

# At Your BEST

on and off the job

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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. *At Your Best* (ISSN 1065-5190) is published monthly by Rodale Press, Inc. Copyright 1993 by Rodale Press, Inc. All rights reserved. GST # R122988611. Individual subscriptions \$19.95/year (\$28.50 in Canada). For information on bulk rate discounts, contact Cindy Dries, Rodale Press, 33 E. Millar St., Emmaus, PA 18098 (215-967-8440). *At Your Best* may not be reproduced in any form without the written permission of the publisher.

## ACTION PLAN

ADVICE FROM JEFF DAVIDSON, *At Your Best*  
ADVISOR AND AUTHOR OF *BREATHING SPACE*

### Roasting the sacred cows of time management!

#### HANDLING PAPER

**Sacred Cow:** "Handle each piece of paper once"

**Reality:** It always depends on what a piece of paper says; you may have to handle some papers 25 times! Yet the optimal number of times to handle most pieces of paper is ZERO; don't let them cross your desk in the first place. Get off mailing lists, prescreen your mail, and guard your in-basket.

#### REDUCING CLUTTER

**Sacred Cow:** "When in doubt, throw it out"

**Reality:** Usually not bad advice, but you should hang on to things that you sense have future value. Pack up and store current nonessentials and make a note on your calendar to check them again next season. Then decide if they still deserve retention or disposal.

#### BEING MORE EFFICIENT

**Sacred Cow:** "Speed read, speed listen, speed learn"

**Reality:** It can be harmful for you to accelerate basic personal functioning. Operate at a rate that is comfortable for you and get a good night's sleep every night, starting tonight. The fact is, going too fast and doing three things at once is the very reason most of us feel out of control of our time. So slow down, enjoy yourself, and finish one thing before you move on to the next.

#### MANAGING YOUR SCHEDULE

**Sacred Cow:** "Use sophisticated scheduling tools"

**Reality:** Any system for improving scheduling, such as electronic calendars or executive planners, will fail you as soon as you don't keep it current. Successful people closely follow a handful of important projects and priorities . . . and have the guts to leave the rest alone.