

Volume 12, Issue 35: Manage Your Will Power

It's interesting to note that we don't always have will power. That will power isn't on will call. Just like energy, will power gets depleted with use. I recently learned this while reading Gary Keller's book, "The One Thing."

Will power is a resource that gets used up. This is why it's important to make doing what matters most a priority when your will power is at its highest.

When I struggled to do certain key things in the past, I noticed that if I didn't do them first thing in the morning, they were not going to get done. Now I understand that it had to do with my will power. It's highest at the start of my day and wanes as the day goes by in my busyness.

Timing is everything when it comes to will power. You shoot yourself in the foot when you spend your strongest hours on things that are of least importance. Because by the time you get to your most important tasks, your will power is drained.

There's a quote I heard from Gary that made so much sense to how I can behave around food after a really tough day. He said, "Make it through a tough day in the trenches and the lure of late night snacking can become your diet's downfall." Isn't this so true? A tough day puts a big dent on our strength to do the right thing. Cathleen Varse wrote in Prevention magazine in 2009 that "The more we use our mind, the less minding power we have."

Gary further alluded that "Will power is a mental muscle that doesn't bounce back quickly. When our will power is low, we tend to fall back on our default settings. What are your default settings? When your will power is low, will you grab a bag of carrots or a bag of potato chips?"

"If you want to get the most out of your day, do your most important work early before your will power is drawn out. Since your self control will be sapped throughout the day, use it when it's at full strength on what matters most." Gary Keller.

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Wednesday, 16 November 2022 08:28

In addition to the tasks on your job from which you would select your most important work each day, what other activities in your life would you classify as your most important work? Is it your quiet time, your exercise, your reading, time with your loved ones? Whatever makes your list, you will do well to attend to them before your will power is drawn out.

Ever wondered why you sometimes start a day planning to do something specific or go somewhere. But as the day goes by in your busyness, it reaches a point when you don't feel like doing that thing or going that place? It's all about will power and it getting drained as you get through your busy day. This is why you must identify what is most important for you to accomplish on a particular day and start with it.

Like energy, will power is a personal resource to be managed. It has a limited battery life but is rechargeable with some down time. Let's do our best in managing our will power to get the most out of our days and life.

For His Glory,

Lillian Chebosi