

Transcript Episode 8: Your Time, Your Goals

Podcast Opener: Adulting – Thinking of all the things adults have to do can be intimidating. Maybe you are realizing just how much you don't know about living on your own. If this sounds familiar, join us today to learn the skills you need and take some of the stress out of being an adult.

This is Grown Up U, an adulting podcast to help you navigate the twists and turns of adult life. Listen and get life skills you didn't learn in school.

Casey Ford: Do you feel like you are constantly pulled in different directions? Do you feel like your goals, be it relationally, academic, career, or health goals, are so far out of reach?

I think we all feel like that sometimes.

But today we are going to talk about some strategies to use our time in a way that best aligns with our goals.

Hello, my name is Casey Ford and I'm the Franklin County Family Consumer Sciences agent with the University of Arkansas System Division of Agriculture Cooperative Extension Service. And I'm joined with Charla Hammonds, the Family Consumer Sciences Agent, in Logan County, Arkansas.

So, before we talk about time management, we need to take some time to define our goals.

For me, some significant goals in my life include nurturing my marriage because I'm newly married and my husband and I are also working on some financial goals.

Another goal is continually maintaining and improving my health mentally and physically and to continue growing in my career.

All three of these goals take time and energy and goals can change as your life changes.

A few years ago I was in college and my goal centered around my academic career, my student leadership roles, and as I got closer to graduating - student teaching and job searching.

So, Charla, what are some of your past and present goals?

Charla Hammonds: Well, I'm glad you asked.

So as for my present goals, I have some physical fitness and health goals and financial goals like saving for a new car and things like that.

In the very recent past, my goal was to complete steps in getting a promotion at work and some other past goals were very similar to yours - completing college, I had the goal of finishing college without any debt, which I know isn't feasible for a lot of individuals, But I was very blessed to graduate without any student loans.

And then, of course, job searching while I was completing my last semester of college, like you mentioned.

Casey Ford: Awesome! So we mentioned some broad overarching areas of life that we are currently or have prioritized in the past.

But when it comes to day to day life, we might find it helpful to set some S.M.A.R.T. goals. S.M.A.R.T. is an acronym that stands for specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timely. So a smart goal that I have now that relates to my health is to walk for 20 minutes, four days a week.

That would be an example of a goal that is specific, measurable, attainable, relevant and timely. This would also help me in starting a habit that can bring me closer to my goals.

Another thing that I personally find helpful to make sure that I how I spend my time lines up with my goals is that I plan my day and over time I work to build routines that align with my priorities.

So this may mean creating a morning routine that allows me to make it to work on time and ready for the day.

This means having some priority tasks to tackle during the workday.

And it also means that I'm making time to meal prep on Saturday mornings so that I'm eating healthy throughout the week.

Also during the weekend, I make sure that I think about the coming week and what days might be good to go on a walk or spend quality time with my husband.

When I was in college, I was not good at this, unfortunately, but I would have looked like evaluating my week ahead and looking at where I can fit in study and homework time.

So Charla, how do you plan your day and do you look for pockets of time or do you have strategies that allow you to be in control of your time rather than time just getting away from you?

Charla Hammonds: Yes. So, well, I am a routine person by nature and I love the familiar, so planning out my day or week comes pretty natural to me.

And like you said, looking ahead at what's coming this next week is a great help.

And something some of my friends, family and I were just discussing the other day was how our energy timetables are all different.

And we discussed how each of our prime time of the day varies from person to person.

So some of us are morning people. We are more productive in the mornings and then others do better in the evening or even late evening.

So knowing yourself and finding your high energy time of day can be very beneficial during these what we call prime time is when I try to schedule more complex tasks so that I'm at my best and more likely to get those tasks accomplished and more importantly, do a quality job.

So for me, I have the most energy in the morning when I first get up, I'm ready to start with the short fitness routine, then walking my dog, starting to get ready for work, packing my lunch, washing dishes, things like that, getting some basic daily activities accomplished right off the bat so that I feel like the rest of the day will be more successful because I started off my morning by accomplishing those needed tasks but mornings are not a good time for me to do a lot of studying or reading.

So in college, I couldn't start out my day studying. I needed to get a couple of other tasks marked off my list before my brain really got started.

And even now, if there's an educational book I am wanting to read or if I'm studying a book with my women's group at church - things that I really want to remember and spend time on - then my prime time of day for these activities is in the evening, so I don't really, or I would really

encourage folks to find their prime time or high energy time of day and do your most important tasks during these times.

And this can really help you meet your goals and get those tasks accomplished.

Casey Ford: I think that's a great strategy and it's something that everybody can tailor to themselves.

You know, some people are morning people and some people are more evening people.

And I think your prime time of the day even changes as, as you get older.

You know, I used to be more of an evening person and slowly but surely I'm finding myself to be more of a morning person.

So a final strategy that I want to bring up is something that I personally do tend to struggle with, and it's saying no to things and delegating. For me, I always feel like I'm disappointing people when I turn down a task or responsibility.

But the reality is that when I do that, it can lead me to my best "Yes".

One way that I have come back to that in my career is by setting boundaries that will help help me to keep my work from spilling into my personal life.

So this maybe setting a cutoff time for working late or blocking off some weekends.

Another way to discern if you should say no, may be to look for those areas of your life that you're prioritizing.

And does this task or responsibility help you get closer to where you want to be in one of those areas five years from now?

And if it doesn't, then this may not be the opportunity for you.

Charla Hammonds: Yes, absolutely. And I also tend to struggle with saying no.

And when it comes to delegating, I have to think about if this task is something that I really need to do, or if someone else can handle it and get enjoyment out of it.

So saying no and delegating can definitely be difficult.

But learning how to do so effectively can not only help you meet your goals, but it can be beneficial to your physical and mental health.

Casey Ford: Thank you so much, Charla, for being with me here today as we talk about using our time to meet our goals.

And thank you so much to everybody listening in.

We hope that you gain some tips and tricks for making sure that how you are using your time aligns with your goals.

Thank you and have a wonderful day.

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