

MAXIMIZING THE MOMENTS IN OUR DAY

Having a set schedule and sticking to it will help you get all of the things done that you are wanting to get done in a day's time, but how do you find MORE time in your day? You maximize moments.

- Do multiple tasks. For example, while talking on the phone, clean out your purse.
- Never walk through your home empty handed pick up as you go. If you are going upstairs take something with you that belongs there.
- Request that kids fold clothes, sort socks, brush dog, while watching TV.
- Clean bathroom mirror and shine fixtures while the children take a bath.
- Hold onto the kitchen counter and do leg lifts while waiting for water to boil.
- Have kids swish hands and feet around the tub during bubble bath to loosen bath tub ring.
- Cook 2-3-4 meals at once.
- Do a 10 minute clean up challenge when things are looking messy.

Being effective

Write it down

Having a lot of children and being pregnant often is enough to make you not remember things. My mind is going a lot of the time during the day and sometimes night. How can I remember things so that I won't forget them? I write them down.

If it is something that I need to remember in the morning, I stick a note on the bathroom mirror so that I won't forget. If I am running an errand and don't want to forget to go to the post office, I place a sticky note on the dashboard of the car. If I need to remind my children or husband of something, place a sticky note on their bathroom mirrors.

I already have my menu so I know what I am making for the day, I have a schedule so I know what I have to do for the day, and I also have my daily chore focus so I know which chores to get done for the day, but I still need lists. Sometimes there are things that I need to just remember to do. I had a homemade dry erase board that I made out of a glass picture frame, some cute scrapbook paper and some stickers. I spelled out in words different areas of my life: blog, food, office, household and then when I would remember something, I would write it down under my headings. Maybe I had an idea for the day for a blog post, I wrote it down. If I wanted to bake something, I wrote it down. I might get a library book suggestion from someone, that would get written down as well. This worked well. I would recommend making sure it is up high enough for no children to touch or accidentally erase. Paper lists are also great, but if gotten into little hands, it could easily disappear. Make sure you keep your lists up so that no one touches them 😊 I used to do them on my phone, but since technology can fail easily, I have found that a good ol' piece of paper does the trick. If you have a choice of purchasing some paper, get something brighter. This helps when you "lose" your lists. I used a yellow notepad instead of plain white paper, this allows me to see it better when looking for it.

Have the right tools

There isn't anything better than planning on doing some big tasks, coming to that day, and realizing that you don't have all the tools needed to accomplish them. If you are going to plan on having a big baking day make sure that you have all the supplies that you need. Take into account freezer storage bags to place all your baked items in. If you are going to do some clothing organization and put away the season's clothing, make sure you have storage bins to do that in. Whatever your task, look through what you need and make sure you have all that is required.

Having buffers

In life, especially when having children you realize that not everyone will move at the pace you are. Traffic is going to be slower when you are running late. The checkout clerk is going to go extra slow the day that you need her to go fast. Your child is going to have a potty accident and you are going to have to stop what you are doing and clean up the mess. Life just happens. Nothing is smooth. We can't control everything around us, even though we would like to ☺ You have to plan for buffers. If you are going for an appointment, leave in plenty of time to get to it. It is better to have to sit and wait, then to be running late. Take some of those magazine articles you have placed aside to read one day. This is a good time to catch up on those. Always plan for longer than expected shopping trips. If you are done early, than awesome more free time! Even having a set schedule each day will not always run smooth. You have to come to expect that you will need buffers in your life. Be firm but not rigid.

Set deadlines

When planning that you want to accomplish something, don't just think that you want to do it "one day." Set a time and work towards it. For myself that might mean that I want to write another book over the next few months. I have to set a realistic time frame and say that I will write a chapter a day. If I don't write a chapter a day, then I need to take from my other "free time" to write. If my home was in need of decluttering, then I would set a goal each week to work on a room a week. If I didn't finish, then I would have to work harder to complete the task. Set realistic goals. If decluttering your home is going to be a major task, don't plan on doing it in one week. If you need to say, "This month I focus on decluttering my kitchen." Then you have the entire month to get it done. That might be a more realistic goal for you in your life. It all depends on what you have going on around you.

Work in advance

Procrastination leads to stress and strife in your life. Even if you work well under pressure, consider the extra burden of leaving things until the last minute. If you know you have a big project that needs to get done, space it out so that you can work on it a little each day or week. If you take the time to schedule it into your everyday schedule, that helps in accomplishing it. If you are needing to declutter your home, schedule to work on it for a ½ hour each day. If you work at it only during that half hour each day, by the end of the week or month you will have accomplished a lot. Sometimes it is harder to get large time slots for big projects and it works to spread it out for a little bit of time over the course of a week or month. If you have a bible study that you do at church and need to get the book part done before the next meeting, then schedule to work and get reading time in each day.

If you are planning a party, schedule out the tasks for you to do something each day. This week we are having a Valentine party for our homeschool group. Yes, I could plan on doing everything the morning of

and making it stressful and crazy for myself, or I could space out and get the tasks done that I need to each day. A few weeks ago, I did an internet search for craft and food ideas. Last week, I purchased all of the items I needed for this party. Monday, we worked on writing out Valentines for everyone. Tuesday, we made a sample of the crafts that we need to make and packed all of the items needed. Wednesday, we will bake the treats we are making. Thursday is the party. I don't have to try and get everything done in the morning. We worked a little each day and can look forward to an afternoon of fun.

Take charge and create boundaries

As Moms, we are prone to do things out of guilt. We may feel guilty that our children are not allowed to do something so we make up for it by doing something that just completely throws off our day. Don't operate out of guilt. Don't let comments made by others fuel what you do for the day. You have to decide, with the help of the Lord and your husband what is important for you to do each day. Taking the time to ask the Lord what He wants you to accomplish is so much better than doing a bunch of things and still feeling empty inside.

Does your child play sports? Should they join the homeschool classes? Should they attend a study group? We can sign up our children for every activity under the sun, to make them not feel "left out" but is it worth it? Is it worth the chaos and busyness just to say that they did it all? I have found it is much better, to be home. Yes, I would love for my children to join tons of activities and stay busy all of the time, but I have learned that they are better adjusted by staying home most of the time. Yes, we do activities, and go out and belong to groups, but it doesn't over power our lives. We are called to be HOME makers, this means we stay home the majority of the time. We teach our children to enjoy being home. We teach them to enjoy simple things and that they don't have to always be doing something to be happy and content.

This goes down to the simplest of tasks like answering the phone. Just because your phone rings, doesn't mean you have to answer it. Unless of course it is a family member and could be an emergency. Let your voicemail pick up and call back when it is convenient for you. Call back on your designated time during the day to return phone calls. Stick to your half hour time slot. I set the timer when I do my phone calling and when it beeps, even if we are midway in our conversation, I kindly let the other person know that I have to go and will talk later. Work your life around you and your family, not how others want you to be.

Calendar

Have a family calendar so that everyone knows what is going on in your family. Make it visible for them to see. Write down birthdays and any activities that you have that month. Use different colored pens for different people in the family. You can also transfer information from birthday invites and then throw away the card. This cuts down on paper clutter. Write down the address and number in your planner on the day of the party for quick reference.

In my personal planner I write down things like getting haircuts, animal flea application, changing the filters on the home, etc for each month. In my December month I write notes about cookies I may have discovered along the way and would like to make, gift idea for people, DIY presents that I'd like to make. Things that I probably will forget throughout the year. All this helps in remembering what I have to do to run our home.