

Filling Time Versus FULLfilling Time? – Dr. Kristina Wilder



As a mother of three young children, I find a frequent challenge in my life is finding time for all of those things I NEED to do and all those things I WANT to do. Many of my clients say they find the same thing in their lives, as well – we live in such a busy world, the time available to do everything feels so limited. Because none of us can create more time, it's that much more important to ensure that we spend that precious resource on things that feel fulfilling instead of on things that just fill the time.

To understand the difference between fulfilling time versus filling time, I often use the example of watching TV. If your favorite show is on from 8 – 9, how often do you watch the show that comes on at 9 “just because” it's on? In this example, the show you look forward to and get excited by would be the “fulfilling” one and the show after it is just “filling”. Paying closer attention to those choices we make every day can help us cut out things that don't really give us what we're looking for in life and leave more time for those activities and things that really do have a positive impact on mood and quality of life.

So, how do you implement this? One simple way to increase your attention to what you're doing is to periodically check in with yourself throughout the day. When you do, ask yourself "Is this really how I want to be spending my time right now?". If the answer is no, then you've just given yourself an opportunity to make a positive change. You could also start asking yourself 10 minutes after starting a TV show or activity if you're really enjoying what you're doing just then, or whether you would rather be doing something else.

Increasing your awareness of what you're doing while also keeping in mind what your personal goals are is the aim here. By monitoring your activity "diet" you can see if you are really feeding yourself FULFILLING things, or if you are just FILLING yourself with things that are available but have no real value.

– Dr. Kristina Wilder