



INSIDE PEOPLE



Chores that can be done in 15 minutes

[By Denise Sautters]

The clock is ticking. You have so many things to do and so little time to do it in. Fifteen minutes, to be exact. It is only a quarter of an hour, but a lot can happen in that period, sometimes something life-changing.

What can you do in 15 minutes? We asked our readers that question and here is what they came up with.

Janelle Hannum Schmidt of Canton, Ohio, quotes Mark Twain as part of her response.

“The secret of getting ahead is getting started. The secret of getting started is breaking your complex overwhelming tasks into small, manageable tasks, and then starting on the first one.”

Last year, two of her friends referred her to the Web site www.flylady.net, which helps people get rid of their clutter by using a timer every day in 15-minute increments. By training herself to clean in 15 minutes, she has realized just how much she can really do in that time frame.

“How funny is it that I’ve been chosen at random to talk about what I can do in exactly that amount of time,” said Schmidt.

In 15 minutes, she can take a 7-minute power walk to and from, then spend the last minute drinking some water; take a bath, wash her hair, shave her legs, and put lotion on; paint her toenails and fingernails; read the “Proverb of the day” and meditate on it; vacuum her whole house; clean and mop the hard-surface floors in her whole house; make one or several return phone calls, depending on how long she is on hold; mix up her children’s favorite banana bread recipe and wash up the dishes while it starts to bake; go outside and sit with bare feet, enjoying the sound of the birds chirping and children playing outside and giggling, the smell of freshly cut lawns and the feel of the warm sunshine.

“I can do anything for 15 minutes at a time, even if I can’t complete it in 15 minutes! This concept has helped to pull myself out of chaos, procrastination, and depression,” she said.

Not everyone can do as much in 15 minutes. “I could do a five-minute abs workout, make a bowl of Uncle Ben’s 5 Minute Rice, and still have time to read the newspaper’s headlines while eating,” said Jason Draper of Massillon, Ohio.

“In 15 minutes, I could knit three rows of an afghan, walk around the block, and say prayers for our troops and all needy people,” said Charlene Poling of Haines City, Fla. “In 15 minutes, I could make love to my hubby. He is 76. I am 74.”

Another Floridian, Richard Cook from Naples, came up with six things he can do.

“I can wash the dog’s paws and feed her in the morning after her walk, shave and shower, walk to the mailbox and back, read my e-mails, read the online obituaries in the newspaper, and think about and complete this survey.”



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In 15 minutes, Dan Strohl of East Sparta, Ohio, said he can run two miles.

Kerry Jackson-Woloszynek of North Royalton, Ohio, said there are all sorts of things you can do in 15 minutes.

“Tell someone you love them, Google your ex, clean out your car, read the paper, arrange flowers in a vase, even walk a mile or two,” she said. “You can also send an e-mail to an old friend, update all of your calendars, vacuum, read a chapter or two in your favorite book, surf a little on www.myspace.com,

download some songs on your iPod, give your puppy a bath then clean up the mess, get ice cream from Milk and Honey, or go to Woody’s and get a large root beer in a to-go cup.”

Fifteen minutes may not seem like a lot of time, but it is enough. Just ask our readers.

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