

The Hurry Cure (How to accomplish more!)

Were Gandhi or Martin Luther King in a hurry? They acted urgently because the things they did were important, but they did not walk faster, talk faster, or do any of the things you do today in the name of efficiency. They'd mastered the art of focusing on one thing at a time.

I sometimes ask audiences to take out their watches and do nothing but stare at them for a solid minute. No one can do it! Our culture emphasizes hurry and flurries. In truth, though, the single best way to cope with a number of different projects is to slow the frenetic pace, work on one piece till its completion, then go on to the next project, and so on.

Jumping around may feel dynamic—after all, you're exerting lots of energy. Yet there's a loss of productivity. You and a friend can test this easily at a desk. Decide on three minor tasks you can do simultaneously. Ex.: stacking pennies, drawing 15 stars on a sheet of paper, and linking paper clips together.

You and your friend should both engage in these tasks. You stack a few pennies at a time, make a few stars on the paper, and link a few paper clips, indiscriminately alternating between the three tasks. Meanwhile, your friend stacks an equal number of pennies to completion—until he has no more. Then he turns to making stars on a page, and reaches 15. Finally, he links up the paper clips.

Who do you think will finish faster, easier, and in better shape mentally and emotionally? Without question, your friend. Why? He was able to focus on the task at hand, while you were bouncing back and forth between tasks.

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PURPOSE: To provide authoritative, useful, easy-to-understand information that will help our readers reduce stress, be more energetic and balance the demands of home and work.

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