



About a decade ago, I would spend hours a day playing my Xbox 360. I was hooked on one game in particular: “Guitar Hero”. In the game, players have to play hit songs by pressing buttons on a fake guitar. Each day I would continuously work on my finger placement, timing, and skills to beat songs and unlock new ones. Then one day I came to a realization. In the time that I had spent pressing multi-colored buttons on my fake guitar, I could have actually learned to play guitar! I had wasted so much time on nothing.

More recently, I started paying attention to the amount of time I spend on Facebook and Twitter. Social media platforms can turn into another time suck. These apps target significant activation in our brains, specifically the anterior cingulate cortex, [which can lead to addiction to our mobile devices](#). One [news story](#) estimated that the human race has spent a collective 55 million years on Facebook since 2009!

Whether it is “Guitar Hero”, social media, or some other activity that consumes but not aid in our growth, they all have the same price- our time. Time more than money, education, or status should be valued. As [Kevin Kruse](#) writes in [15 Secrets Successful People Know About Time Management](#):

Time is unique because it’s the one true equalizer. Some people are born rich, others born poor. Some have Ivy league degrees, while others are high school dropouts. Some

are genetically gifted athletes, others physically challenged. But we all have the same minutes in a day. Time is the lowest common denominator.

There are 1440 minutes in a day, and each one that we waste is gone. We do not get it back. The philosopher Seneca commented on time wasters almost 2,000 years ago, when he wrote:

Were all the geniuses of history to focus on this single theme, they could never fully express their bafflement at the darkness of the human mind. No person would give up even an inch of their estate, and the slightest dispute with a neighbor can mean hell to pay; yet we easily let others encroach on our lives-worse, we often pave the way for those will take it over. No person hands out their money to passerby, but to how many do each of us hand out our lives! We're tight fisted with property and money, yet think too little of wasting time, the one thing about which we should all be the toughest misers.

Ever since I became cognizant of "Guitar Heroes" in my life, I have found that I'm able to better manage my time. I find myself focusing more on family, on being present in the moment, and reflecting more. This has led to a better quality of life, greater fulfillment, and more to show for my time.

So what is your Guitar Hero? What are you doing that is a waste of time? Are you spending hours scrolling through your Facebook feed? Do you get sucked into watching reality TV marathons? Whatever it is, stop! Use that time to read a book, learn a new skill, or be in the moment with loved ones. Let's break the cycle that Seneca observed and start being the toughest misers on the thing that matters the most- our time.

Have you found a "Guitar Hero" in your life? What did you do about it? What productive activity did you replace it with? I would love to here your feedback on this in the comments section below.

For further reading:

[Top 10 Ways to Break Bad Habits](#) (Website)

[The Power of Habit](#) by Charles Duhigg

[Lead Yourself First](#) by Kethledge and Erwin

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