

The 15-Minute, 10-Dollar Day

A strategy for using your shrinking free time and money wisely

By **Kat Avila, contributing writer** | Published on LatinoLA: August 5, 2012



"But it's only 15 minutes a day!" said my voice and diction coach. He was either astonished by my admitted laziness or exasperated with my lack of discipline, or both. After all, it was a 45-minute drive to his place in Hollywood for a 45-minute lesson and a 45-minute drive back, provided that traffic was good. And I didn't have time to do my homework after putting in that kind of investment?

After Rocco said that, I felt pretty ashamed. Whenever I felt like slacking off about something, I would hear his voice like it was yesterday: "But it's only 15 minutes a day!"

If I don't feel like doing my morning routine of sit-ups, if I don't want to walk around the block for exercise, if I am too tired to study, if I don't want to clean and vacuum, if I would rather pay an overdue fine than return a DVD to the library, I hear: "But it's only 15 minutes a day!"

So now, a lot of things get done because of one ghostly nagging voice. As someone once asked, "How much better do you want your life to become?" A focused 15 minutes of your time here and there can add up to something significant.

An artistic ESL student once explained to me how she was able to finish her highly detailed masterpieces, "You draw a rock. Then another and another. You draw a cat, and then you have a family of cats. And then after a year, you have a painting!"

Brian Tracy wrote a book titled **EAT THAT FROG!: 21 Great Ways to Stop Procrastinating and Get More Done in Less Time**. I highly recommend it if your procrastinating is holding you back.

As for money, I am often left with only 10 dollars in my wallet. This was the situation I faced as I went shopping recently for food at Trader Joe's. I bought a pound of strawberries, three apples, a tomato, a red onion, and a package of sliced turkey. Impulse shopper that I am, I ended up putting back as much as I bought. (I've been trying not to default back to my credit card for food.)

My reward was the smiling cashier handing me back a crisp dollar bill for change. That dollar hangs attached to a picture frame on the wall above my computer. Eventually I'm going to need it, but for now it reminds me that saving one dollar is like putting 15 minutes of time to good use.

Time is money, and money is time. Here's hoping that you use yours wisely.

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