

SOMETIMES I'M TOO BUSY TO DO ANYTHING

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There are times the each of us have a lot of things going on in our lives. Between work, chores around the house, church activities, baseball, and hobbies, there usually isn't a spare moment in most of my days. I feel confident that I am not the only one in this situation. The problem is that often I am so busy that I can't take the amount of time needed for a specific task, or maybe I don't take the time to enjoy whatever moment I am in. I'm too busy thinking about the next thing I'm going to do.

I wonder how many times I have made things harder on myself because I am trying to do two or three things that cause conflicts in my time and effort. For instance, my son is pretty involved baseball, keeping us busy during spring and early summer. I also like to put out a garden. Over the last several years I have gotten slightly frustrated at not being able to keep everything in the garden in good shape, primarily due to the lack of time. Since I know I am not going to stop going to baseball with my son, I have started looking to see if there are some places that I can simplify some of my gardening issues. I figured out that a lot of my frustration was due to two crops: sweet potatoes and asparagus. Both of these have weed issues that take a lot of effort. I have decided that for the next few years, it will be easier to go without these two crops, growing the ones that are easier for me to deal with for now, considering the time and effort constraints I have.

I could give a ton more examples of things that cause conflicts of effort, simply not having enough time to do everything well. I wonder how many of those things can we identify in your cattle operation. Maybe keeping clovers and controlling weeds are in conflict with each other. You will need to decide which one gives the most benefit for now, and focus on that one.

What about having to cut a lot of hay for winter, possibly because you have too many cows? If you were to get rid of a few cows, maybe you would have more acreage to stockpile in the fall, allowing you to graze more and need less hay. This could also help reduce fertilizer bills as well as reduce the amount of overgrazing you see during the summer.

Usually the two biggest limitations are time and money. So start there- identify the practices in your operation that take either the most time or the most money. Look to see if any of these practices are causing conflicts, making your life harder instead of easier.

Even if you don't have things that are conflicting, you can look at the things that cause either time or money stress, and then work to try and reduce that stress. I have begun to realize there is no reason to keep myself stressed out with too much to do. I end up not doing any of it well, which adds to my frustration.

We only have once life to accomplish our goals and aspirations. Let's make sure to make every opportunity count, being efficient with our efforts. All of this is easy to say and hard to do. But I'm going to try, and you should too. And if you have any extra sweet potatoes, be sure to bring those by.