

No time to say hello, goodbye

Running late could be down to how some people visualise time. Helen Croydon goes for some timeline therapy

PUNCTUAL people think late people are selfish, disorganised or lazy. But it's more complicated than that. We are the opposite of lazy. We hate wasting time – so much so that we cram every last second with purposeful activity. If I have a 30-minute journey to a 9am meeting and I'm ready to leave at 8.25, I think: 'Five whole minutes. I'll send an email, put washing on...' Suddenly it's 8.45am.

I don't want to be like this. I don't want to flap through train stations, turn up flustered, offend friends, disappoint boyfriends and spend money on cabs and missed flights. This is why I am going to see David Shepherd, a specialist in timeline therapy at the Performance Partnership.

Timeline Therapy is a variation of NLP (neuro-linguistic programming), which teaches people to adjust the way they see time. It is also used to overcome more complex emotional issues such as trauma, depression or phobias. Sessions would typically take five hours but for isolated problems such as tardiness, Shepherd claims he can fix me within an hour.

When I arrive at his west London offices, Shepherd asks me: 'Which direction is the future?' I point forwards. 'The past?' I point backwards. 'And where is now?' I indicate that it's here, where I'm sitting.

My response shows I am an 'in-time' person – I live in the now and find it hard to visualise past and present. Half the population are 'in time'. The other half are 'through-time'. They see the past and future travel from left to right and the present in front of them. They find it easier to visualise past, present and future and can detect when they may be late.

'Timeline orientation has a profound effect on behaviour,' Shepherd says. 'Through-time people tend to be good in

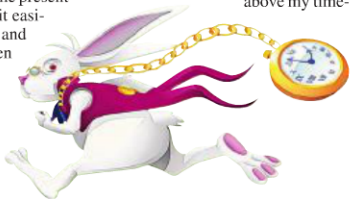


Time flies: There's not enough time in the day for some people

business. They are efficient, plan their days, like lists and make decisions quickly because they don't like keeping things open. The downside is they don't live "in the now" and can't go with the flow. In-time people are good to go on holiday with. They like things to be flexible. They stall on decisions because they keep options open.'

I gulp. I fit the 'in-time' description like a glove. These two archetypes are flexible. 'The ideal situation is to learn to flip your timeline. So you can be in-time and relaxed at home and though-time and organised at work,' says Shepherd. He tells me to close my eyes, imagine I am floating high

above my time-



QUIZ WHICH TIMELINE ARE YOU?

1. Which best represents where you see the future.

- A. To one side of you.
B. Ahead of you.

2. You're working on a project at work. Do you tend to:

- A. Stick to a step-by-step plan, knowing the order of tasks before you start.
B. Take an open approach and change strategy as the project develops.

3. You're out shopping. Do you:

- A. Find what you need immediately.
B. Exhaust every single shop

before you decide on the best value.

4. You're on a phone call and you have to leave for a meeting. Do you:

- A. Carry on talking – you'll make it in time.
B. Cut them short.

ANSWERS

Mostly As: You're likely to be 'through-time' – you like plans and certainty and are rarely late.

Mostly Bs: You're likely to be 'in time' – you live for the moment, often at the expense of being on time.

line until it's just one inch long, with 'now' in the middle. He asks me to rotate it, so it becomes horizontal and then push it forwards so it is laid out in front of me, instead of running through me. The method can be used in reverse for people who are too rigid with planning and wish to become more flexible. Similar visualisation exercises are used for people who feel they are stuck in the past or can't see a future.

It seems too simple to be effective. But I comply and do the exercise every day for a week. I find I'm looking at clocks all the time. I am certainly more aware of time and I've been working less to the wire. But I don't know if I like it. Arriving ahead of

schedule still seems like such a waste of usable time.

Private sessions start from £200 per hour. Weekend group workshops start from £500 (for a whole weekend). www.performancepartnership.com

OTHER THERAPIES

Psychapressure: By facing up to the 'pain' emotionally and physically, the patient can embrace the real root of their problems.

From £220. www.psychapressure.com

Rebel and resistance therapy: Patients identify with a rebellious character in fiction or history and use this to resist old habits.

www.makemeconfident.co.uk

If you just can't face leaving the house in this weather for a gym session, then now you have no excuses to avoid a workout. Personal trainer Matt Roberts has launched a range of home fitness products with Argos (www.argos.co.uk). Roberts is credited for whipping the likes of Naomi Campbell and Tom Ford into shape, so we have no doubt his products will get you tight and toned in no time. There's everything from an exercise mat (£19.99) and foam roller (£14.99) to resistance bands (£12.99, set of three), kettle bells (from £19.99) and medicine balls (from £19.99). Here's our pick of the top three products:



STEP BENCH, £99.99

This simple piece of kit offers unlimited exercise options. With blocks to alter height variations you can work your legs, abdominals, arms and more. There's even a slot to attach a resistance band and take your workout one step further.



RESISTANCE CUFFS, £19.99

This unique piece of training equipment attaches directly to the body so you do not need to grip it. It can be attached to the ankles or the wrists and used with up to three resistance bands to ensure you get the most of your exercise, without putting strain on your muscles.



WEIGHTED VEST, £39.99

Add some serious weight and resistance to your workout without affecting your balance. This unisex vest contains 16 removable weights so you can vary the intensity. There's also a handy pocket for your phone or MP3 player.

ROAD TEST

What is it? Kettlecise is a body transformation and toning class using lightweight kettlebells. It is a combination of 37 exercises that last one minute each.

Why we liked it: In my mind, Kettlebells are the weights bodybuilders use. I tend to panic that I am going to accidentally drop one on my toe or, worse, someone else's. Luckily, Guy Noble, my instructor, looks like he has toes of steel – and the weights we are dealing with are a very manageable 4kg. Even I can cling on to one

of those. What's even more reassuring about this class is that Noble has developed a programme specifically for women. It's designed to burn fat and tone up any wobbly bits. The minute-long exercises alternate between upper and lower body, to ensure you work every muscle group. The time flies as we work our way from bicep curls to tactical lunges and my personal favourite, the woodchop. By the time we get to the abdominal



exercises on the floor, I am exhausted and aching but pleased that I have mastered most of the moves first time.

Why we don't: Noble has identified a number of good stretches to do after the workout but I think that more could be added. Something to stretch my hip flexors and glutes would have been nice after all those lunges and squats. **Jenny Reilly**
www.kettlecise.com