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Accomplish Your Work by Scheduling Your Time

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Accomplish Your Work by Scheduling Your Time

By GERTUDE LYNN, Home Management Specialist

Confusion is characteristic of failure. Organization and system are marks of progress and growth. In the well ordered home one seldom hears the accusations made by the home maker that her work is drudgery or that it leads to mental stagnation. Such complaints usually come from the woman who gives little thought to her work and just drifts along. There is no greater or more important field for constructive thought and work than is offered by the home, and there is perhaps no vocation in which the workers are more inclined to drift.

There are some good reasons for this tendency. Conditions in the home are unlike those in every other occupation in that the work of the home maker is not supervised, nor checked up upon periodically. The home maker has no competition. She is never promoted, and altho she may be a flat failure, she never loses her job. Self improvement is much easier if one is being prodded along from the outside. This inspiration is lacking in housekeeping.

Again, in any business concern, which is run on efficiency principles, provision is always made for definite material rewards in the form of promotion or increased salary, which come at stated regular intervals. This incentive is no small factor, as a stimulant to increased effort. You may say: "Yes, but the rewards of the successful home maker are so much greater than can possibly be measured in terms of honor or glory or money." True, but the home maker after all is only a human being, and it has been proved that human beings do respond to immediate tangible rewards. Many times the homemakers' rewards are so intangible and long deferred, that their value as incentives are almost lost sight of. Her contributions to the family comfort and happiness are taken for granted and often times she does not even receive the ordinary courtesies of expressed appreciation. Last week a woman said to me:

"I always know every one is enjoying the dinner if nothing is said. If it isn't all right I hear about it."

We can see some reasons why it is peculiarly easy to drift and to postpone in the business of housekeeping. This lack of immediate incentive makes it doubly important that the homemaker should define to herself and keep very clearly in mind her ultimate goal, her ambitions for her home and family.

If there is to be home improvement; if the standard of living is to be higher ten years from now than it is now, the home maker must recognize the fact and face it, that she must take the initiative in making the needed improvements.

The goal of the true home maker, I think we will agree, is the establishment of a home where a strong family bond exists, the kind of home which is loved by all of its members. They do not want to leave it, and when away from it are always eager to get back to it.

The big problem universally in home making seems to be the subordination of the problems of food, clothing and cleaning to the even more important ones of provision for the things which make the soul grow, and make for happiness. A first requisite in meeting this problem is a proper sense of values and of the relationships which exist between these two sets of demands on the homemaker's twenty-four hours a day.

The most effective ways of reducing the problems of food, clothing and cleaning to a minimum are by means of simple living, labor saving equipment, step saving arrangement, and a well planned schedule.

In our studies of the problems of time saving with the farm women of Iowa, we have in a small way used the same plan in checking upon household efficiency, which has been used effectively in some business establishments. We have studied the home from the standpoint of equipment, its arrangement methods of work, the schedule, cost of the out put, and the product.

Our first check up was on equipment and kitchen arrangement. Each woman has gone over her own kitchen and equipment and has filled out a detailed information sheet. She has gotten down in black and white conditions as they are. We find that such records are very enlightening and inspirational. She then goes over this information sheet and compares her kitchen with a high standard, well equipped, step saving kitchen. A list is made of desirable changes. From this list she selects possible changes, which may be made without expense. She also decides upon one or two labor savers, which she thinks she will add when the opportunity offers. Some women have proceeded to find out the possibilities and to get all the information they could concerning ways, means and cost of making labor saving changes, or securing equipment, altho at the time their installation seemed quite out of the question. By this means they have been able to at least begin to bring the matter of the needed change to the attention of the family. Sometimes a long preliminary educational campaign must be carried on before the man of the house is convinced that changes are really needed. Her interest increases as her information increases. She talks

about it, and sooner or later the improvement is installed.

A couple of months ago, one of our women began investigating sinks. She had carried the waste water out for twenty-two years, but just as soon as she found that she could get a sink for six dollars and a half, it didn't take her long to order one. When asked if her reason for not having a sink for twenty-two years was because of the six dollars and a half, she said:

"Why of course not, but always when I thought of a sink I thought it meant the installation of an expensive water system, which we couldn't afford, so I never even instigated it; but when I found out how easily I could have it, even if I couldn't have running water, I realized how stupid I had been and I never would have dreamed it would be such a help."

Four of her neighbors profited by her example, and are planning to go and do likewise.

I recall one kitchen which was checked up with the result that the number of steps in doing the kitchen work were reduced one half, with a saving of an hour and a half a day, or about six weeks of ten hour days in a year. A pedometer was worn for a week before and after the changes were made.

In checking up on arrangement we have followed these rules:

1. Group together articles which are used together.
2. Keep articles used oftenest in the most convenient places.

Numerous time saving practices have been adopted by many women over the state. One woman in Black Hawk county scrubs her kitchen only half as often as she did the bare floor before she put down linoleum.

Sixty-five women in one county have pasted oil cloth on the pantry shelves, because it requires just one-fourth as much time to clean them as it does

Many women report that a power washer cuts down the time required to do the washing from six hours to two hours, and a pressure cooker reduces the time of watching food two-thirds, besides cutting the gas bill half in two.

After the mechanical matter of equipment and arrangement has been checked up comes the more difficult matter of checking up on the plan of work.

The systematic woman, who works on a schedule, believes in it thoroly. She

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says it is the only way to get all of the work done and still have some leisure time left. The woman who has never tried it says it can't be done, that there are too many interruptions, you can't predict. I am inclined to agree with the former, when I compare the achievements of the two types of women, which have come under my observation.

If you are not quite sure whether you need a schedule or not ask yourself these questions:

1. Does confusion reign in your home; is the house disorderly; are the children uncontrolled and disorderly; every time the family goes out to do you have to stop to darn a stocking or sew on a button?
2. Are important tasks habitually left undone, such things as mending, cleaning closets or perhaps reading, or specially planned family recreation?
3. Do you use your time to good advantage, or do you belong to the great army of "putterers"?
4. Are you constantly hunting for things? Not long ago while in a home for thirty minutes the following articles were hunted for: the father's hat, paring knife, door key, ice pick, scissors, tape line, yesterday's paper, and key to the car. A monstrous waste of time to say nothing of the irritation.
5. Is the general trend of family development what you want it to be?

If any or all of the above conditions prevail, you may be fairly certain that you are more or less of a failure at your job, and the schedule is the surest and shortest means of rescue from the inevitable unhappiness which follows failure.

In planning a schedule, first take an inventory and find out exactly what is becoming of your time now. As a help in checking up on this we have been using a labor record.

The women have kept this for a week or two, or better still for a month, and then have studied this record to find:

1. If the schedule is regular and effective.
2. If one department is doing the work of another, or if the division of work in the family could be improved upon.
3. If too much time is spent on certain tasks. We have found the length of time spent on cooking for a family of five ranges from 1½ to 6 hours a day.
4. What unnecessary jobs are done?
5. What important things were left undone thru the entire month?
6. Was there needless repetition? One woman found that she phoned four times and sent her little boy to the grocery store three times a day.
7. Is meal time regular, or do members of the family come drifting in at all hours, especially at breakfast?
8. Are rest periods included in the working day?

9. Is too much time spent on recreations and outside interests, with the result that essentials at home are neglected?
10. Is the family recreation satisfactory?
11. How much time is given to the children? One woman said: "I really like my children and I am panic stricken that the years slip by, and I am missing their companionship with concern for their frail trousers and keeping their stomachs filled. I must have more time to be with them."
12. Then comes the use of leisure. Is it well planned? Is it inspirational? Is it used in a worthwhile way?

Examine your labor record carefully to find out if every day time is provided in your schedule for things which supply inspiration. This may come from different sources, contact with inspiring books or people. It may come thru your philosophy of life and the helps you use in trying to live up to it, or thru contact with nature. Many people have found that the most effective use that they can make of an hour, and the hour of the day which may be most fruitful, is a quiet hour in the morning. The day's work goes much more smoothly, one's attitude of mind is much better toward everything and everybody. One may read something, the Bible or some other good book, altho there is no really good substitute for the Bible for real inspiration.

Having taken an inventory of things as they are, and gotten it down in black and white, the next thing is to measure conditions as they are against conditions as we want them to be, and to make, as far as possible, necessary readjustments in the plan of work.

This must be done by the homemaker herself. She cannot be fitted into some ready made time budget planned by some expert a thousand miles away, and based on averages of how other women have used their time. The time budget, like the money budget, must be made to fit the needs of the individual family. No two families are alike. So the homemaker, having taken an inventory, studied and analyzed it, needs to begin with a few of the things that need most to be changed.

The outstanding deficiencies will help to determine where she shall begin. At least regular order of work for all fixed duties should be put into operation as rapidly as possible, including tasks that lie in region of choice. One woman, before planning her schedule, spent two weeks in finding places for everything, time well spent, and a good place to begin in many homes. She said if she hadn't she never could have carried out her schedule, as she was interrupted so often to hunt things for various members of the family.

With some over-worked women the addition of a regular afternoon nap has been the first step. The assignment of fixed, regular tasks to each member of the family is the particular need in some families. The homemaker cannot hope to put her entire program into operation at once, but with her high goal ever before her and a well worked out written down plan as a guide she has made a good beginning. The unsystematic housekeeper must not be discouraged because she cannot establish system in her home overnight. Growth is slow and it is the task of years to

change habits. She must keep thinking, changing, improving. It may be months or years before she is able to live up to her program, but the time schedule like the income budget brings rich returns if it is lived up to to no greater extent than 50 percent.

It helps you to think, to take a square look at the general trend of family life. It helps you to weigh values and to make wise choices. It adds immeasurably to your interest in your work, helps to keep you alert, increases your self respect of your family for you. And last and greatest, a plan lived up to takes the worry out of housekeeping, brings peace of mind, and a satisfying sense that your job has been well done.

Norwegian Cookery

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flour, salt and water. It is rolled out and baked on a greaseless griddle. Flat bread is thirty inches in diameter and one-sixteenth of an inch thick.

Another Scandinavian food somewhat similar to flade brod is levse. It is baked in the same way as the flat bread. In the making of this food, boiling water is poured over graham flour and allowed to stand until cool, when white flour is kneaded in. This delicate bread is eaten on Christmas Eve with lutfish (soaked codfish). When baked it is crisp but generally before serving it is steamed.

Potete kager (potato cakes) are also baked on large greaseless griddles. Potatoes are smashed and flour is kneaded in until the dough is of a consistency easily rolled. Potete kager are thicker than levse, smaller in diameter (about twelve inches), and more hearty. They are excellent served with sausage on a cold winter day.

As to Norwegian pastry, there are krengla. These are made by mixing one cup sugar with three tablespoons butter or butter substitute to which is added one beaten egg and two cups sour milk, neutralized with one teaspoon soda. Flour is mixed in until of a consistency stiff enough for rolling. Small pieces of dough are cut off and rolled by the palms of the hand, (on a board almost devoid of flour, into rope-like shapes. Then these ropes of dough are made into forms similar to pretzels but about five times as large. If too much flour is used on the board the dough slips and will not roll into the desired shape. They are then put on baking sheets and baked in a moderate oven for fifteen minutes. When taken from the oven they are crisp and very appetizing.

Berliner krandsjer (Berlin wreathes) are another Norwegian paste. The name would suggest they originated in Berlin, however, they are often made by Norwegian cooks. Three hard boiled egg yolks are mixed with four raw yolks. One pound of washed butter and one-half pound of sugar are added, and one and a half pounds of flour are stirred in. The dough should be allowed to stiffen overnight. Pieces of dough are then rolled into eight-inch ropes one-half inch in diameter or less. The ends are crossed making a wreath-like form. One side is dipped into egg whites then in coarse sugar (crushed loaf sugar is preferable) and baked in a moderate oven. The wreathes should be removed with a spatula while the pan is still hot or they will stick and break. These