

**“The future depends on what we
do in the present.”**

—Mohandas K. Gandhi
(20th-century Indian leader)

Respecting Your Time


TIME SCHEDULE

Explore how you use your time, and what it says about you and your recovery. Remember that time is more than a clock—it is a profound element of human existence. We all have limited time, and we will never have these moments to live again. Use your time well!

★ *There are two ways to use the schedule below.*

1. **Focus on the present.** Fill out the schedule as best as you can for today and the past 6 days. Then answer the questions in Handout 2 to explore what it says about you.

2. **Focus on the future.** Fill out the schedule to reflect how you would like to use your time. Prioritize your recovery, productive work, time in safe relationships, and other healthy activities.

							
Time Schedule							
	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.	Sun.
7 A.M.							
8 A.M.							
9 A.M.							
10 A.M.							
11 A.M.							
Noon							
1 P.M.							
2 P.M.							
3 P.M.							
4 P.M.							

(cont.)

From *Seeking Safety* by Lisa M. Najavits (2002). Copyright by The Guilford Press. Permission to photocopy this form is granted to purchasers of this book for personal use only (see copyright page for details).

5 P.M.							
6 P.M.							
7 P.M.							
8 P.M.							
9 P.M.							
10 P.M.							
11 P.M.							
Midnight							

Are You Respecting Your Time?

★ *When looking at your current schedule, do you feel that you:*

1.	Are using your time well?	Yes	Sometimes	No
2.	Have prioritized your recovery above all else (e.g., time in treatment and safe activities)?	Yes	Sometimes	No
3.	Take care of your needs, not just other people's needs?	Yes	Sometimes	No
4.	Use daily "to-do" lists to make the most of your time?	Yes	Sometimes	No
5.	Have enough time for yourself?	Yes	Sometimes	No
6.	Have a good amount of structured time (e.g., work, school), neither too much nor too little?	Yes	Sometimes	No
7.	Use time to take good care of your body (eating, sleeping, exercising)?	Yes	Sometimes	No
8.	Spend little or no time in substance-abuse activities (buying, selling, using, recovering from substance use)?	Yes	Sometimes	No
9.	Balance time alone versus time with others?	Yes	Sometimes	No
10.	Have enough time that is entirely your own to enjoy (at least 1 hour/day is recommended)?	Yes	Sometimes	No
11.	Protect your time from being wasted by other people?	Yes	Sometimes	No
12.	Have a stable daily routine?	Yes	Sometimes	No

★ *When you look at your use of time, what are your reactions?* _____

★ *What does your schedule tell you about your priorities in life (e.g., what matters to you, how you take care of yourself)?* _____

★ *How would you would like to change your use of time (e.g., priorities, time alone versus time with others, balance of work and play, time wasted or used well)?* _____

(cont.)

From *Seeking Safety* by Lisa M. Najavits (2002). Copyright by The Guilford Press. Permission to photocopy this form is granted to purchasers of this book for personal use only (see copyright page for details).

★ *When you were growing up, what messages (positive and negative) did you get about spending time?*

(+) *Positive messages:* _____

(-) *Negative messages:* _____

★ *Is how you spend time similar to how you spend money? For many people, these are similar and give clues about deep assumptions. For example, do you balance your use of both time and money? Do you waste time and money too freely? Are you too "tight" with time and money, so you can't enjoy life?* _____

Ideas for a Commitment

Commit to one action that will move your life forward!

It can be anything you feel will help you, or you can try one of the ideas below.

Keeping your commitment is a way of respecting, honoring, and caring for yourself.

- ➔ Option 1: Interview two people in your life this week—one person who uses time well, and one who doesn't. Ask them questions such as "What is your schedule?", "How do you feel about how you use time?", "How do you try to get yourself to use time well?" (If you can't think of someone who uses time well, consider your boss, your AA sponsor, or your therapist.)
- ➔ Option 2: Create a schedule for the week ahead (using the blank schedule from today's session). Focus on how to use time to make recovery your top priority.
- ➔ Option 3: Get a book on time management. Look through it until you find one new way to use your time better. One outstanding book is *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* by Stephen J. Covey (1989). It explores using your time to implement the values you care about.
- ➔ Option 4: Fill out the Safe Coping Sheet. (See below for an example applied to this topic.)

EXAMPLE OF THE SAFE COPING SHEET APPLIED TO THIS TOPIC

	Old Way	New Way
Situation	I saw my brother at a family dinner last week. He seemed so "together": has a great job, lots of money, two kids, and seems happy.	I saw my brother at a family dinner last week. He seemed so "together": has a great job, lots of money, two kids, and seems happy.
★ Your Coping ★	My life is a wreck. I haven't worked for years, don't have a family, and I spend my time in treatment. What the hell is wrong with me? When I got home, I did some coke to raise my mood. I just needed to feel good for a little while.	There are some things I could do to cope better. I could talk to my brother and ask how he makes such good use of his time. Also, I can work in therapy on putting together a schedule that moves me forward in life.
Consequence	Nothing ever changes: I'm stuck in this pattern—I feel bad, I use coke; I feel bad, I use coke. Treatment isn't helping and I can't help myself.	Even though it still feels pretty hopeless, at least it has a chance of getting me out of this rut. Even though my feelings are still negative, trying to cope better may do something.

How safe is your old way of coping? ____ How safe is your new way of coping? ____

Rate from 0 (not at all safe) to 10 (totally safe)

From *Seeking Safety* by Lisa M. Najavits (2002). Copyright by The Guilford Press. Permission to photocopy this form is granted to purchasers of this book for personal use only (see copyright page for details).