you make slowing down, learning to quietly reflect and “good enough” a priority, you’ll find yourself a much happier person. You’ll discover the you that IS, rather than just the you that DOES.

For further reading, I highly recommend, Meditations for Women Who Do Too Much, by Anne Wilson Schaefer. It’s a calendar book of daily meditations on overcoming an addiction to rushing. It’s chock-full of quotes and lessons on letting go and will benefit both genders.

Happy Holidays. May you find peace and prosperity in 2005.

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