

Just do it

It was a gorgeous looking day outside. Fresh snow covered the landscape and trees were heavy with a blanket of white. The sun reflected off the field in a splash of sparkles – it appeared to be another beautiful winter day. But it was frigid. The thermometer stood at minus 20 in the sunshine. I cancelled my walk (yet again) because of the cold.

For months, my routine was to get my children ready in the morning, walk them to the bus stop and then walk around the neighbourhood by myself. However, my routine was interrupted when I started a new work schedule and so instead of walking to the bus stop I drove the children. Then other days in the week seemed to become busier and I found myself itching to get to my office to clear away the things of the day. So instead of starting my day with a walk around the block, I started to weigh it up against other conflicting priorities. Now, the act of walking had to convince me that it was worth it. So each day it was a battle – walk or not walk?

What I learned is that when I didn't give myself the choice, I went for a walk regardless of temperature or mood. However, when I made walking an option, I had to think each day, Am I up to it? Do I have time for it? Is it warm enough or cool enough or dry enough? Each day I put myself through a dance of questions, instead of just doing it. "Just do it" (the saying made famous by Nike) has tremendous impact. If I would just walk in the morning, instead of giving myself the option, I would not have to worry about what is more important on my list of things to do. I would return from my walk refreshed and ready to face the day.

This reminds me of time spent in prayer and Bible study. When I make it a regular part of my routine then there is no question that I will do it. For months, I had dedicated thirty minutes from 4:00-4:30 p.m. to quiet time with God. The kids were home from school; I reviewed their homework and fed them a snack. Then while they had free time to play – before chores, supper and evening extracurricular activities – I would steal away to read my Bible. The kids knew that this was "Mommy's time with God." And so they left me alone for thirty minutes. However, now my job requires that on some days I am not home until after 4:30. My routine has changed. So on days that I am home I am no longer disciplined to take the time in prayer. Instead I wonder about what to make for supper. I tidy up the house and finish up details on the computer. My quiet time with God is now competing against my to-do list. Whereas before I would "just do it" now each day becomes a battle of what I feel is more important at the moment.

My lesson? Just do it! I need to plan out my week in advance knowing my work schedule and my "to do" list; make contingencies for those days that my regular walking and devotion time gets interrupted, and then do it without further thought.

The fear of the Lord is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline (Proverbs 1:7 NIV).