

TIME MANAGEMENT: PHILOSOPHICAL, PSYCHOLOGICAL, AND PRACTICAL ISSUES

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Abstract

This article discusses the relativity of time, how it is perceived by individuals, its values, and the illusions surrounding progress. The focus is on the passage of time, its effective management, and how individuals assess time. The author examines the importance of time management using the mythological examples of Zeno and Sisyphus, and references Stephen Covey's work, emphasizing the significance of time management. The article also explores scientific approaches to the relativity of time and the necessity of implementing time management in daily life.

Keywords: Time, relativity, planning, efficiency, progress, time management, Stephen Covey, Zeno, Sisyphus, motivation, philology, philosophy.

Introduction

Despite its greatness, time is perceived differently by different people—some find it cheap, others expensive. Time is so great that we cannot look directly at it. It changes everything, but it cannot change our eyes. The worst thief in the world is the thief of time. Only the most determined individuals protect their time from being stolen. Procrastination is another form of stealing time. Many people waste their time aimlessly.

We often say that the present time is fast. We move so quickly that, like Achilles in Zeno's "Tortoise and Achilles" paradox, we fail to reach our goal, even though we may think we have. Ultimately, we find ourselves in a situation similar to Sisyphus, endlessly chasing the boulder that rolls down the hill after reaching the peak. This cycle repeats and will continue to do so long after us. As Salvador Dalí described, time always flows away. The clock, shaped like a bird's nest on the wall, ticks relentlessly, and the hanging clock's hand burns our foreheads, leaving marks on our skin.

When it comes to time management, it is one of the easiest yet most complex philosophical and philological issues. Time is both infinite and yet the most fleeting, a gift that comes with responsibility for each of us.

It is well known that people will still carry out tasks even if they do not write a schedule. Whether alone or in a group, they will find a way to complete the task by finding the right opportunity. Time exists in a plan, although it may remain hidden in some cases. Every task in a schedule contributes to the total amount of time spent on it. For example, if you need four hours to write a report, you typically spend about 10 minutes planning. In an additional 8

minutes, we carefully assess how to utilize time efficiently. We divide some tasks between other employees. This is where the essence of planning is revealed. In Stephen Covey's book: "The main focus is on the main things," there is an interesting example. Covey recounts an interesting seminar on time management:

"We are going to do an experiment," he said, bending down and pulling out a large jar from under the table, along with a tray filled with rocks of various sizes. "How many of these rocks do you think will fit in this jar?" he asked. Various opinions were voiced as they tried to guess. The instructor continued: "Let's see."

He placed the large rocks inside the jar, filling it partially, and asked, "Is the jar full now?" Everyone nodded, "Yes." He then took a bucket of gravel from under the table and poured it into the jar, watching it settle in the spaces between the rocks. "Is it full now?" he asked again. The answer was the same. Finally, he poured sand into the jar, and it filled in the remaining spaces. Once again, he asked, "Is it full now?" "Yes," everyone replied.

The instructor then asked, "What does this experiment show?" Various answers were given. One person said, "There's always space in life, and we must work to fill it."

"No," said the instructor. "What I want to show here is that if I hadn't put the big rocks in first, there would have been no room for them. The big rocks represent the important tasks. If we know what our big tasks are and prioritize them, the rest of the tasks will fit into the remaining time."

Covey writes, "Urgent tasks are like the small rocks, but the important tasks are the big rocks. If we know what our big tasks are and take care of them first, the remaining space can be filled with other things" (Covey, 2013).

Now, let's look at the example of time allocation by a manager named William, taken from Jules Margenstern's book. He wakes up every morning at 6:30 a.m. His day off is also divided into large blocks like a workday. He consistently allocates time for writing his autobiography. Category A (which represents the first and most important tasks) or urgent tasks are always written down first. On Fridays, without doing anything else, he dedicates from 10 a.m. to 12 p.m. to paying utility bills. Moreover, his activities are divided into large blocks. During his workday, he spends one hour from 12 p.m. to 1 p.m. working out, and then half an hour for lunch. He does not constantly need motivation to achieve something (to win at something). Likewise, when he sits down to write his autobiography, he does not need to drink coffee, smoke, or talk to friends. He just starts writing. If you need an hour to write something based on a plan, it doesn't matter whether it takes 15 minutes or 5 hours—what matters is that it is planned. He goes to bed and wakes up at the same time every day. His tasks are large blocks, and within them, he can rearrange the order. Sometimes, he compares tasks with each other. For instance, while commuting, he reads fiction.

If a person is engaged in sports, there is no need for constant motivation. In the morning, he writes his autobiography (journal), and he does not need motivation for that. If such motivation takes an hour, it must be considered when planning time, and enough time should be allocated for it.

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