

Getting Help for Your Thinking Problem

In our hectic world of go, Go, GO!... It seems difficult to simply find time to sit down and think. In my own life, I feel the pressure of being a pastor, being a good husband to Angie, being a good father (sherpa/guide/mentor/friend) to my sons Andrew and Chris, serving on ministry boards, travel schedule, and writing projects.

Oftentimes, I do not have time to sit and think simply because I overcommit. So, when you are busy... and we're all busy... we need principles we hold to in order to simply think, dream, and strategize.

Here are seven strategies that I use to implement more brain time into my life.

- 1. Make it part of your job.** "Thinking is necessary for your job" seems like a silly statement but it's a necessary one. Otherwise, we simply complete tasks non-stop and never come up with a new idea. If you are going to lead, you will need time to think it all through.
- 2. First things first.** Don't allow the menial tasks of the day to take precedence over the opportunity to see ahead, hear what's really going on, and think through priorities. Sharpen your mind and refine your strategies so that your work will be fruitful.
- 3. Reframe circumstances by asking "Why?" five times.** Work is never done in a vacuum. When we experience success or failure, we need to know what contribute to either. Asking "Why?" at least five times will take you the context, circumstances, and contributing factors as to how you got to the end result.
- 4. Create a "thinking hour."** The concept comes from [this article](#) by Scott Young. He encourages one hour per week. It is doable if you will do it. So put it and keep it on your schedule.
- 5. Hibernate.** Multitasking is one of the great enemies of focused thinking. If you need to put in some brain time, close down email, power off your cell phone, and shut out the world for a time.
- 6. Get moving.** Physical activity often provokes new thinking. Simply take a walk around the building or around the block. Give your physical vision, hearing, and other senses a workout so your brain can reframe what you need to dwell on.
- 7. Have loose & tight goals.** If you set aside time to think, have an idea about what you're thinking about. I encourage our team to know the difference between daydreaming and strategy. We need both. Go into your thinking time with a view of which you need at the moment.

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