

## Eat a Frog for Breakfast

*Eight steps to becoming healthy, happy and abundantly productive*



### IF YOU HAVE MET GAIL LOWNEY ALOFSIN,

or simply have attended one of her motivational lectures, you may think she is one step short of running the world. You are probably correct. As a mother, wife, Director of Corporate Partnerships at Newport Harbor Corporation, humanitarian, speaker, adjunct professor at University of Rhode Island, and author, she has conquered a concept that when muttered often induces a cringe: time management. Her latest work, *Your Someday is Now*, offers a wealth of tips on how to make the most of each day and focuses on work and life integration, communication, personal branding, organization, overcoming procrastination and eliminating negativity from your life. Just in time for the drab winter months when most of us would prefer to hibernate, Alofsin provides guidance on how to make the most of each day to procure a balanced and productive life.



## 1 SET GOALS

For those struggling to get started on the path towards making “someday now,” Alofsin suggests to start by setting goals. Whether you start with two, five or even 10, the most important task is to decide what you want to accomplish. “Once you set the goals, split them into smaller steps to help yourself reach them. Start writing the ways and visualize those goals,” she encourages. “Wake up and get started. As soon as you get out and get your day started you’ll accomplish much more.”

## 2 EAT A FROG FOR BREAKFAST

A concept originally coined by Mark Twain, “eat a frog for breakfast” touts the notion that by completing your hardest task first, nothing worse will happen to you for the rest of the day. “The key to doing your hardest task first is to really think about what’s holding you back,” explains Alofsin. “Once you eat that frog, it’s jumping around in you all day and you can get so many other things done.”

## 3 BLOCK APPOINTMENTS WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

It’s not always easy to make plans and keep them. Things come up: business calls, important meetings, project deadlines. However, the time spent with your family and friends is not only more important than the work you do, it is also a great way to unwind and refresh. “Take your family and friends and book time with them in pen in your agenda or in bold on your computer. Carve out time for people that are important to you. Be present. Put the phone down. Have real conversations and eye contact instead of being half there.”

## 4 PREPARE FOR TIME TRAPS

Unexpected visitors throughout the day are unavoidable. Whether you get stopped in the hallway or someone asks if you “have a minute,” it is important to protect your time, explains Alofsin. “I call it the chatty Kathy or chatty Charlie escape plan – if you have chatty people in your office, after a few minutes, start standing up and walking out with them, whether you’re running to the restroom

or you’ve got to get to another appointment.” Learning to avoid time traps means you can dedicate your efforts to more productive tasks.

## 5 BUSY IS NOT A CONTEST

Before you commit to a new project or responsibility, Alofsin explains, it’s important to consider what else you have planned. No matter how much you think you can do, there comes a point where you become overexerted. “You have to let go of something before you can keep adding more to your plate,” she explains. “When you just keep adding and adding and adding, you get to a point where you’re not good for anyone.” Before you lose sleep, self-esteem and time, consider the things you can eliminate in order to live a more balanced and productive life.

## 6 LIVE A LIFE OF GENEROSITY

It requires more time and expends more energy to worry about what you will gain in return for your efforts. “Stop worrying about what you’re going to get from anyone else. Whether it’s work, networking, or in your personal life – give, just give. It’s not about keeping score.”

## 7 BLESS AND RELEASE

One of the biggest hindrances to living a positive life is allowing the negativity of others to intrude your thoughts and effect your energy. One of the top 10 management tips, according to Alofsin, is to bless and release negative people: wish them well and then cut your ties with them. Instead, collect positive people that boost your mood and enhance your productivity.

## 8 LIVE IN THE PRESENT

“I’m a big believer in living in the present the best you can. We all need to have respect for the past and look forward to the future, but when we really live in the present one day at a time and one moment at a time, we are really living every single day,” she says. Learn to appreciate each moment, and you are guaranteed to make the most of each one granted to you. 🍄