



...ON TIME

Time management tools are a multimillion-dollar industry because of people like me. I've had calendars on the wall, on the fridge, in the purse, in a vinyl binder, in embossed leather cases, and now even a palm pilot that synchronizes with my computer. It's a calendar in a palm-sized chunk of plastic that allows me to electronically beam my "to do" list to a complete stranger, provided her similar hunk of plastic happens to be open. Zap and the list is gone. It just may be the best tool I've come across yet to managing my activity conflicts.

Sticking to a schedule is work for me. I think it always has been. Like a spoonful of sugar helps the medicine go down, I find a spiritual outlook on these problems gives me better motivation to get a grip on things.

The spiritual word for this dilemma is called boundaries, and you can read about it in addiction recovery literature, self-help guides, and in multitudes of theories about setting the world straight. A pioneer of championing the return of boundaries to our lives is psychologist Dr. Henry Cloud, who says, "People have a need to be in control of their own lives, and they have a need to know that

God is behind that idea."

It can be argued that loss of self-control is the first sin to be recorded in the Bible when Eve, and then Adam, willfully crossed the only boundary established in their world; the boundary to not eat the fruit from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. From the beginning, God created humanity to be free moral agents, free with the responsibility to choose obedience to the protective boundaries designed into our universe.

Think for a minute. What are the boundary issues you may be struggling with? Finances, health, relationships, sex? In fact, every area of life has healthy boundary lines that when crossed – either by ignorance or by dropping our guard – has consequences. For me, time management is an obvious area I need to respect boundaries in, and it doesn't take much imagination to realize the boundaries are there to bring peace and productivity to life.

If a lack of self-control to be obedient to boundaries takes away our freedom, then self-control restores freedom. That's the challenge to staying on time with the things that are best for us. ✂