

Six Principles to Maximize Personal Productivity

Martin Briggs:

Look at that. Hey, we're being recorded. This is live in effect, and here we are. Every week, as you know, it's Monday, you all, it is, and welcome to the first, I'd love to be the first to welcome you to your November. Two very special months coming up, November and December. As a business leader, this is either one of those stressful times for you, or you're looking really good, and you can confidently go into your holidays knowing everything is great.

Martin Briggs:

Either way goes. Welcome to the holiday season, in my mind. And again, this is Martin Briggs here, the co-executive producer of the ULECx market. And Dr. Briggs, are you here today? How are you doing?

Kayla Briggs:

I am, I am. Good morning, everyone, or as The Truman Show used to say, good afternoon and good night, depending on when you are tuning in. Martin, you took the words right out of my mouth. I'm like this is either the best time of year or the most stressful for some. But I hope that most of you are cruising into the final stretch of this last quarter of the year. And hopefully, we'll be all ready to go in the new year with bells on.

Martin Briggs:

I'm telling you. So, I don't know what it was. But today, for some reason, Kayla and I, we pray about this call every week. As a matter of fact, we planned the next call right after this call. And so, I start lining up guests, or lining up thoughts generally, right after this call. And by Tuesday, we've lined things up. It took a while, actually, and I'm always listening to the Lord.

Martin Briggs:

Sometimes the Lord will speak weeks ahead, we already have the thing booked three, four weeks out. And then, other times is we're waiting on the Spirit. And that's the one thing I want to assure you is that this show is always brought by the Spirit. And so, there's always a bit of intuition about what the Lord is wanting to say. With that, sometimes for some reason, I really don't hear anything. I was just like, for a long time, I always hear from him. I just never know exactly when.

Kayla Briggs

I'll also say, sometimes we think we know what it's going to be, and He'll flip the script on us right towards the week. So, we got to be open and available, for sure.

Martin Briggs:

This was one of those calls in which it really took a little while to figure out what the Lord wanted to say. And by the Spirit, we came up with a topic of what he's saying, six ways to maximize personal productivity. Now, I always have a message, Kayla and I always have... I could literally come up with a personal message every day on this call.

Martin Briggs:

Kayla and I could probably produce personal content in which... because we do content based on the economy, unfortunately, we had to get little into politics, safety, things like that. But honestly, Kayla and I, we could fill this podcast up with personal wisdom that we've just learned over the years, day in and day out. But normally, we're not allowed to say those things because something else is more pressing.

Martin Briggs:

Today, the Lord allowed us to be able to release a personal message that is driven has Kayla and I's own success, for better or for worse. And I love to talk about personal productivity. I really believe that your business, your family, and your personal life are only as strong as your personal discipline. And so, today's call is really about personal productivity.

Martin Briggs:

The greater productivity you have personally, the greater success you're going to have in your spiritual life, in your family life, your health life, your business life, you're going to go faster and farther. And the older you get, you actually believe theories because the older folks told you, this is what you should do. And if you do these things, then of course plus scripture, and if you do these things, son, you're going to have a better life.

Martin Briggs:

And so, you're borrowing someone else's wisdom. And as prayerfully as you get older, as Kayla and I are now, and Kayla always wants to make sure you understand that she's younger than me. So, I'm 43 years old now, and I've lived a good fair amount of life. And so, as you get older, you begin to see what you were borrowing from the older people, and you start to see that translated into your actual life. And now, you-

Kayla Briggs:

If you're wise enough to use it, right? They've given us -

Martin Briggs:

Exactly.

Kayla Briggs:

... the wisdom, but you still have to be wise enough to take it upon yourself to listen.

Martin Briggs:

And now, you bear witness to the Word of God. You're borrowing someone else's witness, and you say, you know what, if I follow our grandfathers of King David, and King Solomon, and some of these people who spoke wise words, and proverbs in the book of Psalm, and you listen to Jesus Christ and His words that He spoke, and you listen to your fathers, and your mothers, and the people around you that are mentoring you, cycling you, you begin to see the productivity in your life, and you thank God for what has happened.

Martin Briggs:

And so, thus far, at the age of young 43, Kayla and I, our personal net worth is amazing. We have no debt personally. I just put it out there, the net worth, very, very high, with an M on it, not 1,000, but at

least 1M on it. And so, I feel like I want to give back, it's worth something to say. And I want us to say that, and Kayla and I, the greatest success that we had is really our marriage.

Martin Briggs:

After 22 years of being married, having been together since high school, we have been able to not only talk about where success is, but we've been able to say by using some of these tools and wisdom, we have gotten somewhere, praise God. I'm not saying we have the most or the best. That's not what the point of life is. But I do think it's worth lending to the next generation.

Martin Briggs:

With that being said, as we thought about this call, off we said, gosh, well, who do we know is probably one of the most productive people that I know? Literally, of all the people that I know, who do I personally know is the most productive? The first person at the top of the list is our friend Claudine Land. Claudine, how are you doing today?

Claudine Land:

I'm doing well Martin, and how are you all doing?

Martin Briggs:

Very, very, very good. Claudine has been a very dear friend of Kayla and I. Claudine, has it been three years now, four years?

Claudine Land:

It's been probably going on four years now.

Martin Briggs:

Four years, gosh.

Claudine Land:

Time flies.

Martin Briggs:

It really does. And so, Claudine actually reached out to us through LinkedIn, and she wanted to advance her services. And she owns Virtual Ingenuity, and I don't want to mess her up, and say exactly what she does. I'll let her do that. But she was looking to build her client base, and she reached out to us through LinkedIn. And we needed that type of talent right then and there.

Martin Briggs:

That type of person who'd be aggressive, who could make contact, who could initiate a relationship. And she literally sold her business just by doing that. And we've been working together for four years professionally. She has been an amazing support for our enterprise, for Kayla and I, both ULECx market, both our nurse staffing firm, Claudine has driven us to great far success.

Martin Briggs:

And I really do believe that a big part of that is her personal productivity. You should look at her when she's on a Zoom call, one of my most favorite things about Claudine is her calendar behind her, which I'm sure she'll talk about that. But Claudine, can you tell us a little bit about yourself, and a little bit about Virtual Ingenuity, so they understand where you're coming from?

Claudine Land:

Sure. Well, Martin and viewers, I started out in the health care field, over 21 years ago, as a research assistant, health educator, and grant writer - writing grants for major medical universities and various institutions. And then, I started getting calls from folks that wanted me to help to write grants for them.

Claudine Land:

I've written grants for Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and all of these other major entities. And as you folks know as I have written grants for those organizations, I've had to be really meticulous, and pay attention to every single detail, and prioritize my time extremely well. And so, I ended up working at a medical university for their center for outcomes research and effectiveness.

Claudine Land:

And that's what I did for several years - chase physicians, prior to them going to surgery - literally chasing them down the hallways to try to get information from them for the grant. So, it started out for me at an early age, being organized, and getting processes in place that would help me to be more productive on a daily basis.

Claudine Land:

And then, I moved on to various medical universities, received calls from several physicians, and then worked at the Medical University of South Carolina in Charleston, doing the same thing, heading a project for all six HBCUs with the focus being on diabetes and hypertension at those universities. And marketing to those six HBCUs to get a hypertension and diabetes course into the curriculum, and it worked out.

Claudine Land:

We traveled to all of those six HBCUs, while in the meantime, other physicians kept calling, and so I later moved to Wichita, Kansas, and worked at the medical university there. And then, to Alexandria, Louisiana, and worked in Home Health, as a marketer, and then moved here to Birmingham, Alabama, and traveled within four states marketing to physicians and working for a prescription monitoring company, and worked closely with the DEA, to get physicians from overprescribing pain meds.

Claudine Land:

Just doing that, running from here to there, and location to location, throughout different time zones, I needed to be productive. Because Martin, as you know, and Kayla, you all know, traveling can really... I don't want to say get in the way, but it can hinder your productivity. And so, you have to time everything just right.

Claudine Land:

And when you're sitting on a plane, you're not just sitting on a plane [frivolously]. You can't use your cell phone or computer if the trip is short and I've had to figure out, be really creative, and figure out a

means of how to get this project done in time. So, just coming up with really creative ways of being productive on a daily basis, that's really it. I had no choice in doing it with the positions that I've had.

Claudine Land:

Even driving from appointment to appointment, that's about an hour and two hours out of my time that's taken away. So, I would always think, "how can I get things done without being crammed?" Because the last thing for me, that I don't like to do, is have to rush and do things spur of the moment. To me, that's just the worst.

Claudine Land:

So, finding a way for me to keep up with current productivity applications is always a must. For me, I dedicate a set day. And for me, that's on Friday, every single Friday. I dedicate an hour to an hour and a half of keeping up with the current research applications, or applications that are going to help my clients at Virtual Ingenuity to be productive, not just business-wise, but personally, as well.

Claudine Land:

I'll backtrack a little bit. In working in the medical arena, I took 10 years off, and had my two children. I later wanted to get back into the working arena. But I didn't want the hustle and bustle of working again in pharma [pharmaceutical], or just that industry of always going all the time. My husband actually said to me, he said, "Why don't you just start your own business and help entrepreneurs to accomplish their goals?"

Claudine Land:

Even down to the personal things at home, he says I'm so organized, the house is spotless. I clean, and yet... we have two kids, and I find time to take them to the library, to educate them, to do all of these things. And as a mom, it's challenging, but he didn't understand how I did all of that until one weekend, I went away to a wedding in Orlando.

Claudine Land:

And he was left with the kids and with doing everything, and he said, "How in the world do you do it? You make it look so easy." The reason it seems easy is by prioritizing which tasks are more important. On certain days, I do certain things and make sure that specific tasks get done. So that if there are any interruptions in my day, then it's okay.

Claudine Land:

I have the bulk of the tasks done that I need to get done. So, anyway, I started Virtual Ingenuity to help other businesses to be more productive. And I work across time zones, and I provide project management and content writing services to my clients.

Kayla Briggs:

And Claudine, let me jump in and say this about some of what I've seen of you, and the way that you're able to juggle. I think so many people, but almost, I really want to say maybe especially women, struggle with this idea. They think that the pinnacle would be to find balance, where the scales stop tipping, stop moving to either direction or are perfectly still. And that's the goal.

Kayla Briggs:

But I really think you hit on something so key, which is you have to prioritize. It isn't going to ever balance out. I think that's a myth. The idea really is to figure out what takes priority at what moment, or at which day, and to recognize what things need to get done, what things will be nice to get, and what may need to be rolled over.

Claudine Land:

You're exactly right.

Kayla Briggs:

You do that with such grace and such skill. And your husband is right, I know you not only take care of house and home, and have your business, but you're active in the community. And you are an exhorted, and you make time to write the most thoughtful cards, find the cards that have just the right things to say to a person. So, just had to throw that in there.

Claudine Land:

Thank you, Kayla.

Martin Briggs:

That's very true.

Claudine Land:

Letting people know that they are appreciated, to me, is one of the things that I do. And no matter where I am in my day, I have to make that time at the end of the day to say, " I have a list of folks that I need to thank before I shut down for work today."

Kayla Briggs:

Yeah, that is such a gift and such a blessing. Give thanks in all seasons, like we're coming up on Thanksgiving, but really, that's such an important thing, I think as a believer to do that on a regular basis.

Martin Briggs:

Yeah. I'm getting ready to go into a little bit of scripture to help us see, really, the most effective person was really Jesus Christ. He's a great model of effectiveness. But before we go there, that I'll give the six ways to maximize personal productivity and just my personal viewpoint on how I see productivity. One of the things I want to ask Claudine before we went there is Claudine works virtually by the way.

Martin Briggs:

So, most of the time when we see her, it's over the internet. And she has this huge calendar behind her. Claudine, what is that calendar? What is it all about? What do you use it for? It's written on like, it's not just a calendar, she's actually writing on it. Every day it's filled. Well, what is that calendar? How do you use it?

Claudine Land:

My calendar consists of various projects, and it is prioritized by projects. And what works for me may not work for others. However, I do want to say, find what works for you, whether it's prioritizing by a project for the month. My monthly calendar of projects is color-coded according to the due date.

Claudine Land:

When that project is due, that may be in red, or if I'm working on something, it may be in yellow. I found throughout the years in over 17 plus years of management, being a project manager is something that anyone can do if you have the right skills. And by that, I mean you've got to get your timelines in order, you've got to have various organization strategies.

Claudine Land:

I use a lot of customized tools for myself and for my clients, both in business and personally. And like I said before, on Fridays, I'm always researching productivity applications to figure out what's going to work and what's going to work better. I think that in business and even in one's personal life, people become complacent with a certain platform, one that works well.

Claudine Land:

I'm never too complacent with one platform, because things change, and things improve. And I think sometimes in business folks stick with a platform that works for them, or an application, but they don't realize there could be something better. Because you have to realize that a lot of these applications are competing against one another.

Claudine Land:

Every company wants to be quicker, faster, and more productive. And we can't just find one application and stop there. We just have to keep researching. And my calendar, with a couple of my clients that I have, those projects are on there. I also have my personal, my family activities on there with my kids activities. If it's at 5:00 p.m. 5:30 p.m. [after work], that's also on the board as well so that I can look at it and know that's what I have to do [for the day].

Claudine Land:

I also keep that same list [calendar] on my phone. So, it's a duplicated list [calendar] in case I lose my phone. I also know that it's backed up to the cloud. But just in case, if I'm in a bind, I always have a backup. My calendar stays updated. This one stays in my office, it doesn't go anywhere. [The calendar on] my phone goes everywhere with me. So, that's a backup for me.

Martin Briggs:

Well, I love it. And again, one of the things I love that you said the most, it sounds like you have your personal commitments and your professional commitments on one calendar. So, that way, I think you're seeing a more integrated life. And so, that's one of the things that I have noticed as well, especially with COVID, and more and more of us are now working from home.

Martin Briggs:

Really having a work calendar, and then a personal calendar separate, or even a work calendar, a personal calendar, and then you have a ministry calendar somewhere else, and they're not integrated,

to me, is not the most efficient thing. One calendar that expresses all of life in one space, because you only have one life, and you only have one set of 24 hours.

Martin Briggs:

So, to segment it out doesn't make any sense. Well, thank you for that, Claudine. And again, I really recommend that you go to Claudine if you have a large special project that you're trying to get done, or a big administrative need, or marketing strategy you're trying to achieve. And honestly, if you just need a pusher, like just somebody to keep you on schedule, on a commitment you've made, and you just need somebody to keep you what is the word I'm looking for? Somebody keeps you committed.

Kayla Briggs:

Accountable.

Martin Briggs:

Yeah. So, my accountability person. She's really, really good at that. And we have utilized her that way, for sure. So, let me get into a little bit of scripture, and it's not a lot, actually. And you know what? I'm going to do this. A big part of this has to do with... let me do this first. Let's do the scripture. Let's start with Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ, when you talk about personal productivity, you want to be effective.

Martin Briggs:

That's really what it comes down to. How do you know that you're productive, is when your life is effective? And the goals that God has given you, that's very important, the goals that God is giving you, whatever you commit yourself to, that the goal you have is actually accomplished. And when you look back on your life, you have been effective.

Martin Briggs:

In other words, plans actually take fruition, and you manifest what you thought you were going to do. And to me, that is the ultimate outcome of productivity. And if you're not achieving certain goals or ambitions that God has set you on, then it probably says something about your personal productivity. Let me read this, Matthew 15:30, and this is about Jesus.

Martin Briggs:

Great crowds came to Him, bringing the lame, the blind, the cripple, the mute, and many others. And they laid them at their feet, and He healed them. Let me read it again. Great crowds came to Him, bringing the lame, the blind, the crippled, the mute, and many others. And they laid them at His feet, and Jesus healed them. And you're like, "Well, why is Martin bringing up healing right now?"

Martin Briggs:

Because there's really three things that Jesus did. He disciplined, preaching, so discipleship, preaching is one he healed. And then, the last thing that He did is He jumped in the cross for you and I's sins. Those are the three large buckets, okay. Healing people, He disciplined, He preached, and then lastly, He jumped on the cross. I would argue, and I'm very much okay if I'm wrong. Okay. I have the excuse of just saying I'm a businessman. Okay. And then, I feel theologian. I really believe that obviously, now Jesus was anointed, okay.

Martin Brigg:

He was just anointing. Trust me, He was. But I believe what Jesus utilized for His success, and just the three years that He was here is He was just highly effective. That's what it came down to. He was highly effective. So, in other words, if your arm was broken, you could walk up to this individual, and He would touch it, or whatever, He would spit on it, or He speak to it.

Martin Briggs:

It didn't matter how He did it. If you just walked up to Him, He would heal you in whatever manner that He wanted. If you were blind, you could see, and at the end of the day, he was just effective. Storms would happen on boats, and people are going to die, and disciples would be upset, and the waters getting in the boat, and the winds are going crazy. They're going to die.

Martin Briggs:

And this guy sitting here calm as a cucumber, and He just talks to the winds, and the waters, and they calm down. He was just super effective. And the last example, I'll give you, the most effective thing that Jesus has done, and will ever do, by the way, is the greatest problem that humanity had is that none of us can ever meet God's standard of being a son or a daughter, none of us.

Martin Briggs:

I don't care how perfect you are, or how much you go to church, or read your word, or stay in worship, you will never ever reach the standard in which you can stand in God's presence. That's a major problem for billions and billions of people. And Jesus, with being the most effective person to ever walk on the earth, He says, "You know what, here's the solution.

Martin Briggs:

I'll be the lamb, the lamb for everyone. And I'll jump on this cross, and give my life, and excruciating, agonizing pain, and for all eternity, for history, and for the future, and for present moment, every sin can be forgiven only through the blood of Christ. Now, that's effectiveness, that's effective. And because of his bloodshed on the cross, he then also took the rightful... He then was promoted to king and everlasting king of all the universe.

Martin Briggs:

And I would debate this, and I'm okay with debate, that had Jesus come, healed the planet, or healed people. And if he had given the same message and then say, "God, I'm ready to come home now," and didn't jump on the cross, I don't believe He would become the king of the universe. I don't. He had to get on the cross so that we could be forgiven, and so that we could experience His love.

Martin Briggs:

And that is what got Him to where he is today, the ever-eternal king, and when it comes down to His effectiveness. And so, ultimately, I know that we called this call something, I called it six ways to maximize personal productivity. But really, if I had to really name it, spiritually speaking, it's being effective. Having an effective life is what this is all about. Are you actually being effective?

Martin Briggs:

I witnessed a lot of leaders. I look at like baseball. In baseball, you can hit a baseball with a wooden bat, a metal bat. And typically, if you're in the pros, you hit with a wooden bat. In the minor leagues, or whatever, or college ball, you hit with a metal bat. And either way it goes, if you hit with a wooden bat or a metal bat, you hit that baseball, it's going to go. Now, that's effective.

Martin Briggs:

But I've noticed a lot of leaders are actually hitting with a Wiffle ball bat. A Wiffle ball bat, if you know what the Wiffle ball bat is, it's that little plastic bat that you initially get when you're three years old, and your mom and your dad gave you this little plastic ball, and you get a plastic bag with air in it. And so, what I think is happening is you got a lot of leaders that are hitting with a Wiffle ball bat.

Martin Briggs:

And you're in the major leagues, you're now grown, but you're hitting a hard ball with a Wiffle bat, it's a plastic bat. And so, when you hit the ball, it's not going anywhere. You're out there swinging, you're making it happen, you're busy all day. And then, when you look back on your life, as you get older, you're like, "I'm not really going as far as I think I should be going, even though I'm working six times harder than everybody else."

Martin Briggs:

And so, the rest of this call is really dedicated to helping leaders to change how to stop hitting with a Wiffle ball bat in the league, and start putting up hardwood bats, metal bats. So, when you hit the ball, when you approach the day of life, and you wake up in the morning, and then you end the day, when you end the week, when you look back, you're like, "Man, I hit homeruns this week or today."

Martin Briggs:

And so, in order to live a productive life, or a very, very effective life, I would say it comes down to how you manage every single day. And what I'm going to do right now is I'm going to have to give credit to Pastor Chris Hodges for this. I have to. Our local church that Kayla and I go to, Church of the Highlands, a long, long time ago, and I think Pastor Chris probably spoke this message at least twice.

Martin Briggs:

But in the very, very beginning, this is many years ago, I'm probably in my 30s. In the business world, and Pastor Chris spoke a message about order, and I don't remember the name of the message. Kayla might remember the name. But basically, and I think he also got this analogy, or he had a... Kayla, what are you doing? He actually brought hard materials on the table during his message.

Martin Briggs:

And he had rocks, and sand, and other materials, and it had a big, big bowl, right? And he just started-

Kayla Briggs:

He had a glass container, Martin, yeah, it was a large glass container, and he had larger stones, and I would say like pebbles, and sand.

Martin Briggs:

Yes, that's right. He had sands, pebbles, and then large rocks. And so, he started to load this bowl with everything, with the goal being to be able to fit all three elements in the bowl fine and well. So, he just starts randomly putting things in there. And you know what? It wouldn't fit. He then emptied the bowl out. And then, he rearranged the order of how things go in there.

Martin Briggs:

And he started to put the large rocks in first, he then put, I believe, the small pebbles in, and then the sand. And you know what? It all fit. And oddly enough, there was enough room at the top to put more in there, if you wanted to. And he basically showed through that really great example, that it's not about removing stuff from your life necessarily. It's really about the order in which you approach life.

Martin Briggs:

Radically changed my life. I know it changed Kayla's life. And I'm sure many, many people that day, but it radically changed mine. And I begin to want to be a more productive person. And so, this is another thing that he taught us, that I really believe is one of the most, the best usage of... the best principle that I have heard so far on personal productivity.

Martin Briggs:

And I think he was forced that he got this from someone else, okay, he just happens to be where I got it from. But I try to live myself on this with this every day. And there has actually been years in which I forgot this. But this is really what I've been doing over the last couple of years, and has been the most meaningful, and where I'm going to center the rest of this conversation is what I call the big three.

Martin Briggs:

These represent the big rocks in your life that you have to have. Every day that you're productive, and not every day, by the way, should be productive. But five out of six days of seven should be productive. But you do need to have one day in which it is not productive. So, that's what we call the Sabbath, by the way. But if you're productive every single day, seven days a week, you're going to kill yourself.

Martin Briggs:

Let me just say that. If you're productive every day, and there's a mission every single day, you're going to really, really have a challenging time. You cannot be checking email, and doing work every day. Number one, it's not biblical. Number two, it's not good for you, and you're not going to be sustainable.

Martin Briggs:

So, if you're working every day, and checking email every day, and actually doing something that adds work life to you, then I would definitely check yourself in that area, and really begin to pray on how you can draw down to at least one day of the week, you're not exhausting yourself in productivity.

Martin Briggs:

And I'm not just talking about work, I'm talking about chasing down things that drain you. Anything that drains you, anything that's not giving you life, if you're doing it that day, then I wouldn't do it. If it's something you're like, "Ah, I don't want to go to so and so's house." Or you're making yourself go to something that you don't really want to go to because it's not giving you energy, you have to have a day in which everything you do is giving you energy back, giving you energy back.

Martin Briggs:

But if every day, you completely give yourself out, and you don't stop that, it really is something that it's a gift that God has given you, the world doesn't want you to have. And I'll be one of the few people to tell you that, by the way. Anyway, I'm going off on a tangent a little bit. But on your five or six days that you're productive, I believe you should have your big three.

Martin Briggs:

Your big three are the things that you need to get done today that would maximize your effectiveness. Every day, you should wake up with one to three things, no more than three, by the way. It's really easy to be like I'm going to put 10 things on the list, I got 10 things I want to get done, or four things. If it's more than three, then it really wasn't significant.

Martin Briggs:

Don't write more than three things on your list. And sometimes, it should only be one. So, one to three things that you know, if I get these things done, I will have had the best day ever. And the reason you want that list small is because you want to make sure they get done. If you put a whole bunch of stuff on there and it doesn't get done, then you're hitting him with that Wiffle ball bat.

Martin Briggs:

You definitely want to hit the bat... you want to hit the ball, that's the point of baseball is hitting the ball out of the park if you can, hitting the ball. And so, you have to make life easy enough for you to do it. And what we have found is typically speaking, if you can accomplish three great things a day, then you will have not only a productive day, and a highly effective day, but you will have a very, very productive life.

Martin Briggs:

And so, that would be my advice. So, what I'm going to do now is I'm going to go into the six ways to maximize personal productivity. And I'm going to wrap it around those three. At the center of this again, if you hear anything from this discussion, is to have one to three things that you know you need to get done today. Now, what I'm doing is I'm going to say well, how do you know that you're doing that the three things that matter the most?

Martin Briggs:

Let's go through my top six right here. One is, and this is thinking more globally, is you have to have major life commitments, major life commitments. So, this is very broad, by the way. This is not very specific and tangible. In order for your three things that you do every day to be effective, you have to have broader commitments that discipline the way you see life.

Martin Briggs:

So, for example, I'll give you my broad life commitment. Number one, I'm highly dedicated and committed to living a personal life that is way stronger than my professional life. In other words, how I treat my physical body, and how I treat my life with the Lord spiritually, how I treat my wife, and what kind of husband I am to her, then going in order, if I had kids, I'd put kids in there.

Martin Briggs:

And then, how I leave my house, literally, my personal house, my cars, those things must be stronger than my professional life, for sure. And so, I have a high commitment to working out, a high commitment to getting into the word with God. A high commitment, which I struggle with the most is actually time with my wife. Of all of my personal commitments, I think the one I challenged with the most, is making sure that I spend good quality time with Kayla, because she's amazingly good at it.

Martin Briggs:

And so, I'm trying to get better in that particular area, because unfortunately, with all the stuff that I want to get done, Kayla oftentimes gets the brunt of it. And so, babe, forgive me on that. I think I've been getting little bit better. I think [inaudible 00:36:34] on that, that's right.

Kayla Briggs:

Heads-up, you can give me a second to get off in mute. He definitely makes strides, I would say for sure, especially the last few years.

Martin Briggs:

Well, thank you. And I want to get better at that. So, I have a high personal commitment to fitness, to eating as best as I can, eating the best. And so, I prayerfully am better personally than I am professionally. My professional life takes the brunt of my personal life. In most Americans that I witnessed, most leaders that I witnessed, they're much stronger professionally.

Martin Briggs:

And in many cases in ministry, with their church life, in their nonprofit life, they're much stronger in their professional and ministry life than they are in their personal life. I would argue with you to say that that is not a biblical way of seeing things. The Lord wants you spiritually stronger, and personally stronger, and allow him to take care of the rest.

Martin Briggs:

And so, number one thing that I would say is to have major life commitments. You have to know what is important and what is not, because that sets the stage for little things that you do every day. So, if you believe that work is the highest productivity or the highest priority, then you're going to lead life that way. So, you got to know what your productivity is. So, right there.

Martin Briggs:

Secondly, and again, I'm still talking very globally, is you have to have fewer obligations. This is the greatest advice that I can give you, praise God, Lord, I'm praying right now. I thank you, Jesus. Father God, this is a moment in which I transmit to the listener. Those of you that are here right now, those of you listening on the podcast, this is much what I'm doing right now, which would be in my prayer language, okay, but I won't going to do that to you.

Martin Briggs:

But I feel transmission to you right now. And in impartation, and I send the Spirit to you as I speak [inaudible 00:38:37]. And so, as you get older, your responsibilities should go down. So, as your age increases, the things you're responsible for, and the duties, and tasks upon you should go down. You don't want to be getting more and more responsibility as you're getting older.

Martin Briggs:

And so, yes, when you're younger, especially in your 30s, well, you live in it, you're going crazy. You're taking on everything. You're having kids, and ministry opportunities are coming, and promotions happening on the job or on the business. But the greatest thing that can happen is you want to scale down as you get older, and don't wait until you get older.

Martin Briggs:

Don't wait until you get to 55, and 60, and 65 to start thinking about retirement. You need to be retiring every day, baby. Every day, you need to start delegating your life to someone else. And you have to exchange, oftentimes you have to pay for, you have to pay others, and delegate others your responsibilities. And so, that's the second advice that I would give you is as you get older, with every passing day, have fewer and fewer obligations.

Martin Briggs:

I'll go off on a little bit of a tangent. As you get older, your home should be getting smaller, not bigger. You should be thinking about living on the first floor, and having one level if you can. Things should get smaller, not bigger. Things should be getting simpler, not more complicated. A lighter life is much easier than a heavy life. You should always show less than what you actually have on the plate.

Martin Briggs:

Third thing I would say, only add up, yes, now I'm getting a little bit more tangible. Getting back to the top three, and you're like, "Good lord, those first two things were so global." But when you have those two things together, when you do those first two things I just talked about better and better, it makes your big three stronger and stronger.

Martin Briggs:

Those big three, even though it's the same three rocks, they begin to become boulders and mountains. Because there's less on the plate, that when you do move, you're moving with great power and vigor. And so, here's the other thing. This is the most tangible. Now, getting back to big three, now you've agreed, okay, I'm going to make sure that I'm going to get these top three things done today, and you have to decide what they're going to be.

Martin Briggs:

And I'll tell you exactly, so we're going to get into, you're like, "Well, I'm in agreement with doing at least getting one of the three things done. But how do I know what to put on the list?" The first thing I would tell you is you want to put on there what your weakest at, for sure. You don't want to put on there what you're really good at, what you know is going to get done.

Martin Briggs:

You put on there what has the most potential to not get done. So, for example, I'll give you my examples. So, my personal goal is to work out five days a week, five days a week to do something physical. And some days, it's easier than others. So, for example, if I'm going to go play golf, I don't need to put that on the list. I'll be the driver to golf. I will show up to golf every day.

Martin Briggs:

For playing basketball or volleyball, I never have to put that on the list because I love those things, and I cherish them. Now, there's other days in which I have to go to the gym, and actually get on a treadmill, or get on the walk machine, and actually lift weights, and all those kinds of things. I'm not good at that. Once I'm there, I'm good. But taking myself out of work and dragging myself to the gym to work out is the hardest thing.

Martin Briggs:

So, that's going to go on the list that day. That day, when I have to go to the gym, I'm going to write it on the list. You're like, "Martin, are you serious?" Yes, above all the things I have to get done, it is not uncommon that you will see me at the gym at 7:00 even in the morning on Tuesday, or at 8:00 in the morning, or at 9:00 in the morning. And I will run to work late. I get to work until noon that day.

Martin Briggs:

Because I've been at the gym working out, and I have to go home, get a shower, feed myself, and blah-blah-blah-blah. And so, yes, you put now, there's other days in which Kayla and I, we have a personal trainer, [Deshawn Edwards 00:42:53], and he works us out. And I don't write it on the list that day. So, that day, I don't write it on the list, because I know I'm going to show with him.

Martin Briggs:

Because I'm not going to no call, no show on him or call out. That's just not my personal personality. And when I don't have a personal trainer, when I don't have golf, or some kind of competitive sport, I'm going to have to write it on the list. That is a very good example of putting your weakest thing on there.

Martin Briggs:

From a business perspective, if you don't enjoy making sales calls, for example, or recruiting calls, you put what you know you have to get done, you write those things down, the things that are probably not going to happen. So, oftentimes, I wouldn't be very, very good at sales, for example, but I had a goal to make 30 sales calls a week.

Martin Briggs:

And so, I would write that on the list. Today, I'm going to make 10 sales calls, today. And then, write that on the list because that would be a weak thing for me. And so, what you definitely want to write on there is the weakest things. The things you know you're going to get done that are going to actually happen, don't write those things on the list. All right, so there's that piece of advice.

Martin Briggs:

The fourth thing that I would say is that every day should have a theme. I talked about this a little bit already. Not everybody has to have a theme, but maybe, well, I'll give you my example. So, every day has an actual theme for the day. I already gave you one of them. Kayla and I have a strict Sabbath one day a week, which typically ends up being on the weekend.

Martin Briggs:

And so, that's the theme. That day, we don't do anything that we don't want to do. I'll just put it straight out there. We don't exert energy that requires us to muster or force ourselves out of it. It is completely

of it. It is completely dedicated to rest, whatever that looks like. Sometimes that looks like a movie and a dinner. And girl, we're going out, and we're going to go to a movie.

Martin Briggs:

Other days, it is just sitting at the house, and just recovering, and just literally doing nothing, lounging, and getting nothing done. And so, you have to figure out what your thing is, but you cannot... every day, I suggest that you don't muster forcing yourself to do things you don't want to do. You should schedule it in there. Here's another themed day.

Martin Briggs:

For me, Monday is what I call advancement Mondays, advancement Mondays. On Monday, I only do activities that will advance really organizationally, the company, UX market, our nurse staffing firm, I only will do things in advance. I don't do things that are task oriented. I don't check emails, or respond to emails on Mondays, by the way, either. Unless that email has something to do with advancing the company.

Martin Briggs:

You might call it marketing Mondays, that is why we actually put this call on Mondays. Before COVID, we actually went to open this office to all of the market partners, and people could come to this Monday, they come to the office, and you would just do only things that would advance your company. You wouldn't do anything that was not marketing related.

Martin Briggs:

So, today is the day that I would make sales calls. Today is the day that I intentionally call people that will advance the organization, or only are make a marketing presentation, and create something that's going to advance the company. And I don't take appointments on Mondays. I don't schedule appointments that aren't going to advance.

Martin Briggs:

I never take lunch dates or anything like that on Monday, whatever will advance. And so, my big three tend to be around those things. And so, that's so everyday sort of theme. And I don't theme every day, by the way. I only theme Mondays are themed, and I have one day typically during the week in which is a Sabbath. And then, the rest of the days are just fill-ins here in there.

Martin Briggs:

Fifth out of six things. Create one list, which Claudine and I, and Kayla and I, we talked about earlier is to create one list for your entire list, your entire life. So, I don't have a big three for personal, and then, a big three for business, and a big three for the local church. I just have three things that need to get done that day, period. It is not unusual that I will put something really small on there.

Martin Briggs:

For example, here's a good one that needs to go on the list. Kayla bought me a gift certificate to a business called Stretch Zone, see, and I have four sessions, I think it is Kayla, that they'll stretch me out, they literally just stretch you out. And I had... what?

Kayla Briggs:

I said yes, you have for four.

Martin Briggs:

Four sessions.

Kayla Briggs:

It could be a month worth, it could be stretched out over a quarter, however you want to do it.

Martin Briggs:

I don't know if it was a birthday gift or a Christmas gift. But it's been sitting in my wallet for like a year. That would go on the list. For example, it would never go on a Monday, but on a Tuesday, I'm going to write on my big three, call Stretch Zone, and schedule the appointment. So, it's not even like go to Stretch Zone. Literally, on the big three, just make a phone call to Stretch Zone.

Martin Briggs:

I've had to do that with car maintenance. Car maintenance, I have a tough time getting to that sometimes. And so, the car is yelling at me, "Hey, you need to get fixed the car." That will be a big three. Oddly enough, that will be on the big three, just to call the mechanic and say, "Hey, I'm going to bring the car in." Boom, that gets on there.

Martin Briggs:

And so, what I mean maximizing personal productivity, it doesn't always mean you're going to grow business. But I'm never going to take those two things and put them on a Monday though. And again, I also recommend again, to be on point five, to create one list. So, on that same list, I'll have call Stretch Zone. And on that same list, I'll have make 10 sales calls on the same list.

Martin Briggs:

So, there's one, there's two, and the third one may be something... and I don't make all three of them super, super huge. Sometimes I have one project that will take me two to four hours to get it done. And then, I have another one, it would just be five minutes. Literally, if I just pick up the phone five minutes, and make that phone call, it's very important to get it done.

Martin Briggs:

And so, I put those two things together. But I'm not going to put three two-hour things on one list for that day. That's just too much. I generally have one huge thing that takes either a lot of energy, or a lot of time. Some things don't get done because of the energy that it takes. It's not really the time, it's just the fact that you have to lift yourself out of what you want to do, and do that one thing. So, there's the last, and the last thing I would say-

Kayla Briggs:

Martin, can I jump in really quickly on that point?

Martin Briggs:

Of course. Let's get it.

Kayla Briggs:

Yeah. So, I just wanted to mention again, with the idea of having one list, or one calendar, however you choose to do it. It's more than just about... obviously, we know today is about efficiency. But it's even more than that. You're really integrating your life. You're helping your brain to stop seeing things fragmented, or as if this piece doesn't belong with that piece, or this group of people are separate from that group of people.

Kayla Briggs:

Our lives are meant to be integrated. Just like with the Lord, it's not just a Sunday relationship, it is an everyday all the time relationship, an ongoing communication. And I think for some people, it's harder to see life that way. So, again, even if that a start for you to start to put your life into perspective in that light, then it's a good exercise even for that, towards that end.

Kayla Briggs:

Martin and I were talking the other day about how before the Industrial Revolution, you had an agrarian lifestyle, and there wasn't a separation between home, and work, and community. All of that was intertwined. And you had really, relationships and fellowship between people that lived in your region, and the rebar and raisins, all kinds of things that contributed to a different kind of lifestyle than we have now.

Kayla Briggs:

We have call centers now, and ways to connect through technology, which can sometimes be great, but can sometimes hinder us from actually having true eye contact and face time. So, all of that to say, even though some of these tips may look just like practical things towards growth in your organization, or more efficient lifestyle as a whole, it really is a way of getting back to, I think more of the kind of life that God really intended for us to have.

Martin Briggs:

That's good, Kayla. I love that. You had more integrated. So, the last thing I'd put on this list, is everything needs to be scheduled, everything has to be scheduled. And for those of you that are still trying to find extra time, or time to rest, you're never going to find it. Never. You never find free time, by the way. You have to schedule it in, like all of your other priorities.

Martin Briggs:

And that doesn't necessarily mean you have to hit your calendar, by the way. For example, it is already scheduled in that Kayla and I basically try to shut down by 6:00 every day. We don't always get to do it. But basically, there's a rule in our house that by 6:00, there is no more business, it's done, we're done, put our cell phones down away, put them away. And work is done after 6:00.

Martin Briggs:

So, we very rarely scheduled meetings after 6:00. In the morning, I already know that I get up at 5:00 in the morning, most mornings. And I'm going to be with the Lord in the morning, before everyone else

wakes up, and phone starts ringing, and emails start coming in. Between 5:00 and 7:00, I've already taken care of myself, and also been with the Lord.

Martin Briggs:

So, basically between 7:00 and 6:00, that's where everyone else essentially. And that's a lot of time. Another thing, your rest time has to be scheduled. You cannot say you're going to have a Sabbath. You have to say this is the day. And Kayla and I look at the schedule every week. One of the most effective things, and this one came from Kayla, by the way, this is her idea, which I never valued it up until, really until COVID.

Martin Briggs):

But Kayla needed to look at the schedule, she hated when we would come up on a day, and she didn't know that this or that was happening. So, what we implemented from her wisdom was that on every Sunday, we would look at the schedule for the next week. And boy, does it bring so much peace. Scheduling rest is just as important as scheduling activity. They're all the same.

Kayla Briggs:

And rest is different than sleep. That's the other piece, right? Rest is not the same as just going to sleep.

Martin Briggs:

Yes, we're up top.

Kayla Briggs:

And part of the reason for our calendar, obviously, I think if you have children, and they're involved, especially in extracurricular activities, you most likely have some kind of family calendar or some kind of information, where everybody knows what's happening. But what would happen with us, because we don't have kids is it's assumed like, "Oh, yeah, we haven't talked about there being something going on in that day."

Kayla Briggs:

So, we're both scheduled for something, but only one person might know what's happening. And so, if you're wanting to make sure that you are eating healthy meals, and you have to have time to prepare those things. So, you need to know when there are big meetings, smaller get togethers, what have you, in order to make sure that that we're running in the same lane to some degree. So, that was the idea behind that.

Martin Briggs:

Yeah. And it's been very beautiful, and very helpful for our marriage. And another thing is, you get to have lots of rules, a lot of rules. One of the rules is, this is a personal rule that I have, is to not schedule more than one meeting a day with the external world. I call it not talking about my internal staff necessarily, but external meetings.

Martin Briggs:

I don't set up more than one, whether it's a Zoom meeting, or whether it's an in-person meeting, I don't schedule multiple visits in one day. And that's what I did. And I'm not telling that's what you should do

necessarily, but you got to figure out where your rest point is. And I've recognized that as I look back on my life that when I schedule multiple appointments on one day, I am drained, or I don't get things done that needed to get done.

Martin Briggs:

So, oftentimes, that means I will push... it's not uncommon that if somebody wants to meet with me that it will be three to four weeks off before I can meet with him. Because all the other days are booked with something. So, if there's already a marketing meeting, or a networking meeting I'm going to go to, that immediately means I cannot meet with someone else that exact same day.

Martin Briggs:

And again, that's what I mean by everything is scheduled, here's another thing and the last thing I'll say, is you can't run every play. You can't run every play that's called on your life. And this is something you're typically not going to hear from your local church, you're not going to hear this from your nonprofit ministries, you're not going to oftentimes hear this from your families.

Martin Briggs:

You have peer pressure, which exists for adults, by the way, to run every play that's called at you. And oftentimes, they'll use the word of God to say you need to be here, we have to attend every event, or this is the schedule of the play. Or your kids come to you, "Hey, we're signing up for this, we're signing up for that." You cannot run every play. You're going to have to make sacrifices.

Martin Briggs:

You're going to have to, "Disappoint people," in order that you may have life. Okay. And so, Jesus didn't give you a religion to where you had to follow a specific schedule and do it this certain way. Know He gave you freedom to live life in a relationship with Him. Relationship is very driven by the Spirit, and not necessarily by a schedule. So, I'm not saying that you shouldn't have a schedule.

Martin Briggs:

Obviously, this is all about having a schedule. What I'm saying is you cannot schedule in everything. The greatest thing that will happen for you is when you stop being perfect at everything, is when there's a blemish on your record. When you do commit to something, you should go. But sometimes, you're going to have to back out of that thing, because you're not able to go. I'm sorry.

Kayla Briggs:

And the reality is, Martin, the reality is you have to be willing to say no. Some people, it's not a problem. But I think for Martin and I, both, it has been a hard learned lesson. We don't have enough time to go into what not saying no did to our lives for a period of time. But that was a huge lesson for both of us. I can say it's a personal testimony of mine, story for another day. But you have to be judicious with those yeses.

Martin Briggs:

Yes. Your noes are way-

Claudine Land:

It should feel great, guys, when you say no, it shouldn't be a burden. Oh, no, I have to say no to this person. It should feel really good.

Kayla Briggs:

That's right. That's right.

Claudine Land:

Martin, I want to say this.

Martin Briggs:

Go ahead, go ahead. Okay.

Claudine Land:

I just want to say that you've brought up some really great points, a lot of which I live by. Our family and household are a family of rules. My kids can attest. We've got a rule for everything. But it's funny because my neighbors know when my husband gets home, this is our rule, I'll share with you. When my husband gets home, if he is on the phone, he has to stay on the phone, and not enter the house until he is finished with that business call.

Claudine Land:

So, he will literally, and my neighbors all know this, he'll come in, he'll sit in our driveway in his car, he hasn't pulled into the garage yet. But he'll sit in the driveway, in his vehicle, on the phone, it could be for 45 minutes, it could be an hour. But the rule is that he has to finish that call [before he enters the house] because when he opens that door, that is family time. And that's the cutoff. So, every single day like clockwork, that's been our rule for over 15 years now.

Kayla Briggs:

I love it. I love it.

Martin Briggs:

That is cool.

Claudine Land:

And I also want to share this with you, you brought up another great point. When I share my calendar with folks, everyone will know this, Mondays and Fridays, those days are blocked. Those days are blocked because Mondays are my sales calls day. That's when I make all my sales calls. Fridays are my... I call it my business improvement day.

Claudine Land:

So, those are the days that I may join a networking group or plan out my next week. Those are the days that I send thank you notes to people that Kayla mentioned earlier. Those are my days that I may look for grants, etc., but it's not going to be a meeting day. So, Mondays and Fridays, no one can get on my calendar.

Claudine Land:

Case in point, today is the day that I'm on the podcast with you all. But you will never be able to get on my calendar on Mondays and Fridays [for meetings]. And I say no to people [who want to schedule a meeting on those days]. Saying no is really for the betterment of your mind, for your body. So you can really take that breather, and get things done personally, and business-wise as well.

Claudine Land:

And I want to share with you all, on my desk, Martin, you talked about doing three things every day that your inner self will thank you for. That phrase sits on my desk. Do three things every day that your inner self will thank you for. Another thing that sits on my desk is it says: 'I am deliberate and highly effective'.

Claudine Land:

And my daily vision sits on my desk. It says: 'I deliberately balance my personal and professional life with a greater sense of clarity, and significant contribution for myself, and others around me, which gives me a deeper sense of peace of mind'. So, I look at those things every single day on my desk as a reminder of who I am, and who I strive to be every day.

Claudine Land:

My mission says: 'As a great leader, I communicate effectively, confidently to the point, and with purpose for a win-win outcome'. And those are the things that I look at on a daily basis, - doing something specific every day that will take you another step closer to your goal. Those are the four things that I look at every single day just to remind me, and to keep me in balance. So, thank you for saying those things Martin.

Martin Briggs:

Amen, I've enjoyed the call, and we got to live it over, but I think it was worth it. Thank you so much, Claudine, for being with us today. Your words are very wise, really enjoyed your perspective. I highly recommend you contact Claudine if you need her services, or just wanted advice. But thank you so much everyone for listening.