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Here's how to figure out how much time you really have available during an average week in less than ten minutes.

Step 1a: Print the worksheet [last page]. Or, if you'd rather do this exercise digitally, any spreadsheet or table will work just fine just make sure it has 168 blocks to represent the hours available to you in a week.

Step 1b: Grab a writing implement. Or if you want to get all fancy and color-code this thing, grab a set of markers (you'll need 9 colors), but remember, there's no right way, good enough is good enough!

Step 2: Fill in the squares. *X them out. Label them. Color them in. Start at the top or bottom. Whatever.* The worksheet is a simple 7x24 grid representing the 168 hours available to you in a week. You'll note that columns and rows are not labelled *because this is NOT a schedule*. This exercise is *only* about measuring your current capacity.

2a: Block out the time you need for SLEEP. Not the minimum you can survive on, but what you need to be a generally happy, healthy, functioning human being.

2b: Block out the time you need for NUTRITION. Preparing and eating meals and purchasing groceries (or picking up take out - no judgment here).

2c: Block out the time you need for HYGIENE. Bathing, brushing your teeth, getting dressed, and so on.

2d: Block out the time you need for MOVEMENT. Exercise, stretching, getting outdoors.

2e: Block out the time you need for CONNECTION. Caring for children, pets or other dependents and interaction with those you love.

2f: Block out the time you need for HOUSEKEEPING. Dishwashing, laundry, vacuuming, watering houseplants, etc. (Not decor-magazine perfect, just to *your* standard of clean.)

2g: Block out the time you need for routine ADMIN. Email, bookkeeping, and the like - the basic stuff that keeps your life running smoothly.

2h: Block out the time you need for FIXED commitments. Work, standing appointments and the all other stuff that's already on your calendar - personal or professional.

2i: Block out the time you need for LEISURE. You can't do without regular opportunities for play and rest.

Again, this is NOT a schedule. You don't need to worry about when this stuff happens, how it all fits together, or what exactly needs doing within a block. Just block out the squares as best you can - *and this is important* - without dropping into magical thinking (you know, the belief that

if you just work a little longer or harder or faster you can squeeze it all in and get "everything" done).

If at any point in filling in the squares you start to feel anxious about how few remain, don't let that anxiety talk you into fudging about how much time things really take to do. Yes, there are probably some things you could do more efficiently and effectively, but until you develop the skills and systems to make that happen, you need to work honestly with your current reality.

If your grid is filled before you reach *leisure*, stop here. You are already working beyond your capacity and in a state of overwhelm. Address that before adding anything new.

If you end with empty squares, huzzah! That's the time you have available for creative projects and learning new things. It also represents your buffer. Please proceed. That said, even if you do end up with empty squares, this has probably been a revealing exercise about what it takes to support a happy, healthy life. It's easy to assume our professional/creative work (however we define it) is the main event. But this exercise often illustrates that it isn't. A good life is largely maintenance. So you might as well become as efficient and effective about how you go about that as you can, and figure out how to enjoy it.
