



## **Time-shifting Not Time-management, by Stephan Rechtschaffen**

"I've observed over the years that many people in our culture experience not having enough time in daily life. The feelings: frustration, anxiety, panic, pressure, stress. It's as if somebody yelled "Fire!"-and although we could get out of the room, we don't. This is the way we live in relationship to time, all day long responding to the subtle message, "fire, fire, fire, fire ..."

Many cultures, however, have a completely different experience of time. What is a moment in New Guinea, for example, where there are no words for hours or minutes? Maybe a moment lasts all morning. But for those of us who live in nanosecond time, a moment becomes very, very short, and in each moment we ask how much we have gotten done. How much did I cram into it? Was I successful in multitasking? As one woman in a class I was working with said to me, "I have finally figured out how to relax. When I go from my job teaching to my consulting job and I'm driving in my car, I listen to a self-help tape, I eat lunch on the way, I talk on my cellular phone, and I relax at the same time."

This approach to time management simply turns up the speed on the treadmill of our lives. I propose we evolve beyond time management to "timeshifting"-which is different from merely "downshifting." The practice of timeshifting recognizes that every single moment has a particular rhythm to it, and that we have the capacity to expand or contract an individual moment as appropriate. One way to shift what's going on in our world is not to try to rush to do more, but to allow ourselves to go deeper into that moment of being present. Our ability to shift gears, to shift our rhythm to meet that moment and be present in it, is what allows us to experience the fullness of life - to create our life in the way we want it to be."

-- Stephan Rechtschaffen