

Change your life in just 15 minutes

Written by Marcia Humphrey • Style on a Dime
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If you are at all like me, you have probably said to yourself, “There is just not enough time in the day for me to accomplish all the things that I have to/need to accomplish. All of the demands of life compete for my attention, my energy, and my money, so one of my goals in 2010 is to discover practical ways to continually simplify my life and redeem my time. Inspired by a website I introduced to you last week, www.flylady.com, I have started using bite-sized chunks of time throughout the day to accomplish small, yet important goals. I am already seeing some savings; more time, less headaches and frustration, more family unity.

The trick to making this strategy work is to actually use a timer-it can be the one on your cell phone, your watch, your stove, microwave, etc-just make sure you use it. I even have my kids using this method and it is working! Below is a list of 15-minute good-for-the-soul actions that are guaranteed to create some type of savings in your life. Grab your timer. Ready, set, start!

Talk to your spouse (or your baby’s mama/daddy) Respectful communication is the key to any healthy relationship. If you are married, agree to set the timer for 15 minutes of chat-time just before bed or in the morning. And while you are at it, exchange gentle touches (simple, but very effective). If you and your child’s daddy/mama are no longer together, do your best to make effective communication a high priority. Continually work on building or maintaining a stable relationship where regular two-way communication occurs. Your kids will thank you later. Savings: More emotional security within your marriage and less fighting. Savings (if parents aren’t together); less stress and discomfort during those special school activities and milestones where both parents will to attend (and did I mention less fighting?).

Play with your kids If you want to build strong family ties that bind you together for years to come, take the time to play around with those babies-no matter how old they are. Set the timer and play a card game together-spades or go fish, read, or dance to your favorite (and their favorite) tunes. We often do this just before bed as a way to reconnect. Savings: Fewer calls from the teacher

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Meditate-Pray Everyone in the family benefits when you take an opportunity to unwind at the end of a long day. A great way to achieve this is by praying or meditating for only 15 minutes. Believe it or not, the time you spend in reflective prayer helps you to refocus and rejuvenate, making you even more effective in your day. Be sure to keep your pen and paper handy for the inspirational thoughts that are sure to come. Savings: More sanity, less craziness.

Sounds almost too good to be true, doesn't it? Yet by using your timer and working the 15-minute strategy you will find yourself less worried, less stressed, and more in-tune with the people and the goals that matter most. Go ahead and take the challenge to change your life in 15 minutes and then let me hear from you! Enjoy!

Marcia Humphrey is an interior decorator and home stager who specializes in achieving high style at low costs. A native of Michigan, she and her husband, Lonnie, have three children.

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