

WASTING TIME



As we age we all become increasingly aware of how precious time is and become more and more reluctant to spend our time in ways that seem wasteful of our life energy. Mary Pipher in her book, Another Country - Navigating the Emotional Terrain of our Elders,” talks about a mnemonic device to help her make good decisions about time. She decided she needed five things in her life:

RESPECT RELATIONSHIPS RESULTS RELAXATION REALIZATION

When she has a choice to make she asks herself,
Will this project bring me what I want?
Will this decision make me more relaxed or respected?
Will it bring results in the culture or for those I love?

If the answer is ‘no’ she tries to turn down these projects and activities and tries to make every minute matter.

It seems to me that all five must be answered yes, otherwise life becomes unbalanced. Relaxation with no results or realization is a waste of time. Relationships without respect are a waste of time ... any combination with one missing is a waste of time. Perhaps your list would be different?

It is a useful and helpful exercise to consider what things you need in your life and attempt to live accordingly. It brings up all kinds of fears that need to be dealt with, for instance,

How often do I say “yes,” to things because I am **afraid to say no** even though this is not something that will bring me respect, relationship, results, relaxation or realization?

Where does this fear come from and how did it develop in me to the point that I throw away my life energy out of fear?

Or how often do I deny myself relaxation because results are more important to me and I am **afraid of not getting results?** Are the results I am getting really results I need and want? Do I perhaps want to get different results to the one’s I have focused my life on until now? Do the results I am getting bring me realization, respect and relationship or only monetary reward, attention or praise?

Or

How often do I compromise myself and forfeit people respecting me because I am **afraid of not being liked?** How does this result in unsatisfactory relationships, lacking in intimacy and mutuality?

May you all increasingly have more respect, relationship, results, relaxation and realization in your lives as you confront your fears.