How many of you have ever been up in an airplane? A good many! And how many of you have ever looked at a picture taken from an airplane? All of us! We have not yet all been in the air but we all know how the ground looks from above for we have seen the pictures. And if you have looked at pictures of familiar places, you have had still another thrill—on our level, home and farm looks so and so and we are used to the picture. From the air it all falls into a beautiful pattern—house, orchard, buildings, roads, woods, fields and creek—it is easy enough to see it all at a glance and to realize that it forms a lovely picture.

Suppose, while we are still in the air and looking at sights, we look at our days. Forget the small jobs, the interruptions and chores, just as from the airplane you can forget the small objects on the ground—can you see a pattern in your days? Does a thread of achievement run through the picture? Pretend you look back over the last five years—pretend you look ahead. Do you catch the plan of your living? If not, why? That brings us directly to our topic.

Are you getting what you want out of your twenty-four hours? Do your days follow a pattern, blurred, no doubt, as you look at them closely and see your failures and bothers, but plain enough as you look back over a period of time? Do you know what you want out of your twenty-four hours? Is your goal clearly in your mind as you plan your days or do you just drift along, doing what seems most important at the moment and having no special plan in your mind? Searching questions, these, and in the answers we will find ample reasons for happiness or unhappiness, for the thrill of success or the pang of failure.

Generally speaking, if you know what you want, you can get it. This does not at all mean that if I know I want a million dollars it will fall through the ceiling at my feet—not at all. But it does mean that if I know the kind of person I want to be, I can be that person—not in a day, not in a month, but some time. It means that if I want to accomplish certain things—be a good homemaker, or mother writer, or a person of culture, I can attain that goal—perhaps all of it, provided—and right here is the catch—provided that I keep my goal, my aim, clearly in mind all the time and work toward it, shape all my days toward it. The reason so few of us do not get what we want is twofold; first, we do not know what we want—actually know it; we have no defined purpose in living. And, second, we do not shape our days to accomplish our ends. I think more of us fail for the first reason than the second; if we know what we want in a clearly defined way, we will work until we attain it.

What do you want to get out of your hours? That is too personal a question for a lecturer to decide; study it out for yourself. But remember, you can not be conflicting persons; you can not be a great traveller and stay at home; you cannot be a wonderfully successful homebody and have all of your interest outside the home.
You cannot be two people. Some time while you are waiting for the family at mealtime, or better, some time after the family has gone to bed, take a pencil and paper and write down what you would like to be. Then mark off conflicts and decide what of all your favorite aims you like best and then set out to attain it.

Your twenty-four hours are for accomplishing what you want. Do not say that you haven't the time-you have all there is! No one has more than twenty-four hours—no one has less. Time is the world's greatest democracy—we are all treated exactly alike. Yet how different are our results! Doesn't a part of this difference come from our lack of understanding of time? We do not even speak correctly about it! We say, "I must find time!" You cannot find time! Time is! We say, "We must save time." You cannot save time. There is just one thing you can do with time— you can use it. Time is given you every day—a brand new twenty-four hours. It is yours to use. You cannot save an hour from today and use it tomorrow; you cannot borrow from tomorrow to use today. We can only use today's time today and tomorrow's time tomorrow. And therein lies our difficulty.

Many a person could make a plan for study or work or recreation and then, given a year, could accomplish it. But to take an hour out of each day, two hours, twenty minutes each day—that is different! To stick to a plan for minutes once it is made is like saving pennies; each seems so little, hardly worth saving, yet counted up, all together, they can reach dollars and dollars. I think one reason why homemakers are often fretted and worried is that they feel time slipping away, day by day, and do not have the thrill of accomplishment. They feel that they are ever working with nothing done—a false feeling, of course, and one that could be overcome if a plan for living was kept in mind and followed.

I have said that I cannot tell you what you want from your twenty-four hours. But in general we can all be sure of certain things we want to get out of our days. We want healthy bodies. Great deeds have been accomplished in the world by invalids, but even those gifted souls could have done more in health and for most of us, health is needed for the day's task. That means time used to eat, time to rest, time to play. It is my observation that more homemakers neglect themselves than their families. And let us not be proud of this and think it is unselfish. Sometimes it is merely the line of least resistance. It is much easier to plan a meal for the family, serve it and then hastily swallow something ourselves. It takes real brains to plan so that mother will have time to sit down with the others and take her ease while eating—yet it can be done, if you will; it must be done if you are to be healthy as you can be. It is easy to put the children to bed on time and then stay up to do work in the quiet; a little of that is fun. Too much ruins eyes, muscles, nerves; watch out and do not do too much. Better less work and a jollier homemaker. It is easy enough to plan recreation for the family and forget ourselves, but are we not members of the family, too? And what is good for one is good for all. Let us put play for ourselves into our twenty-four hours, and keep healthy, happy and comfortable.

We want time for healthy mental life. That means books, radio, conversation. It does not take long to read a few lines that will lift you out of a humdrum trend of thought. But the book does not just happen to be there along with the ten minutes for reading it—you have to plan. It does not take any time, so to speak, to turn on the radio, but you have to know which program you would rather have at the moment and that means planning. By the way, have you ever tried the idea of having each person in the family be radio secretary for a week and be responsible for planning the family program? It is loads of fun, try it! The secretary looks up the
programs, selects the best ones, and tells various members of the family of special features they might enjoy. Next week the job is passed on to another person and so on around the family.

We want time for things of the spirit, friends, service for others (a happy and stimulating outside duty that should go into every person's time plan if it possibly can), time for worship, time for thought, time to develop our own personality—it almost seems as though this is the most important and the most neglected goal of all.

After these three we can put into our plan whatever we most want to do. I have not a doubt but that nearly every woman would put as her first goal the desire to be a good homemaker and to serve her family—you simply would not be here today if you did not have a high aim in your homemaking. But remember that families do not live by bread alone and the most of your hours, no doubt, may be spent for such needs; you can, if you will, so organize your day that you will have time, plenty of time, for other needs, too.

Along about now you will be saying to yourself, "That is well enough to say in a speech, but I would like to see it worked out in a big family"—take my own— I will tell you how I made a start with a small use of time and planning.

I began with weeks, they are much easier to manage than months and years. On Sunday evening I sat down and with pencil and paper I listed all the things I wanted to do that week. I didn't bother to write twenty-one meals, potatoes, puddings, and dishes; I knew I would get those done. I did not write clean or mend or make beds. I just took all those for granted and began later. But I did write, "Remake my blue silk, write to Aunt Jane, visit Sally Bowen, ask Ellen to bring her mending over for tea," and such as that. On the list I put everything besides routine tasks, that I thought I had to do or I wanted to do that week. Then I sat back and looked at it. Of course it was much too long; no human could possibly have done it all in a week even if she had no meals and cleaning. So instead of being discouraged, I began to cut. Why bother with the blue silk this week? It had done this long; and really it was becoming as it was. Instead of remaking, I would clean and press it and put on a new pique collar. I must write Aunt Jane—no putting that off. How about Ellen—no, I would not put that off; it would be fun and I had not seen Ellen for ages. Through that whole list I went and by the time I had culled it out there was a busy but a well-balanced and happy week ahead. And so with every week, by listing duties and pleasures ahead I have learned to drop from my mind and my days much that I might otherwise have been tempted to do but which, on examination proved not to fit with my plan of living.

Do not think that this is easy, it isn't and sometimes I am so puzzled that I don't know how to decide which to leave undone. But by planning ahead, by writing it down where I can look at it, deciding is simplified. At first I planned every minute. But I have found that it is not wise; something unexpected always turned up—that is the fun of homemaking. Now I plan for five working days, not six, and carry that sixth as a comfortable spare. Try the idea yourself when you go home and after you have it working smoothly by the week, plan ahead in a more general way for a season, listing spring, summer, fall and winter work and pleasures. You will have a delightful thrill of accomplishment as you mark off duties done; you will know the time you spend in recreation and fun is enjoyed without the sense of pushing that ill-planned pleasure often carries with it.
With thought your days take on a pattern—doubtless the pattern was there all the time but you were not conscious of it in the same way you now are. And you will enjoy the inspiration that comes with knowing that you are the master of your hours.

You can get what you want out of your twenty-four hours if you know what you want and have the will to carry through.

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DESIDERATA

"Go placidly amid the noise and the haste,
And remember what peace there may be in silence.
As far as possible, without surrender, be on good Terms with all persons. Speak your truth quietly
And clearly; and listen to others, even to the Dull and the ignorant; they, too, have their story.
Avoid loud and aggressive persons; they are Vexations to the spirit.
If you compare yourselves with others, you may Become vain and bitter, for always there will Be greater and lesser persons than yourself.
Enjoy your achievements as well as your plans.
Keep interested in your own career, however humble;
It is a real possession in the changing fortunes of time.
Exercise caution in your business affairs, for the world Is full of trickery.
But let this not blind you to what virtue there is;
Many persons strive for high ideals, and everywhere Life is full of heroism.
Be yourself.
Neither be cynical about love; for in the face of All aridity and disenchantment, it is as perennial As grass. Take kindly the counsel of the years,
Gracefully surrendering the things of youth.
Nurture strength of spirit to shield you In sudden misfortune; but do not distress Yourself with dark imaginings. Many fears are born Of fatigue and loneliness. Beyond a wholesome Discipline, be gentle with yourself.
You are a child of the universe no less than the Trees and the stars; you have a right to be here.
And whether or not it is clear to you, no doubt the Universe is unfolding as it should.
Therefore, be at peace with God,
Whatever you conceive him to be.
And whatever your labors and aspirations in the noisy Confusion of life, keep peace in your soul.
With all the sham, drudgery, and broken dreams,
It is still a beautiful world.
Be cheerful. Strive to be happy."

- Max Ehrmann (N.Y. Times Book Review, Jan. 8, 193

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