

FIVE TRACKS OF WEALTH

The Soul Purpose ADVOCATE

Mental Track— Aggregate to Succeed by Sergiu S. Simmel



We live in a world of fragmentation: everything comes at us in small doses: lots of short messages over IM, lots of emails, lots of paperwork, constant voice messages, etc. With fragmentation of the flow of “stuff” comes fragmentation in time: our time is now divided into short spurts of attention to many items, jumping from one to the next in an never ending dance of coping. At the end of the week, we are exhausted.

While fragmentation has its benefits, it has sunk our productivity, our ability to produce more results in less time. Why? Because fragmentation requires switching:

- In time, from one task to the next;
- In space, from one source to the next;
- In our mind, from one focus to the next.

Research has shown that switching comes at a huge cost. According to Dave Crenshaw, author of *The Myth of Multitasking*, the cost is an average of 28% in lost time.

The antidote to fragmentation is aggregation. **In time**, it means that we need to aggregate actions into time-blocks we schedule on our calendars. For example, instead of checking and processing email 18 times a day, I recommend doing it only 3 times a day, during pre-scheduled “processing time-blocks.” Or for example, instead of processing insurance billing issues whenever we get a chance, I recommend doing it only during specific time-blocks.


In space, aggregation means combining together places we hold or look for unprocessed items. Instead

of checking each of your 4 email accounts separately, I recommend that you forward three of them and look at a single in-box. Instead of placing the insurance bills all over the place around the office, car, home, I recommend creating a single “processing bin,” such as a large & deep desktop tray, and placing everything that comes in it, so when the processing time-block comes along, we go to one single place for it.

Finally, **in mind**, aggregation means focus. This can only occur when our mind is clear of all the small thoughts, worries, and triggers that constantly pop up and get us unfocused. Instead of keeping a “mental note” that we need to write an article, put a time-block on your calendar for exactly this task.

Instead of remembering that you should re-negotiate your insurance contract, place it on your task list (if the time-frame is a bit looser) or on your calendar (if you have a deadline). Your mind will then be clear of these items, and more able to focus. As a bonus, your level of stress will go down.

Imagine aggregation recovered a portion of that wasted time. If your work week is 60 hours, recovering 20% amounts to 12 hours/week. What would you do with them? Assume you invest ½ back into your business and the other half into your personal life. How would your business grow if you had 6 extra

hours per week? How would your life become happier if you spent an extra 6 hours with your family or friends or yourself? 

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