

	Urgent	Not Urgent
Important	<p><i>I</i></p> <p><i>DO</i></p>	<p><i>II</i></p> <p><i>SCHEDULE</i></p>
Not Important	<p><i>III</i></p> <p><i>DELEGATE</i></p>	<p><i>IV</i></p> <p><i>ELIMINATE</i> <i>OR</i> <i>RE-EVALUATE</i></p>

Dharma and the Art of Time Management

“And remember – Life is very short – Do not waste any single moment of your life”

These were the last words I heard directly from my spiritual master – Shrii Shrii Anandamurti three days before he left the body on October 21st 1990.

At distance of almost seventeen years those words still ring in my ears and push me to find better ways to utilize time.

Many times I questioned myself about what is the best utilization of time. In spirituality *Kiirtana* is considered the best utilization of time. *Kiirtana* is a spiritual practice that consists in chanting the name God and dancing softly at the same time. It is a very subtle science which is able to

elevate the mind in the loftiest realm of joy and infinite happiness.

Unfortunately we are not in the capacity to do *Kiirtana* all the time. We live in a world that needs many different utilizations of time which may or may not be conducive for spiritual pursuits. Of course it should be also considered that not everybody has a spiritual inclination and human society is a quite a complex and heterogenic body.

Time Management is defined as the ability to use one's time effectively or productively, especially at work. Several authors consider it both an Art and a Science. Here we wish to consider the relationship between the essential characteristics of human being in relationship with time management. As we are dealing on an uncharted ground it is rather premature to call it a science. It is rather safe to call it an art of living which outcome or product is happiness and wellbeing for both individuals and society.

Matrixes are common tools in Time Management. In one of the most common time is considered in the form of urgency and importance of an activity. Each author add its own twist of it. Above is the Eisenhower Matrix as an example.

When we talk about Dharma we consider four types of specific engagements or essential pursuits common to all human beings:

Expansion – It relates to all types of activities that gives the satisfaction of **growing**.

Flow – It related to all types of activities conducive for **unity and togetherness**.

Service – It relates to all types of activities meant to **give without compensation**.

Spiritual Love – It relates to all types of activities conducive to a state of **grace**.

Taking in consideration and nurturing these four aspects of human life transform Time Management in the art of living a fully productive and satisfactory life.

“**Time** is the psychic measurement of the motivity of action. For there to be time, there has to be a **place**, for without a place no action can be performed. Over and above time and place, a **person** is also necessary, for that person will take the measure of the motivity of action. And thus where there is time, there have to be place and person as well.”

Time is a relative factor and in time management we have also to consider the other two variables, place and person. It means that an activity cannot be considered as standalone. It should be included in an **agenda**. Each activity becomes a composition of four factors: time, place, person and **purpose**.

The importance and the urgency of an activity are relative to the agenda. The importance qualifies the purpose and the urgency qualifies the other three factors, time place and person.

At this point we can safely conclude that Dharma is the guiding principle that determines whether our agenda is going to lead us to success or not.

Time Management changes radically when we work in a team instead of working alone. The whole agenda needs to be flexible enough in other to accommodate any kind of change or inconvenience. In family life as well as in community time management is the art being available and makes attention in any circumstances. We are bound to do mistakes and we need time to make adjustments and sacrifices.

In collective life sentiments play a big role and they can upset the most carefully prepared agenda. The idea that we can separate family life from work assigning a respective time frame may prove a recipe for catastrophe in the delicate balance of human relationships. Sometime time management and

planning reduces safely to one simple condition: complete surrender.

Once I was in company with a dear friend a spiritual practitioner of meditation. He had already two children and the wife was waiting for more. The finances of the family were quite tight and it happened that in this most critical time he lost the job as a nurse of a retirement home. He remained without job for some time and finally he got job in a hospital. The time was up for the new babies! The wife had to be brought to the hospital for a premature delivery. There were twins of seven months and they required intensive care. Only after that everything got normalized he found out that the new job had all the medical expenses for the wife covered while the previous job had no benefits in regard.

Family and collective are part of Dharma. They allow expressing fully the four characteristics of human life. Nurturing relationships is both important and urgent. In this context time management is not a dry science. It is the very subtle art of making the best of everything at any given time. Everything is important as everybody is important and great. Including our time.