

Time Wasters Keep You From Your Dreams

By Michael Burris

We all have 168 hours in a week. Often the difference between those progressing toward their dreams and those that aren't is in how the former use the time the latter waste. I've also found that few people have large blocks of time to accomplish their dreams, so it comes down to how they use the small blocks of time that add up over time. How do you eat an elephant? One bite at a time! Also remember what Brain Tracy said: "One of the very worst uses of time is to do something very well that need not to be done at all."

- **Surfing the internet:** It's called the "Web" for good reason. You can chew up a lot of valuable time accomplishing little to show for it.
- **Video games:** The latest 2014 studies show that games with violent content are linked to more aggressive behavior from users, because of the sheer volume of violent acts rewarded within the game and the fact that the average person between 8 and 18 is devoted to 7.5 hrs of entertainment media a day. That's nearly a full-time job and in direct competition with all other forms of educational influence – family and school. Also, ADHD and autistic people, esp. younger males, and video games simply don't mix, "greatly worsening time-management problems, further reducing attention spans, promoting impulsive behavior, increasing likelihood of obesity, and greatly reducing social interaction, creating a vicious cycle," according to Dr. Douglas Gentile and many others. Many of the medical, psychological, and educational experts say that games should be treated as dessert – enjoyed only as an occasional treat. Dr. Gentile says "though visual attention may be increased through gaming, this skill is of little value in the ordinary classroom, so the negative impacts are far greater than any benefits. Also, it makes it harder for people to complete goal-oriented tasks that require longer-term concentration. Finally, the excessive stimulation of a video game far exceeds any ordinary daily stimulation, making the real world less interesting." It causes people to disconnect from and handle real life. I've seen it keep so many of my drum students from realizing their dreams for drumming, by keeping them away from the daily practice of drums needed to develop muscle memory for the skill of drumming. It's really very sad, because these students traded reality for fantasy and will have little to show later for all the time they spent in a make-believe world! A very small % of kids will ever grow up to be the computer programmers (I know because I did this for 15 years at several companies) that wrote the games or the pilots and soldiers that they role-play as. Why? Because these real-world careers require longer-term commitments to physical disciplines and/or mental concentration needed to study many "less exciting" subjects that video games greatly encourage the players away from.
- **TV time:** People often call it the "boob tube" for a reason – you can feel your IQ points being subtracted every hour you watch it. Nevertheless, I used it as a way to motivate me to

play rudiments and stick control exercises on a practice pad on the coffee table. My hands got so much more coordinated, faster, and stronger while watching my favorite show! You can even tap your feet to keep good time. Trust me – you can watch TV while doing this!

- **Toiletry:** Get it done or multi-task! I've learned many rudiments on a practice pad placed on a stool pulled out from a corner of my bathroom. It's amazing what you can learn in 5 minutes here and there! I also keep drum magazines and practice books in there to get inspired and draw valuable ideas from. Don't let this valuable time go down the toilet!
- **Driving:** I've learned from many books on tape this way. I also listen to music over and over that I have to learn for my band(s). I often have a drumstick to beat on the steering wheel to exercise my fingers, or simply keep up with the music on the radio. This sure makes long trips go by fast, and keeps me from losing my cool in city traffic. Ugh!
- **Eating:** I'm either watching TV, sorting mail, having a conversation, or reading a book. It slows your eating down for better digestion. This is a great time to read a drum magazine or watch Youtube.com videos of drummers on your smart phone.
- **Cleaning house/car:** This is a great time to listen to your favorite music and become that drummer you hear! Listening more than you talk is how you learn – thus 2 ears, 1 mouth.
- **Gym:** This is a perfect time to plug into your ipod/mp3 player and become that drummer in the music. Remember, 90% of drumming is mental. You can't play it if you can't think it!
- **Stuck in a line?** Whether in traffic, Starbucks, gas station, or at the grocery store, this is a perfect time to be listening to music and becoming that drummer you are hearing. If there's no access to music, it's a perfect time to sing your own beats. Drumming comes from inside you and this takes practice getting it inside you. It needs to become integral to your life. You can't play it if you can't sing it. So practice singing rhythm every chance you get!
- **Any other ideas?** I'd love to hear how you use your time to move closer to your dreams instead of letting it slip through your fingers "like dust in the wind." Email me at info@TeachMeToDrum.com or text me at (520) 392-9093. If there's any way I can help you move toward your dreams for dreaming I will. I teach full-time 6 days a weeks in several locations. I'm sure we can find a schedule and rate that fits your life.