[Synchronicity and mindfulness are keys to effective time management.](http://www.elephantjournal.com/2012/01/synchronicity-and-mindfulness-are-keys-to-effective-time-management/)

[](http://www.elephantjournal.com/2012/01/synchronicity-and-mindfulness-are-keys-to-effective-time-management/hurdle/) There’s more to scheduling your time than setting priorities and filling in blocks in your calendar. In fact, the time you leave blank may be the most important time of all.

Unscheduled time is like white space in in a pleasing design. It gives order, context, and emphasis to the things that matter. It’s also the key to noticing and responding to those nudges and tugs from the universe that Carl Jung dubbed synchronicities.

A synchronicity is a meaningful coincidence, the co-occurrence in time of inner and outer events that show us what we need to know or learn in order to thrive.

You could say the ability to notice and respond to synchronicity is the key to good luck.

The thing is, a synchronicity isn’t manifest until you notice and respond to it. Without this, it’s just random events in a chaotic world. And the key to noticing and responding to synchronicity is white space.

**Little bits of white space create spaciousness**  
Designers talk about two kinds of white space: micro and macro. Micro white space is the space between small elements in a design. In your calendar it’s the bit of wiggle room you allow when you plan your time. It’s allowing ten minutes between clients or giving yourself a bit more time than you think you need for a project.

In design, micro white space makes things easier to read and grok. It communicates calm and encourages trust and connection. In business, micro white space creates spaciousness. It softens your heart and helps you notice important details.

Without micro white space, you contract and feel pressured. With it, you expand and feel more alert and engaged. Because of this you can sense and respond to the subtle promptings of synchronous events.

**Chunks of white space create order**  
Macro white space is the space between large elements in a design. It lets you know what to pay attention to first and how different elements relate to each other.

In your business, macro white space has two expressions. One is time you schedule for things that renew you, like meditation or taking a walk. The other is unscheduled time. Time for all the unexpected things that crop up in a day that would otherwise make you tear your hair. Time to defrag.

Without macro white space, everything has the same degree of urgency and importance. It’s like living in a constant state of emergency. When everything is a crisis, interruptions are unwelcome. And synchronicities do like to interrupt things.

**How to find white space**  
The buddhist-informed therapist, David Richo, writes that, because all things are ultimately one, the Universe is always conspiring in your favor. Whether or not you collaborate in that conspiracy is often a function of white space. Here are some tips for including more white space in your calendar.

**Just say no to multi-tasking.** There’s increasing evidence that multi-tasking is inefficient and inelegant. You can’t actually do more than one thing at a time, and when you switch back and forth, however rapidly, you lose focus, connection, and momentum.

Another cost of multi-tasking is that it fills in those micro-white spaces where synchronicity happens.

Choosing to do one thing at a time takes practice. Start by setting modest goals. Thirty minutes of writing without checking email or Twitter. One hour without answering the phone. As you get the hang of spacious concentration, it will get easier and easier.

**Build in chaos time.** During the 2010 [Self Employment Telesummit](http://www.selfemploymenttelesummit.com/), Sean D’Souza suggested you set aside two hours every day for the unexpected. On top of that, set aside one week a month to catch up on and complete all the things that got interrupted or delayed during the previous weeks.

At first, scheduling for chaos is scary. How can you afford to set aside so much time? But in reality, chaos happens whether you plan for it or not. When you do build in chaos time, you will have the satisfaction of meeting deadlines and the bandwidth for unexpected opportunities.

**It’s a friendly Universe**  
It’s alleged that Einstein said the biggest question in life is whether or not we live in a friendly Universe. I say the answer is determined by our choices. Make room for synchronous nudges and pokes and the world becomes a much kinder place.

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