

# Time Management: The Pickle Jar Theory

By: Jeremy Wright

There's something about a nice crunchy pickle, isn't there? I mean the aroma may make some people puke, but for me it's the taste and the juice forcing itself into your mouth like a divine cascade of flavor. As a wise man once said, "It's like a taste explosion in your mouth!"

Well, this article really has nothing to do with pickles, nor does it have anything to do with eating or wise men at all. In fact this article has nothing to do with anything tangible, unless you choose to follow along. Though you don't have to, I would strongly suggest it as you could have quite the nifty little craft project by the end of this piece!

## The Jar

Time management theories have come and gone. I've tried many of these and most have failed because of the sheer amount of time I needed to commit to the theory in order to save some time. The return just never seemed to justify the cost, if you know what I mean.

The latest theory of time management I heard has actually caused me to stop and think about how I run my entire life. This kind of thing doesn't happen very often, and no I don't mean thinking, cheeky readers! The theory that was recently taught in a Leadership course I'm enduring is called the Pickle Jar Theory.

## The Theory

Imagine if you will an, or for those crafty people among you just go get an, empty pickle jar – A big pickle jar. One that you could fit at least three of the largest pickles you've ever imagined inside of it. For those of you who don't like pickles, I apologize, feel free to substitute the words "pancake jar" for "pickle jar" as needed.

Okay, so you've got yourself a pickle jar. Now, put some large rocks in it. Put in as many as you possibly can. Let me know when it's full. Now, I know you think it's full, but put a couple more in anyway.

Okay, you've got a full pickle jar that you can't fit anything else into, right? Now, put some pebbles in. Put as many in as you can possibly fit, and raise your hand and bark like a pig when you feel your jar is full.

Now, take your full jar and take sand and, you guessed it, fill that jar until you can't possibly fit anymore in, and then add some water.

I am sure the significance of this little exercise hasn't escaped any of you. Each of us has many large priorities in our life, represented by the large rocks. We also have things which we enjoy doing, such as the pebbles. We have other things we have to do, like the sand. And finally, we have things that simply clutter up our lives and get in everywhere: water.

None of these are bad things. After all, we need the gamut of these objects—from large priorities to times of rest—in order to feel truly fulfilled. No time management theory should be without balance, and the Pickle Jar Theory is all about balance. You make time for everything, and everything simply fits well where it is supposed to fit.

<http://www.alistapart.com/articles/pickle>

Submitted by: Carmen Etienne