



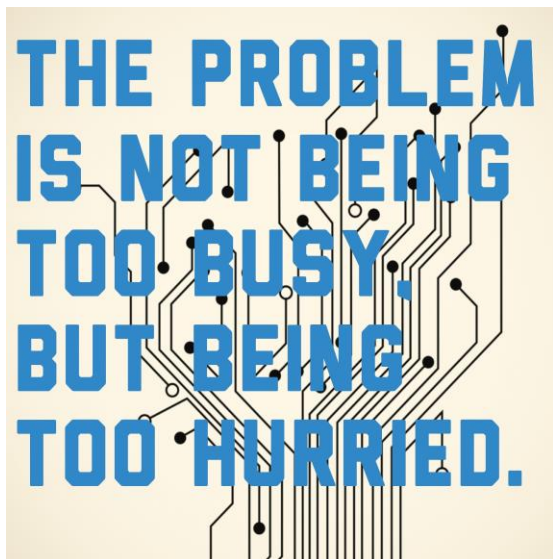
Paul Burke Training Group

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Beyond training: Looking at learning MI in a whole new light!

Thoughts on Improved Practice (TIP) #1723

THE TYRANNY OF THE CLOCK



"But Paul, Geesh! I have no time to spend on my clients! Time is precious where I work! Spending it listening to people is just not practical in the real world. I'm always short of time and I can't waste what little I have in "being in the moment" with clients as you call it. The fact is, I have a job to do and I have to get it done in the amount of time allowed. That's just reality. We're in a hurry to make change happen and we can't spend time listening to people when we already know what their problem is!"

I sometimes wonder what my clients see in my eyes when they sit in that chair across from me. Do they see a person who is willing to listen? Do they see the hurry that drives my agenda in solving their problem as quick as I can? How awful it would be if they saw a clock that was ticking loudly in my mind, wishing that they would hurry up and stop talking so that we could get on with the important stuff that has to get done?

It would be nice if they see the part of me that knows that change happens when it is time. Do they see an energy in me that knows that being with someone in their moment, on their time, and in their thoughts, is more important to me than the clock that is ticking and inviting me to believe the panic that says, "I have no time for you today because I have to change you as quick as I can."





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Sometimes I remember that I have seen people change quickly. I have seen people who benefit so much when I take the time to help to listen – so that I can help them to hear themselves. I remember how quickly things speed up when I slow down enough to be with the client – and not 50 steps ahead!

So, in the days ahead, if you sometimes feel like the clock is not your friend, I invite you to work on confronting this bully called time. Don't give in to the pressure of being pushed around by the clock. Our clients are in charge of their time, and the time I invest in them. Imagine that your time is an investment in their process of change. Time is not something that we "spend". Being with people, in the moment, and listening to them, in the here, and also in the now, is not something that "costs us time". To the contrary, we waste time when we move away from where our clients are at.

In our work with clients, being here, and now is really all there is. And - if we learn to use our client's time wisely, it may very well be enough.

(Adapted from Ann Richards)



Thinking that we have no time to give to clients is an unfortunate mistake. We have exactly the amount of time we have and the valuable question has to do with how we're going to use it.

Eleanor Roosevelt said that "today is a gift and that's why it's called the "present". Being in the here and now with clients, and giving our attention to them instead of to the clock is the best present of all.

Investing time in people gives a fantastic rate of return. It's worth every second - if it's invested wisely. MI is about making the most of the time you have.

Paul Burke