

Make Your Summer Count

(a worksheet)

Grab up some objects that help you create great lists. Then spend some time practicing thankfulness with God. Practice staying in a place of peace. Dream.

Ask yourself what you'd really like to do this summer. Jot down what comes to mind. Write; don't edit. Let your heart jump over your brain for this one.

After you get some time with that, you can leave it or move on.



Write down a list of your responsibilities. This is what you provide for yourself and others. This includes your work, how you promote health, caring for others...the things in your life that just have to get done. Some of these are already firmly established in your routine and those do not need to be included. But if you're newly committing to exercise, or eight hours of uninterrupted sleep, or more veggies, these need to be in the list.

At some point, imagine the pitfalls you'll encounter and write them down. This helps us identify our weaknesses and create healthy boundaries, which help protect our momentum and goals.



Eventually, you want to create a system or a cycle, pattern, schedule that includes your summer plans, responsibilities and boundaries. Summer is a pretty short season, so keep that in mind. Plan on really only having eight weeks to work with. Turning those free-flowing poetic lists into the hard, cold steel of a schedule can feel brutal.

Grab an online calendar or just work on paper (with a pencil!) You want to complete a template of sorts that is flexible, and easily changed. You want to try and find a daily, weekly or monthly rhythm that reflects your values. Research shows that most people benefit from having a set morning routine. Something to consider.

Add in the big chunks first--the things that can't be moved or are inflexible. Think about what's most important to you. Does anything have to be done at a certain time of day? Factor in plenty of time for transitions and leave blanks in your schedule. I use my calendar to build my two-week template, and then a piece of paper for daily tasks.

TIME IS PRECIOUS. WASTE IT WISELY.

We're not advocating rigid boxes, rules, and inflexible systems. But a healthy schedule that reflects your priorities is wisdom. Our seasons change, and often our priorities need to change with them. Summer can be a much-needed fresh breath. A schedule will help you make the most of it.



Tips for creating your schedule:

- become a student of what fuels you: these will become your priorities
- learn the importance of keeping momentum
- learn the importance of rest
- I create my plan in a two-week cycle. I get too bored if every week looks the same.

This also gives me room to include what's super-important more than once a week, and what isn't as important gets bumped to once every other week.

- Request a set schedule at work. (This may not be possible.)
- Do the important brain work first thing, when you are truly fresh.
- Do the important work in 60-90 minute chunks.
- Take a mental break or enjoy a "reward" between tasks that require discipline or concentration.

concentration.

- When true focus is required, use airplane mode for your devices.
- Protect yourself from distraction. Research shows that when we multitask it takes 25%

longer to complete our task. ("We also retain less and have more difficulty applying what we learn." - theenergyproject.com)

- schedule breaks from your phone and other devices