Is Multitasking Good or Bad?

We have so many hours in the day, and we tend to think we can get everything done that we planned to do, right? Not always, so we multitask some things in order to catch up. But can it be a costly mistake to multitask most of the time? So let's discuss, whether it's good or bad, to do more than one thing at a time.

Multitasking is a symptom of prioritizing things in the wrong order--going back and forth between tasks trying to complete a little bit at a time, instead of fully concentrating and completing one task at a time in the order of importance--for instance, meeting a deadline and you decide to do filing and talking on the phone. You lose your focus and could miss something very important if you're multitasking because you're not focusing to make sure the right things get done.

Then--think how long it's going to correct your mistake if you miss something important like taking down notes when someone is giving you verbal instructions to do something, and you decide to answer the phone at the same time? It might cost you time and money if you write down the wrong thing? It takes more processing for the brain to go back and forth to refigure out what you were trying to accomplish in the first place when handling multiple items, and that may cause longer lists of "uncompleted" tasks and projects stacking higher and higher. Think of the stress level that is being created.

The key to having more time, yet being more productive so we don't have to multitask all the time, is doing "less"--yes doing less . . . You ask why? Basically, because you only have so many hours in the day, and you can't say "yes" to everything you're confronted with. You need to ask Townsend's question several times to yourself everyday. ***"Is what I'm doing or about to do, moving me toward my objectives?"*** If it's not and you're not going to be reducing your stress and increasing your income level, then it's time to re-evaluate your commitments. Let's briefly discuss the reasons why:

1. Define a short ***"To Do"*** list everyday (remember, a "Master List" is a long list of "to do's" or "want to dos", and

2. Define a short ***"Not to Do"*** list

Here's why. If you make a "Not to Do" list, it will get all the mental/emotional clutter out of your head so you can focus on the task and/or project at hand with a clear head equals more clarity + more productivity = making more money in less time with less stress. Now isn't that what you want?

Sometimes we take on things thinking we have enough time to do in a day, but we don't always take into account interruptions. ***What are interruptions?*** They are ***unexpected events that can change our day sometimes into chaos and confusion***. So what do we do? In order to catch up from our interruptions and perhaps extra things we took on that day because we couldn't say "no," we try multitasking things we normally don't multitask--like trying to write a note about a project you're working on while you're talking on the phone with someone on a completely different subject. Does this sound familiar?

And when we finish the day, sometimes we remembered we forgot to do something, didn't write something down so you could remember it later because you "thought" you'd remember it later. That has happened to me a couple of times, and has caused me a lot more work to try to correct the situation. So now I handle things one at a time. It takes too much time to rethink everything to see if I left anything out when completing my task and/or project.

If you're multitasking all the time, you get all this mental/emotional clutter in your head and is "distracting" to the task in front of you. Therefore, you up your stress level, you lose your clarity and your productivity level, and the bottom line is, you put in longer hours and make less money. Not only that, sometimes your stacks and "to do" lists get longer and longer because you have to redo something because you made a mistake.

So think of simple things like putting in a load of laundry, closing a file drawer, or putting a book on a shelf requires very little "thinking power."

"If you can't find it in 30 seconds, it's in the wrong place"