

With summer holidays approaching teachers may be feeling that they will finally have “more time”. A chance to do all they want to do—but didn’t have the chance during the year because they were simply too busy! It is important to avoid two things



as we plan for the summer. First, don’t assume that simply because you aren’t teaching that you will have all the time in the world! Second, don’t place all your chance for happiness and stress relief simply on the summer.

Just because you’re not teaching—don’t assume you will have more time!

What is a better way to approach summer holidays and time free from teaching? A good way to consider our lifestyles and time is explained by Arlie Hoschschild (author of the *Second Shift*). We should consider ourselves “time architects.” We can “build” our time in the way we want. Too often we allow the multiple responsibilities of work, caring for children, organizing children’s activities, caring for aging parents, taking care of household responsibilities, looking after



pets, etc., as overriding our ability to make decisions about our time. “I have too much to do” often drives our daily thoughts. So how can viewing ourselves as builders of our own time change our decision making?

As a builder of your own time you can view what is needed to do in a different way. Stephen Covey refers to this unique way of considering our time as “put[ting] first things first.” For this approach, start by thinking of the most **important** things you need to and would like to do—rather than the most urgent. Important things may include items that have a specific time already scheduled (such as doctors’ appointments, children’s organized activities, pre-booked holidays or trips) as well as activities you would like to ensure are not overlooked (i.e., activities you really want to do but often find you don’t have time to do so). Schedule these important items first and ensure you have allowed enough time to prepare for them and to complete them. This will ensure that you move to more “importance thinking” and away from the “urgency” approach. Using this type of re-thinking about your free time will actually allow you to have more FREE time and accomplish more of what you would like to in the summer. It will allow you to come back to teaching in the fall feeling refreshed.

So, now that you have free time – what can you do with it?

Now that you are looking at your time differently, you will find that you actually have some of that glorious FREE time! What types of things can you consider doing during your summer holidays? Using the importance thinking approach, start by thinking about those



things that you would really like to do. Would you like to say at the end of the summer, “I finally had a chance to _____!” Fill in the blank for yourself. While doing this, try and consider some of your recreation options!

You might want to consider something that:

- **Renews or refreshes** you, such as recreation! There are lots of options. Check out the Recreation Nova Scotia website for ideas. Links to municipal recreation departments in your area are found at www.recreationns.ns.ca/connect. Some examples might include joining a fitness class, learning to paint, making some pottery, participating in a yoga class, reading a new book, or playing tennis.

- **Relaxes and reconnects** you, such as spending time with family and friends; doing something that you enjoy. The literature indicates that people need to take time for themselves. People who do for others often do not take time for themselves. Just doing

nothing is also a plus.

- **Supports others in your community**, such as volunteering to coach an activity or lead a youth group.

- **Enhances your skills**, such as learning a new task or activity. Whatever you have always wanted to do, why not try it this summer?

Regardless of your choice, try and make sure it is one you have decided on through importance thinking, rather than through urgency thinking. Keep in mind that many people catch up on all of the television programs they missed or spend summer time in front of the computer only to find that summer has slipped away. Instead of letting another summer zip by take some control over your summer, even if it is a choice to simply sit, relax, and smell the flowers! This way, at the end of the summer, you will feel rejuvenated and refreshed and ready for a successful school year!

did you KNOW?

The Early Intervention Program (EIP) invites NSTU members to sign up for our Wellness email list at **Be_Well@nstu.ca**.

Please contact Erin at ekeefe@nstu.ca to provide her with your NSTU email address. The **Be_Well@nstu.ca** list will provide information about the EIP and other wellness topics.

