

WHAT WOMEN ARE SAYING ABOUT THIS BOOK:



“I am busy every day, seven days a week, and have always prided myself on being organized and on top of my schedule. Until I started a *Time by Design Journal*, however, I didn’t realize that being efficient and organized was not the same thing as being focused and productive.”



“My *Time by Design Journal* has opened my eyes to the reality of living in a world of possibility, joy, and happiness.”



“Diana took an already popular and powerful tool (the journal), applied the powerful six principles of time and self-management to it, and used them to create a new approach to living.”



“The *Time by Design Journal* is a focusing tool that increases your awareness, creativity, and productivity—and gets you back on track to living your best life every day.”

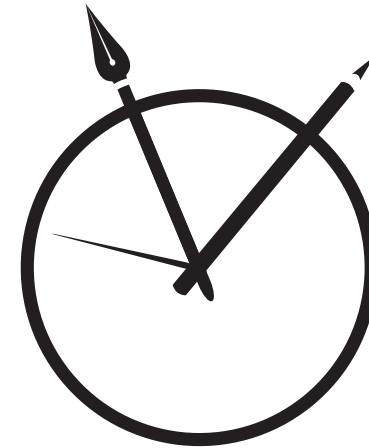


“It’s amazing how something so simple can be so powerful. Having a systematic approach to managing my entire twenty-four seven life has been the reason for my newfound successes.”



“Without a plan, life just sort of happens. I’ve learned that my calendar is not enough; I need a systematic approach to designing my days and to being mindful of how I spend my time.”

**SAMPLE PAGES**



## Time by Design

—Women’s Edition—

Simple Tools for Creating a Life  
of Purpose and Joy

by Diana Gelow



Vine Hill Publishing  
Napa ~ San Francisco

## Introduction

∞ If you wish to live your best life every day you must first learn that today matters. Although we measure our lives in years—we live them in days, hours, minutes, and seconds—twenty-four seven.

**T**ime. There never seems to be enough of it. Time is more than valuable; it is vital for sustaining life. An early morning beach walk in 1999 revealed a sand-written message that tells the story: Time flies but remember that you are the navigator.

What a remarkable reminder! We are the manager of our time and the designer of our lives. Time is a gift. We can use time; spend time, waste time, and even kill time. But to live a life of purpose and joy, we need to use our time wisely—to invest our time in designing our best lives, the lives of our dreams.

Women are masterfully driven to be the best at all they do. Whether you are a mom, office manager, writer, fire fighter, professor, gardener, business owner, homemaker, dance instructor, elected official, or community volunteer—you want to do your best, give your best, and be your best!

Life is ever-growing and ever-changing. As our children, life's work, and relationships grow and change—we transition into the next, new life arena. There will be times when our life's direction seems clear and times when we are deep in thought, wondering what might be next on our horizon. There will be times when we are unsure of what we even want to happen next. Those are pivotal moments when we need to reflect,

dream, think, plan, and design our own blueprint for building.

In each new role and arena, time is the common thread that weaves together our interesting, complex, and unfolding lives. Days are never the same; each step of the journey is different and new. Life's surprises will bring us joy, as well as challenges. We will define who we are and who we become by the choices that we make. The choices that will make us most happy are those which are aligned with our core—those that are true to our deepest hopes and dreams, those that align with our inner compass.

To keep from just going through the motions and to keep from feeling overwhelmed and unfulfilled in life, it is important to move from incidental to intentional time management and design.

Over the years of coaching women, I've concluded that the biggest obstacle that prevents them from realizing their dreams is time. Whether a woman is a corporate CEO or a stay-at-home mom, she has the same complaint: "I never have enough time."

I work with women every day who are burned out from juggling way too much and know they are not living the life they were meant to live. They are unhealthy—physically and emotionally. They are overweight and overwhelmed, stressed out and exhausted. They're not living the lives they imagined, and no amount of candlelit bubble baths is going to fix it.

It doesn't have to be this way. To improve the situation, we first need to acknowledge that most of us have an inherently dysfunctional relationship with time. We give too much of it away. We fill our days with tasks that keep us busy, but we're not productive. We take care of everyone else's needs first; and then, we try to squeeze in time for ourselves at the end of the day. As a result, I see more and more frustrated and exhausted women putting their own dreams on hold, if not abandoning them completely.

With that in mind, I developed the *Time by Design Journaling System*, a breakthrough approach for taking back control of your time and life. Unlike other time-management tools, this is a self-management system that is simple, accessible, and based on the here and now. I have been coaching this very effective and popular system with great success to individuals for over seven years.

In this book, I will teach you the six principles of *Time by Design Journaling* and show you how to create your own *Time by Design Journal*. You'll learn how to tailor the system specifically for your needs, how to use it to have better control of time to reclaim your life, and to build a lifestyle you love—all by shifting your mindsets.

A *Time by Design Journal* is a notebook that incorporates the activities we do throughout our entire day into one natural plan—because this is how women operate best. Rather than trying to fragment our home lives and our work lives, this helps us to weave them together!

Isn't that what you tell yourself when you're overwhelmed? "Keep it together!"

Your life is not based on the traditional model of the eight-hour day, five-day workweek. Living a well-designed life requires you to make a conscious choice to live fully aware, and be in the moment, twenty-four seven. This commitment has the power to transform your thoughts, actions, and relationship with time.

In *Time by Design*, I will guide you to create new, healthier thoughts by tapping into the power of affirmations and gratitude. You will learn to recognize what is holding you back, and you will learn how to develop new and better habits. Among these, you'll learn the art of gently folding one to two of your higher purpose activities into your daily schedule. When done daily, this habit will become the foundation of a lifestyle that

will take your professional and personal life to new heights.

Research has shown that people are happy and successful when what they dream and what they do are in alignment. Successful, happy people know what they want, and they go after those things with purpose and passion. In this book, I will show you how to manage yourself so that you will naturally manage your time in order to have the life of your dreams.

The only tools you require to get started right now are a blank, bound notebook (which will become your *Time by Design Journal*) and a pen. You will maintain your current calendaring system, and your *Time by Design Journal* will be the place where you pull everything together. You will use it to capture on paper your daily activities, time-sensitive appointments, goals, notes, thoughts, affirmations, and feelings. Through this collection process, you will engage in a highly productive way of thinking and acting.

The *Time by Design Journal* is a proven focusing and self-management tool designed by women for women. More importantly, it is a tool proven to help us create the lives of our dreams. We all know that life is short. That's why we shouldn't waste time on inconsequential activities. Let's prioritize so we can thrive and create the very best lives for our loved ones and ourselves.

As you work your way through this book, we will examine the key areas of your life: your relationships, work, money, health, and personal development. I will guide you to create a specific and doable plan for reaching your goals in all of these key areas, and I will teach you a way to organize your days so that you have time each day to focus on the things that matter most to you.

During this process, you will identify your higher purpose activities (your HPAs) the pursuit of which will move you from a ho-hum pace to full-throttle. I will help you eliminate the un-

necessary activities and sabotaging behaviors that are robbing you of having the life you deserve.

Confidence can be cultivated by carefully defining your identity (likes/dislikes; needs/wants), by learning to focus and manage time, by eliminating stress, by becoming more assertive, and by developing trust in your instincts. You will then have all the tools you need to become more confident. I will show you a simple way to make it happen.

You will become more optimistic about your future as you put the system to work for you. The most common reaction I hear is: "This is simple, yet so powerful." Your *Time by Design Journal* is intended to be a safe place to free your creativity, to clarify your goals, and to make decisions. Organize your life and you will feel as if time has expanded and that it is easier to find creative solutions to old problems.

I view the *Time by Design Journal* as a path to self-awareness, as a memory aid, and as a quiet place to relax and refresh. As a recording tool, it is a place to capture your memories and your dreams.

My coaching clients include executives, teachers, small business owners, artists, sales and service professionals, and women in transition. I recount many of their stories in this book. For each, the *Time by Design Journaling System* has provided a new way of being accountable for managing time and for seeing opportunities that otherwise would have been missed.

I trust you will get those same benefits from creating a *Time by Design Journal* and from applying the six principles of journaling in your life—and one more: the most important benefit is the joy and excitement that comes from putting the you back into your life.

## Chapter 2

## Time: The Key to Your Success

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*“It’s how we spend our time here and now, that really matters. If you are fed up with the way you have come to interact with time, change it.”*

—Marcia Wieder

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Emily was always on time; her husband was always late. Her husband had a successful career and a dream to become a pastor. Emily had her dreams, too. But while her husband completed a master’s degree in theology, allowing him to realize his dream, Emily only managed to fill her days with activities that made life easier for him and for everyone else. She put her dreams on hold while she was waiting until her children were “settled into college” or she and her husband “saved more money” or she “had more time.”

Emily congratulated herself for being a good time manager because she was always on time. In my opinion, what Emily needed to be more concerned about was not her time management, but her self management.

When we sat down to talk, I said, “Emily, you have a dysfunctional relationship with time.”

“How can you say that?” she exclaimed. “I’m the one who keeps everything on track. I’m never late. I never drop the ball.”

So I asked her the next important question that I ask every new client. “Do you feel you are in control of your time and living the life you were meant to live?”

Emily’s eyes slowly filled with tears as she replied, “Honestly, I don’t feel I am living the life I was meant to live. I am so busy focusing on everybody else’s needs that I am not sure what I even want anymore. There’s always too much to do and so many commitments, and I don’t feel I am doing any one thing really well.”

“When I look at the clock or the calendar, I constantly ask myself, where did the time go? I keep thinking that when the kids are settled and we have more money or I have time, I will start this project or finally finish this or that. I do feel stressed and tired most of the time. Over the years, I’ve tried dozens of different planning systems, thinking they might help me get back on track, but nothing has really worked. This is not how, when I was younger, I imagined my life would be. I love my family and appreciate all that I have, but I believe in my heart there is something more.”

Emily is not alone.

## What a Woman Wants

Sigmund Freud, the founder of modern psychotherapy, wrote, “The great question that has never been answered, and which I have not been able to answer despite my thirty years of research into the feminine soul, is ‘What does a woman want?’”

If he’d asked me, I could have told him: women want joy, peace of mind, a sense of making a difference in the world—and more time. Don’t you agree?

### Assess Your Relationship with Time

So, how is your own relationship with time? The first step in taking control of your life is becoming aware of some of the sabotaging habits that are robbing you of precious time. Take a few moments to answer the questions below using the following point system.



- 1 = All of the time
- 2 = Frequently
- 3 = Once in a while
- 4 = Almost never

1. \_\_\_\_ I often say “yes” when someone makes a request for my time and then later wish I had said no.
2. \_\_\_\_ Often when I say no, I feel guilty.
3. \_\_\_\_ I don’t ask for help because it is easier just to do it myself.
4. \_\_\_\_ I feel overwhelmed by too many tasks and responsibilities.
5. \_\_\_\_ I feel uncomfortable negotiating alternative solutions when my time is requested.
6. \_\_\_\_ I frequently multi-task in order to get everything I need to complete done.
7. \_\_\_\_ Every day I alter my schedule to accommodate the activities, errands, and special projects of others.
8. \_\_\_\_ My days, weeks, and months are often a blur of activity, and I frequently can’t distinguish one day from another.
9. \_\_\_\_ My days consist of constant interruptions and little emergencies.
10. \_\_\_\_ I find it difficult to set clear boundaries on my time and availability.
11. \_\_\_\_ I sometimes feel stuck in the here-and-now and do not have a clear picture of my dreams and goals.
12. \_\_\_\_ I don’t take the time to wrap-up my current day and design my ideal upcoming day.
13. \_\_\_\_ My thoughts are often focused on the lack of abundance in my life.
14. \_\_\_\_ I blame people and circumstances for my lack of time and for control of my decisions.
15. \_\_\_\_ I find it difficult to focus on what I want most in my life.

Total Score: \_\_\_\_

**15–34:** You are likely feeling frustrated, stressed, and overwhelmed due to a lack of control over your time and life. Implementing the *Time by Design Journaling System* will transform both your personal and professional activities.

**35–49:** You are well on your way to taking control of your time and life. Implementing the *Time by Design Journaling System* will help you take your personal and professional life to new heights.

**50–60:** Congratulations! You take responsibility for your time and life. Implementing the *Time by Design Journaling System* will now enhance your life and help you to continue living your best life every day with greater ease.

### It's Your Time

Women need to learn how to improve their most important relationship—the one they have with time.

Does this sound like you? You're running with scissors, you've given too much of yourself, and you're exhausted. Most of the time you're just getting the leftovers after everyone else's needs have been taken care of each day. If so, you need to learn how to nurture yourself and to give yourself the same level of care and attention that you are giving to others.

How do women get into this situation? I believe most women subscribe to six sabotaging truths:

1. We don't say no often enough
2. We multi-task to extreme levels
3. We don't place enough value on our time or our needs
4. We place other's needs before our own
5. We don't ask for help
6. We focus on busy-activity versus meaningful-activity.

Society encourages women to derive our "core selves" from being selfless through giving to everyone else first and foremost. We're caregivers; to nurture is our basic instinct. We take care of our family, friends, neighbors, and co-workers. We want to do something for others because we feel the need to make people happy.

### The Power of No (the New Yes)

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*"Long-term change requires looking honestly at our lives and realizing that it's nice to be needed—but not at the expense of our health, our happiness, and our sanity." —Ellen Sue Stern*

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Because relationships are so important to us, we assume that our only two responses to requests for our time are yes or maybe. Our answer was usually yes when we wish retrospectively that we had said no.

Whether or not a woman works outside the home, she somehow ends up being the person who does it all for her family. She makes the dentist appointments, organizes the birthday celebrations, plans the meals, walks the dog, picks up the laundry, and puts out little fires all day long. Where there's smoke ...there's a woman!

My husband will remember to call to remind me to call the man to service the hot tub. I'll think, "Wait a minute, why didn't he just call the repairman instead?" But you know what? I make the call. I am a perfect example of how women are quick to respond to time demands from others, but fall completely short when it comes to respecting our own schedules and needs. We must learn to say no so we have the time and energy left to say yes to the things in our lives that matter most.

Being in a constant state of helper-mode at the expense of your own higher purpose activities is not good for you or for others. Think about what role you want to play in your personal life. Do you want to be the CEO and in charge of how your days are run, or are you going to remain the busy assistant who supports everyone else? Life is better when you are the CEO!

When my daughter Kelli was in high school, I received an

urgent call from her saying that she had forgotten her game-day jersey and that the volleyball match would be starting in thirty minutes. My first instinct was to give my workshop participants a thirty-minute break so I could dash home to retrieve the jersey from the washing machine where she had left it that morning. Instead, I took a deep breath and told her that I was unable to help and that she would need to figure out another option. I felt guilty that I didn't solve her dilemma, but I knew I had done the right thing.

When I later arrived at the game, I quickly spotted Kelli on the court wearing her practice jersey with a big number ten duct-taped on the back of her shirt. She had figured out a creative solution on her own, and I went from being her personal assistant to the CEO of my own life.

#### She Slices, She Dices, She Does It All—She's You!

Women have an amazing ability to do many things well at the same time, which is why we accomplish as much as we do. But just because we can, doesn't mean we should.

Well-documented studies suggest that multi-tasking is not good for our health, and it's not hard to see why. How many times have you seen a woman driving down the road, having an animated conversation on her mobile phone, while sipping her latté? She is also likely thinking about all the things she has to do that day, at the same time she is doing these other tasks.

Does this sound familiar? Have you ever done it?

With the explosion of email, social networking, wireless internet, and mobile phones—we are multi-tasking to a greater degree and at much greater speed than ever before. We are guilty of preparing the evening meal, talking on our mobile phones, and simultaneously checking our emails while thinking about all the things we need to do tomorrow. The simple

task that could have been finished in one hour stretches to three hours and still the task is not done (or at least not done well) if we're not paying it the attention it deserves.

I believe there is a time and place for multi-tasking in our busy lives, but it needs to be curtailed dramatically. We need to implement "focus time," where we start and complete one task at a time. Multi-tasking is not the best way to get things done well.

#### Time: More Valuable than Money

When we are shopping and considering the purchase of an item, we almost always will take the necessary time to consider the pros and cons of the choice. Yet, when someone requests our time, we often take very little time, or no time at all, to decide to say yes.

☞ **We forget that our time is always more valuable than money because more money is usually accessible to us, whereas more time is not.**

In a perfect world, the decision of how we spend our time should take as much thought as the decision of how we spend our money.

#### Ask for What You Want

Do you want to know an inside secret that was taught at the boys-only camp across the lake from the all-girls camp? While the girls were working on their crafts, singing songs, and learning how to get along with their bunkmates, the boys were being taught the importance of healthy competition and how to get what they wanted. The boys learned that it's not only okay to ask for what you want, but if you don't ask you won't get it.



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“Ask and you get; don’t and you won’t.”  
—Proverbial wisdom

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Learning the power of asking and expressing what you really want is one skill that is a challenge for women. The fear of feeling selfish and the fear of rejection typically hold us back from what we want most in life. “What if they say ‘no’ or what if they think less of me?” To help you move forward, you need to keep in mind that your true fear should be, “What if I don’t ask, and the answer would have been yes?”

Whether you are asking for assistance, support, knowledge, or time—learning to ask for what you want is a skill that can be mastered by practicing it on a consistent basis. This one skill alone truly can transform your life.

Alyssa is the CFO for a large construction company and one of the best business negotiators I know. Working in the male-dominated building industry, she uses her natural ability to develop relationships to be successful in the company. She is direct and honest when asking for what she needs at the office. However, when it comes to asking for what she wants for herself, outside of the work environment, she finds it much more difficult. Why is it that she can ask for what she wants for her company, but she cannot ask for what she wants for herself?

I believe it is our inner voice that holds us back. You know the one that told us it was selfish to ask for what we personally want. Especially when we were told at a very young age, “Be a good little girl and wait your turn.”

I read about a professor at an established and well-respected university who noticed that many of the male graduate students were actively teaching courses, but their female counterparts were only teaching assistants. To the professor’s surprise,

she found out that the male graduate students who were teaching went to the professors directly and asked for a job, whereas the female graduate students did not. Unfortunately this is a common tale. I am confident there was plenty of complaining among the women about the unfairness of the situation. However, the bottom line is simply...the women did not ask.

I’m not asking you to stop being who you are, or for you to become selfish and self-centered. The ability to be loving, giving, nurturing, compassionate, and intuitive makes women incredibly powerful and valuable both at home and in the workplace.

My wish is for women to be more consciously aware of how to invest their biggest asset, which is their time. The number one take-away lesson for all women who keep a *Time by Design Journal* is their awareness of how much time they spend on lower-purpose activities, and how much of their time they give away as if it had no value.

### It’s About Time

By now you should get it—we need to improve our relationship with our most valuable asset: time. We need to take 100 percent responsibility for how we use it. This is where the *Time by Design Journaling System* comes in.

We need a holistic way to plan the day and direct it toward our higher purpose activities.

“What?” you ask. “Put myself first?” Shocking, I know. When I give seminars, I always remind the audience about the overused, but easy to understand example of the pre-flight safety instructions given by flight attendants. They always remind the passengers that if for any reason the oxygen masks drop down from the ceiling, passengers must put on their own masks before they can help others.

You know they're talking directly to "us" women. Admit it, if you're traveling with a child or loved one and there's any chance of trouble, you will be scrambling to assist them first while your own mask dangles in your face.

The obvious point is that if you are without oxygen and pass out you can't be helpful to anyone, including yourself. If you take care of yourself, you will be in a better position to take care of those who mean the most to you. When you take back control of your time, you'll be living a life of power and purpose, making everyone around you happier, too. So strap on your oxygen mask, breathe, and move forward.

To live your life to the fullest, you must take responsibility for shaping it and for not accepting "whatever comes your way." Learning to say no without guilt, being stingy with your free time, minimizing multi-tasking, asking for what you want, and proudly placing your needs and desires first—these are the foundational principles of taking responsibility for your life.

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*"I had heard the term 'success one day at a time,' but did not realize the power of its meaning until I started journaling. Now I can't imagine living any other way."*

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To close this chapter, I want to tell you about Anna, a genuine earth mother and boundlessly loving and giving woman, who thrived on making others happy. Her dream was to own a bed-and-breakfast inn, but she only achieved it by doing what she calls "one of the most difficult things I ever did." She asked for what she needed.

Anna accidentally stumbled upon a wonderful old house in need of restoration that would be perfect for a bed-and-

breakfast. Anna explained, "I would normally just pass it by and think 'some day' because I knew I could not possibly afford it. But since one of my higher purpose activities was to research possible properties, I stopped the car, went in, and shared my idea with the real estate agent at the open house. To my surprise, as soon as I said out loud that I needed help and shared my dream; all kinds of new opportunities presented themselves to me."

Although she did not purchase that particular bed-and-breakfast, when another property came up within the year all the pieces fell into place. As a result, she realized just how much not asking for what she wanted had held her back for years.

Anna now applies the same lesson with her bed-and-breakfast guests. She tells them, "Ask me for what you need because I don't have a crystal ball."

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*"When anyone asks me what I am writing, I smile and reply, 'My life.'"*

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I have an abundance of time and complete my HPAs every day

Insurance quote: \$1187 - bundled services - per Brooke  
707-255-5528: Diana appt. confirmed 2:00pm

807 Soscol Ave. X St. Office building on right just past bike shop

\$5,432.98 balance / transfer due in 30 days

Costco:



Develop film  
Printer ink  
Prescriptions  
CD's

✓ Dorothy's Birthday

Saturday 11-4 self-guided tour  
max. 4 people  
Ask for Morgan

Messages

10:45am Brandon 707-255-5528

11:00am Lab Results call in am

1:30am Sharon: Bring copies of books

Fresh Salmon for dinner

I'm grateful that I live in one of the most beautiful places on earth and I have friends who support and love me.

Wednesday, June 3

6:00 Meditation and stretching

7:45 Drop off Brian at school

8:00 Dentist appt.

9:00 Office

9:15 Call Greg Adams Quote

9:30 Conference call branch update

12:00 Leadership team meeting

1:00 Schedule Meeting with Mortgage Broker

1:30 lunch Fast Walk

2:15 Lunch

4:00 Owners meeting

5:30 Drop off Brian football practice

6:00 Prepare dinner

6:45 Pay Bills

7:30 Writing club meeting

9:00 Spend 30 minutes on resumé

\*pay bills

Dry cleaners (request home delivery)

Get quote for insurance

Pick up gift for mom (ask Julie)

\*Call Greg Adam re: quote

Grocery shopping

Completed Sample 2 Page Journal

Schedule appt. with mortgage broker

Spend 30 minutes on resume

Fast walk for 2 miles