



COLORADO LAWYER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Are You Dealing with Constant Distractions and Interruptions?

“It is not that I'm so smart. But I stay with the questions much longer.” ~Albert Einstein

We live in a culture that encourages quick fixes, and have access to technology that increases our need for immediate gratification. Whatever the need, want, or urge, we want it NOW. We have constant and immediate connectedness with other people through emails, texts, and tweets, yet not so long ago we would have to wait until we got home to “play our messages” to find out who had contacted us. If we have a question about something, we can “Google it” or find it on YouTube. Even the practice of law has changed exponentially in the past 20 years with the speed of communication.

The ability for quick fixes and access to instantaneous information in both our personal and professional lives should in theory leave us more time to enjoy life and focus on the “important things” such as our relationships, our hobbies, and doing what we love. However, as things get faster, and technology more advanced, we actually have less time for what is really important to us. The smartphone that makes it easier to access information is also the tool that we become addicted to looking at, even at the dinner table. More access to on-line portals and company websites means we have long lists of usernames and passwords to remember, and if we can't remember them, that quick look at our bank account balance can turn into a 30 minute endeavor. The more channels on TV we have access to, the more time we spend looking for something to watch. The internet that so obligingly gets us fast information through Google and YouTube is also the place where we can get lost for hours looking at news, sports, goods we want to purchase, etc.

The advances in technology, and the lifestyle changes we have made because of them, have encouraged our nervous systems to be on constant overdrive as we rapidly shift our attention to all stimuli in front of us. This “multitasking” has compromised our physical, mental, and emotional health, in addition to limiting our ability to focus and spend time on what matters to us. As such, patience, stillness, wisdom, and contemplation are virtues that many of us could spend more time cultivating. Think about the things that are truly important to you. What people, places, activities, or concepts make you feel joyful, excited, or interested in life? How much time do you spend on or with those? Sometimes we are so busy that we can't even identify what those “things” are. Ram Dass said, “The quieter you become, the more you can hear.” If your life or your mind has become like a pin ball game, bouncing from one source of stimuli to another without time for quiet, stillness, and patience,

you are most likely neglecting to live the life you want to live. *Take time* to reflect on what is important to you, and then *make time* to do it!

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