

## **No Time For Foolin' Around**

By Beverly Denver

For months, I've been hoping for more free time to simply fool around. You know what I mean: goof off, lark about, focus on myself, do more of the fun and frivolous things I really want to do on these longer, prettier days!

How I long to play hooky from responsibility - to walk on the beach, go hit golf balls, get a facial, shop for shoes! But, alas, I never seem to have enough free time to do it!

Just as I was about to sink into a serious funk about being overly committed, I remember what I learned from Loral Langemeier, one of the smartest (and most successful) women in the country.

She says, "If you never seem to have enough time for the things you want and need to do, you just aren't delegating enough!"

She is right, of course!

Delegating is difficult for many of us women. We take on too much and justify it by thinking: It's easier to do it myself; nobody is going to do it exactly the way I want it done; this is too important to trust to somebody else.

Then, we make lists. Lists of things to do - at work and at home, for our clients, co-workers, family and friends! The lists are endless; we resort to making a list of our lists!

And then, we get busy. Always, we are eager to DO, and in so doing earn the right to put bright red check marks next to all of the items on our lists. We take on lots and lots of tasks, regardless of their importance and without regard to whether or not doing them is truly the best use of our time.

With permission, I offer a perfect example.

Anne (not her real name) is a good friend of mine. She always complains about not having enough time for herself.

Anne is a six-figure senior executive, employed for many years by one of the city's big oil companies. You would think such a smart and savvy woman would have mastered the art of time management a long time ago.

Not so!

The other day I called her mobile number - after hours - and found Anne still at her office. As this was not unusual, I didn't think too much about it - until I asked her what she was working on.

She said, "I'm sharpening pencils for a staff meeting tomorrow, making sure there's enough notepads. "

Needless to say, I was stunned!

Anne has a top-notch executive assistant, Sally, who also has an assistant. Both of them left the office that day, as they do every day, at 5 o'clock. Sally, I learned, went to watch her son play baseball; the other woman was off to meet friends for dinner. No doubt, both planned to get everything ready for the 10 a.m. meeting first thing the next day. Neither thought it necessary to "work late."

Why should they? They work for a company and a boss (Anne) who strongly believe in maintaining a healthy work/life balance.

So, why doesn't Anne insist on the same kind of equilibrium in her own life? That's the question she's asking herself now. It's the same question most of us women ask ourselves far too often.

Maybe, just maybe, if we women make a list of the things we can delegate, and then just do it; we'll have enough time, at last, to do the things we so desperately want to do.

*Houston Woman Magazine*  
*April 2008*