

Debbye Cannon-finding More Time in the Day

For the Multitasking Moms Telesummit 4/10

Lain: Hello and welcome to the Multitasking Moms Telesummit, this is Lain Ehmann of 30MinuteMartha.com, and I am here with Debbye Cannon for our call. If you have questions for Debbye you can email those to me at lainie9@gmail.com. If we have time at the end of the call I will shoot a couple of those questions at Debbye. Otherwise, you can also follow us on Twitter under #mumo, if you want to connect to other attendees to the telesummit.

I want to introduce our speaker today, Debbye Cannon. In the early 1980s Debbye's two children were under 2 years old and her husband was active duty Army. Life was eating her alive...no dinner ready, messy house, sticky floors, etc. She was overwhelmed. Then she started a home-based business. (What was she thinking?) For survival Debbye designed a system to simplify repetitive activities such as laundry, housekeeping, meals, and shopping so she could carve out time for her business. Soon friends and family wanted to know her SMARTcut® system. She began teaching local workshops and published *Organizing without Agonizing* in 1988.

After creating her own entrepreneurial ventures and over 25 successful years at internationally known direct selling companies, Debbye became the Business Mom Mentor. Experience has made her a great resource for

the business mom who finds herself struggling with juggling the demands of running a household, caring for her family members, volunteering in the community, and expanding business simultaneously. She now loves speaking, teaching, and working internationally with private clients who refer to her as 'the Fairy Godmother'. Her passion is mentoring business moms worldwide to find the SMARTcut® to simplify life and create serenity and prosperity for their businesses and families. Debbye will make your life simply brilliant. Wow! Welcome, Debbye. I can't wait to get all your secrets.

Debbye: I don't think you can get them all in an hour, but we'll give it a shot.

Lain: We'll give it a good shot.

Debbye: I've been piling them up for quite a long time.

Lain: It sounds like it. I have to start by asking what you were thinking when you started that home-based business with the two small children and the husband in the Army? What was going through your mind?

Debbye: I think a lot of times for us as moms especially when our children are really young we kind of miss our own identity...something to do besides watch Sesame Street - or whatever the current little people shows are - and have some adult companionship and somebody to talk to. It actually started because I was at a particular Army post in a temporary assignment with my husband and all the gals there were doing these home parties and I kept getting invitations to the parties. Finally I decided I'd rather go and demonstrate and get paid to go to the party than have to go and just

spend money. That was kind of what started the first of the home-based businesses in that area.

Lain: I think it's interesting to think about times when you've been overwhelmed and there's still that seed inside of you that wants to be expressed even as you're saying the laundry isn't done and the meals aren't getting cooked on time and the kids are clamoring for attention. No matter how much else is going on externally there's still something inside each of us, I think, that still needs to be heard even in the midst of chaos. I think of your life as an example of a great antidote that plays to that.

Debbye: I think it's a very common situation particularly if you've had some kind of career or worked outside the home or some other special talent or skill that you've nurtured pre-family, you can kind of feel like: *Where'd I go? I'm missing in action here.*

Lain: Exactly. What you said about Sesame Street...that might be entertaining when you're under 3 but only so much of Ernie and Bert before your brain starts to gel. I can completely identify. So one of the questions I had for you was: Pretty much every woman I talk to...no one says: *Oh, I've got it all figured out in my life. I have it so easy. I never have any stress.* Everybody is stressed out. They feel like they're doing too much, pulled in too many directions...Is it true in your opinion from the clients that you've worked with? Are we doing too much, or are we just not prioritizing and working effectively and efficiently?

Debbye: I think there's kind of a combination of things that are going on there. I think part of it is a pretty good sized hunk of 'guilty mommy' that's going on because we keep hearing that you need to have everything in balance. I think it's kind of this quest for perfection. I think we have a lot of guilt as moms that it's not all perfect. We don't have it in balance.

I was going through this myself several years back. In my business I was hearing that I needed to have this balance between my business and my family and my priorities and all this stuff. I was very frustrated by it and finally I kind of had a little sit down and talk with myself (I guess you could say) and I just pictured the word 'balance'. I played a little word **sniff bit** with myself and I pictured the word 'balance'. When I did that I pictured walking on a balance beam or maybe along the curb like little kids do when they're trying to balance and they have their hands out. I realized that this gave me almost an immediate sense of stress and constriction. I almost couldn't breathe because I felt like I had to concentrate so entirely in order to maintain this balanced position. Whether you're thinking of a balance beam or standing on your tippy toes or whatever, it just kind of makes you tense up. I thought: *That doesn't feel good.*

Then I started re-thinking and thought: *I don't know that I could really maintain balance.* Balance is just not something that I could keep long term. I can't stand on my tippy toes forever. It's a limited time deal. So I thought what I really needed to find in my life was a way to recreate rhythm. That word just sung to my heart. I could figure that I could create rhythm in my family and my business and my home. That was kind of a

maintainable idea to me. It gave me a sense of calm and peace to think that sometimes rhythm goes fast and sometimes it goes slow. That's the way our life is as moms, especially the multitasking moms (that is all moms).

That one little semantic word change made a big difference for me and I didn't feel so overwhelmed. So that's the first thing, I think. Get rid of that guilt of feeling like you have to have everything perfect and in balance because I'm here to tell you that balance is a mirage. It's just not going to happen. You'll hit it every now and then for these little brief shining moments as the song says, but it's not something that you can maintain.

Lain: It's not sustainable?

Debbye: It's not sustainable or realistic. Women are very cyclical so the idea of rhythm just plays into the way our life really does work. If we can create some rhythm by using some of the things we're going to talk about today, I think it will really help you to get some things going in a routine...not so much that it becomes boring. I think for us the routine has to be very flexible. That can be a very frustrating thing; too, because you can't just imagine that every single Monday morning at 10 o'clock this certain thing is going to happen. Your kids are going to get sick and things are going to happen so it just doesn't work that way.

I was literally walking out the door this morning to do some early morning grocery shopping before this call and my daughter, who is an adult with a

baby, called up and said: *I'm going to run an errand, can you go with me?*
I had to flex my plan just a little bit. That's the way we have to work.

I have a wonderful tool that I'll offer again at the end of the call but right now I'll tell you that it's at <http://bit.ly/weeklyplanning>. That is a free document that I use to plan my ideal week. I actually set up a plan so that I can kind of have a target to shoot for. I sit and figure out (probably 2-3 times a year as life changes) what's my best time to do this particular project, or what's the best time for me to work in my business or the best time to do the laundry. What's the best time to do the shopping? When am I going to run errands and when am I going to be at home? It's just a wonderful little tool and I hope everybody will go and visit that. You can also get to it from my website - BusinessMomMentor.com.

Lain: That's great. I really appreciate what you said about the flexibility that you stress is necessary. So often we think that we create this plan and this is how it's going to be. It's all written in stone and everything is going to go perfectly and I'm going to get to the gym at 9:32 and do 22 minutes of my cardio and it never works out like that. What happens is we set ourselves up for failure when we expect it to go perfectly. We get off kilter and then we're out of balance and we just kind of give up because it's just not happening. What you're saying by seeing it more as a dance with a rhythm (I love that because it is such a freeing concept.) you can make a little shift here and a little over there versus: *Okay, Johnny, you get 12 minutes of my attention and then Sally, you get 12 minutes of my attention.*

Debbye: I think we just have to be realistic. I've completed my years of in-home mothering, and I find sometimes that we do try to do too much. We'll talk about that a little bit more. I have a technique for that, but I think when you try to cram in too much, you just become frustrated because it does take longer. I was told years back that if you have anyone in your midst (your family or your care) that is under 2 years old, it's going to take at least twice as long to do anything. For me, I had two kids under 2 so I think you kind of go from no kids to 'I just had this baby and now...' You're just not used to allowing the amount of time that it takes. I know my daughter with her baby is often surprised at how long it takes to do things...especially to her husband. They were at the lumber store the other day and he said: *Boy, it's kind of hard to shop with a one year old.* I'm like: *Yeah.* It takes a lot of time because you're chasing her and pulling her in and out.

I didn't even take my kids to the grocery store until they were old enough to help with shopping. I used a babysitting co-op or I used the local childcare center because I got my grocery shopping down to where I could actually shop for a month in one hour. I would owe one hour of childcare. Your monthly grocery budget is equal to almost a small appliance so it was just crazy to me to think I was going to do that when I needed to look at the labels and compare prices and make sure I got everything I went after. To do that with the distraction of a child was just counterproductive at best.

Lain: So what would you say are some of the biggest mistakes that Moms and home managers make when they're planning out their schedules or even

just thinking about living life? I know that a lot of women don't even get to the planning stage. They just take each day as it comes and hope to survive to the end of it. What do we do that kind of shoots us in the foot?

Debbye: I think the first thing that I teach as far as being a professional organizer or what I prefer to call it...Simplification Strategist... I think there are three steps that I teach in a number of different topics. The first thing is to become clear on what it is that you're trying to do. What is your objective? Be very specific about that. That can apply whether you're trying to decide what you need to get done for today or this week, what you're going to do as far as a project...what is ultimate outcome, how's it going to look, what's it going to smell, what is the point...what do you need it be at the end? I think we have to visualize it and become very clear.

Another part of becoming clear is clearing stuff out. The National Association of Professional Organizers says we only use about 20% of the stuff that we have in our life. That's probably true in our closet or in our office or kitchen. If you could spend some time clearing out some stuff that is maybe from a previous age and stage of your family/your business, get some of that stuff out of the way. Clear out that clutter. I think it really does help to be able to just really have what you need to work with.

I don't think most people can possibly get rid of 80% of their stuff. I think that's crazy to even imagine. What if you could get rid of 20% of your stuff? Everything that you bring into your life is going to take your time,

your space, and your energy and probably your money. It doesn't matter whether it's a puppy dog or a pair of shoes or a baby or any person or thing that you bring in, it's going to require that. So in this abundant society we get so much stuff that that brings a lot of overwhelm that really slows us down and makes us not achieve what we want to get done. We're just fighting through. It's almost like you're in a swamp or quicksand and you're just trying to get yourself out.

I think the next step after clearing is that we need to find ways to contain. If we're talking about physical items like maybe in your closet, that containing might be putting things in a box and deciding that this drawer or this box is what I've allocated for my socks or my shorts or piece of clothing.

If you're doing a hobby, how much space do you allow for your scrapbooking things or your sewing things or your kitchen gadgets and gadgets if you're cake decorating? Contain it. Containing can also be done in time. There again, that's where that weekly planning sheet that I mentioned comes in handy because it helps you to block out and realize how much time you've already got spent before time really starts before the week or the day really starts.

You've got certain things that have to be accomplished. Maybe you have meals to prepare or laundry that needs to be done or errands. You have time that you have to drop your kids at school, pick them up from school,

and take them to extracurricular activities. There is a lot of time already spoken for in your life. I think you have to realize that that time is already contained and taken up so that you realize the amount of available time you have for the extras is probably not as much as you're trying to stuff into it for one thing.

Then that third piece is to continue. My continue step is usually about finding ways you can repurpose, recycle, reuse the work or the preparation that you've already made. That might be something like making a checklist so your kids know all of the things they need to gather up or do before they leave the house for school in the morning or all the things that you need to pack and carry for a business appointment or a trip. Maybe it's some kind of form or letter that you can send out in your business but find things that you can do once and then reuse it. It's my own version of Earth Day recycling.

Lain: We're saving our sanity instead of saving the planet.

Debbye: I think we do it all at once. Saving our sanity does save the planet.

Lain: That's true.

Debbye: Let's talk a little bit about this 'to do' list thing that people do. I think this is a big mistake. You asked about a specific mistake and I think that would be creating this 'to do' list. Your 'to do' list could be about as long as a roll of toilet paper...so much stuff that needs to be done. I really discovered

this when I was working in my business when I was trying to help women to grow their career position in their business and found that they were feeling guilty and overwhelmed because they were trying to do too much. I was acquainted with a philosophy called The Six Most Important Things. It's a daily checklist of the six most important things that you need to do that day.

I started... because I was working with home-based entrepreneurial women... I decided it would be very helpful to have them take two of those six things for the things that they needed to do for their family. What are the two most important tasks that you need to complete for your family today? It could be unload the dishwasher. It could be buy groceries. It could be doing the laundry...whatever two things that you have to get done today for your family.

Pick two things that you need to do for your business whatever those might be. You might have email that you need to write or a phone call that you might need to make or do some filing or bookkeeping or whatever it needs to be that you need to do for your business. If you're just trying to get two things done, this works to be a reasonable amount.

Then the last two things were very beneficial for me personally. Pick two things that you have on your priority list to do for yourself. We forget to put the oxygen mask on ourselves before we try to nurture the planet. So I think if you decide: *The two things I'm going to do for myself today might*

be taking a shower. I've been there! I know how many moms don't get to take showers. Maybe it's to go to the gym or eat a nutritious meal. Maybe it's just to take some time out to read a book or call a girlfriend. But take some time to think of the two things you could do for yourself. There are six things on the list and that's it.

Now the trick of this is to make sure you're not going to give yourself any negative self-talk if those six things don't get done. But it's a matter of bringing those six...kind of like the cream rising to the top. Those six things that you really want to do the most come up to the top of the list. You don't worry about all the zillion other things on your list. I don't even make a list. I put things actually on my calendar rather than starting this long 'to do' list. I like to say: *Well, I'm going to do this particular weekend project on Saturday afternoon.* I just put it in on my calendar on Saturday afternoon. I don't really start a 'to do' list. I think that's been very helpful to me. Working with six most important things, minimizing it down to two for the family, two for the business, and two for yourself is a wonderful technique.

Lain: Let me ask you a question on that. Let's use my family as an example because I know our routine. We've got the lunches in the morning. The little one I have to monitor her getting dressed because she's not really large enough yet to do all the brushing and stuff on her own. I'm trying to figure out what level of items might fit on the two for the family because I'm obviously not going to make two kids' lunches and not make the

third...although I have done that on occasion by accident. We won't talk about that. So what would I put on the list?

Debbye: One thing I'm hearing is the possibility or potential to have some of those children who are older maybe start to do their own lunch. Delegation is a big thing for me. I love to have some family participation. One of my clients told me I was the Queen of Outsourcing and outsourcing began at home.

Lain: I love that.

Debbye: So I would think in terms of doing something like that. Maybe you can set up a particular bin or box or cabinet where you could collect all the things that are necessary for your kids to make their own school lunches...if they're of an age. (I don't even know what ages your children are.) We certainly did that with our children so that they were responsible to make their own lunch but back to your original question. For me it would be the things that I'm more in charge of as the house manager. So if you're the one who is going to do the grocery shopping, the laundry, maybe clean the bathrooms or vacuum the upstairs or downstairs or something like that, it would be more of those kinds of weekly activities that you would want to put on that...kind of like chores.

Lain: Right... Gotcha. So, business it might be calling the bank to follow up on my business loan and do research on a new account...two larger things versus just the regular small items that are going to get done just in the course of living through your day?

Debbye: Yes, something that you would really have to pay attention. It wouldn't be the routine, everyday, we brush our teeth.

Lain: I got it. For some people like you were saying...that shower...

Debbye: I do have clients that do have difficulty with that particular item. If that needs to be a goal for you, maybe put a shower as one of your two personal things...something that you're going to make a concerted effort to get done that day.

Debbye: It sounds kind of funny to think that you're going to take a shower or brush your teeth, but I do remember those days as a mom of young children where a shower was a major undertaking and there just seemed to be so much more on the list that that fell to the bottom. It was more important that I nurse the baby. It was more important that I try to get some kind of order in the house. Everything was 'more important'...and I'm putting quotes around that. I love that you're making that an equal priority to the other two elements.

Debbye: If you're in those early stages of a very new baby, I think to use this is probably a very good tool. Give yourself permission that the two important things you're going to do for your family is you are going to nurse the baby and do a load of laundry. Maybe that's enough. There's a stage in motherhood where we have to be realistic. I can remember laughing that my major accomplishment in the day for being a mom was I didn't lose any of the children today. I got back home from my grocery shopping or

my errands and I still had two children when I got home. You just need to realize with a little bit of humor and laughter that we can't do everything that we used to do before we were taking care of children, especially small children.

Lain: One word that really resonated there was permission that we can take this really high standard off ourselves and give ourselves permission to be imperfect because we're going to be imperfect anyway just by virtue of being human.

Debbye: Maybe it's not really being imperfect, Lain, maybe it's really just changing our definition of what is perfect. Perfect doesn't have to be Martha. You would agree. My perfect is what I'm comfortable with. A lot of times guilt comes into this time management and this organizing and unhappiness that we bring upon ourselves instead of just realizing that I may be perfectly happy. I'm not saying that your floor has to be immaculate and your house has to be perfect all the time. I am not an organizer. I don't even use that word very much because I think people think of that as being perfected...having things ready for a military white glove inspection and I think that's crazy.

Your definition of being organized is really when you have it under control...when you're comfortable. If you're stressed, step back and look and say: *How many things am I taking onto myself or putting onto myself that I don't really need to do? Have I volunteered for too many things for*

this age and stage of where I am in my life right now? I'm nursing a baby or running this business or growing this xyz...maybe I'm putting in my garden.

You can't do everything all the time...that time and season kind of a philosophy that you need to get back to. We're so caught up because of technology and peer pressure and everything else. There's so much stuff we could do. Back in the *Little House on the Prairie* days they had a lot of menial work they had to do and that pretty much took up their time. Well, we have all these labor saving devices now...dishwashers and washing machines and microwave ovens, etc., and yet we have more stuff to do on our plate than our ancestors did. I think we need to just realize that we need to empty it out some.

Lain: I was thinking back to what you were saying about NAPO saying 80% of the stuff we don't even use...I wonder how that would apply to our time and our busyness... like 80% of the things on our calendar? I'm not saying this is true. It's just something to think about. It might be an equal thing where 20% of what we really value...most of what we really value falls into a very small number of items on our list.

Debbye: Exactly. I've watched this 80/20 concept in business and in life for a long time and I think you're right on. You see all this other stuff you could do but if you really had to pare down to what is really going to matter or what

really counted for you, how much more time would you spend doing something different?

Lain: Do you have any questions that women can use as a filter to help determine that? I think we get into this mindset where it's all important. There's no way we can drop anything. We can't drop the Library Committee. We can't drop Little League...but we can if we take a step back. I'm just trying to think of a filter for people that could in some way assist them in making some of those decisions.

Debbye: You'll probably laugh but the kind of question I say to myself is: *Would the world blow up if I didn't do this?* You know what? Not usually...If I didn't participate in this committee or do this or do that...It doesn't mean you can't do that ever, it just means maybe not right now. If you have something that's very important...back to nursing that new baby...that age and stage of your life is a very critical time. Maybe right now is just not the best time for that. It's not like you have to do it forever.

I think over-committing our kids is a big deal. Depending on the number of kids you have in your family...how many of these extracurricular activities is really sane, or do you start to just lose all concept of family time? I know in our children's latter years (about 4th grade and up) we did some homeschooling. That homeschooling time kind of brought my family back down to reality. We weren't rushing for the bus and rushing for this and rushing for that. We found ourselves not participating in quite so much

stuff outside the home. We limited it to one activity for each of the kids. By the time we did that and just had a life, it was plenty. So I think we get so caught up...your neighbors' kids are all in soccer and tee-ball and taking piano and ballet and gymnastics. Your kids just don't even have time to breathe and then you don't either.

Lain: It always seems like any one thing whether it's for me or the kids isn't a big deal. Oh, sure. I can give you an hour here and I can do this here. Of course, we can add on this play date or that class for the child, and then you look at the schedule and every square inch of it is filled in with some kind of activity because there's no one big thing that's taking up all of that. It's just scores of little things I've found for us.

Debbye: I guess it's activity confetti.

Lain: That's exactly what it looks like.

Debbye: I think when you use this weekly rhythm plan that I use as a tool and you kind of put those basic things...it's color coded so you can see what the family activities are and what the business activities are...once you do that you can put those things in. It's like putting a puzzle together. You think: *Gosh. There's not that much extra time. I have to save this much time to take the kids to school and this time right here is going to be for making dinner. We have this activity there and that meeting over there.* When you start putting that in, you really see right there in black and white and living color in front of you how much stuff is already filled up.

Lain: Can you give that address one more time? I know we have had some more people join the call so I want to make sure they get that. It was bit.ly/weeklyplanning –

Debbye: <http://bit.ly/weeklyplanning>.

Lain: That is a free weekly planning guide that Debbye has to scope out your week looking at it as a whole versus any particular day or hour at a time so you can get into that rhythm. Is that correct?

Debbye: That is correct. It's a marvelous tool that I've used for many years in my direct selling business. My kids have used it to plan out their college courses. I just actually last Friday taught a webinar on Time Planning and Time Management. I'll give the link to connect for that. We're just barely getting the page for that up but it's at Time-Simplified.com. That will give people a link where they can go and it's the webinar and the templates and the handouts. This weekly planning guide is included in that. It also does annual and monthly planning. It's a 35 minute class...so less time than we've already been on the phone today. It's full.

My forte is cutting things down and making them simplified...finding the SMARTcut® or the short, quick, easy way to do things is really what I'm about, so I do make these products very quick and easy to use so they can be implemented quickly and easily.

Lain: Fabulous.

Debbye: I'll share with you some staggering, eye-opening thoughts about the amount of time that we spend to do things. I have run some numbers on some things that I find very amusing...almost scary. The cost of meal mismanagement- the amount of time it takes you to plan, shop, prepare, eat, cleanup meals is staggering. I'm sure most of the moms would agree with that that it's like every time you look up it's time to do another meal. There was nothing hardly more dangerous than asking my mother what was for dinner. Now that I've been a mother for many years I understand why. It's such an endless thing. Besides the fact that it stresses you out to have to come up with meals and get them on the table and you're worried about providing good nutrition for your family and keeping them healthy and keeping the budget inline and all these things that are involved.

If you spend an hour three times a day (counting shopping time, preparation and cleaning up time - you can easily spend that amount of time...365 times a year), that's over 1,000 hours a year you spend just feeding your family. If you have a business where you can make as much as \$50 an hour (and for the entrepreneurs I work with that's not an unrealistic goal...many direct selling companies you can make that in home selling parties and that sort of thing) that time is worth over \$54,000 a year. That's not counting the cost of food.

It's important that we use our time carefully and that we realize how valuable that time is. The meter is not running like on a taxi cab or

something or I think we might be a little more vigilant about how we are spending our time and how much gets wasted.

If you have four people in your family and you're doing their laundry...which I don't do after the age of 8 for my children...but if you spent 6 hours a week doing laundry...which I think is a reasonably conservative amount...that could be worth \$15,000 to you. So it's very important. There again we come back to this outsourcing or delegation. We taught our children to do laundry the year that they were 7. I did the laundry with them....their own personal laundry... and the year they were 8 they began to do their own laundry because that's \$15,000 worth of Mom's time that's going down the hole. Everybody in their family does their own laundry. If anyone decides to help out, that's a random act of kindness.

I think we need our family members (spouses and children) to be very responsible, independent, and able to take care of themselves. They need to be able to cook and buy their own groceries and to manage their checkbook...all these basic life skills that they don't get in traditional schools. I think it's very important that we bring those into our home and that saves Mom some time so she isn't the workhorse that does everything, but everybody is contributing to the work that has to be done in the family. Then we have some time. You mentioned that you loved one of my slides that shows the family having a group hug and that's how you get that. You get everybody participating.

I have a system that's part of that Time Simplified program that I mentioned....where you figure out all the tasks that have to be done and you kind of have to have a way of divvying those up. One of the families I worked with would have probably 4-5 kids in the family and they were all at least school age. When they sat down to look at the activities (the tasks) that needed to be done on a weekly basis within the family, the Mom had all the tasks. Maybe one kid had take out the trash and one might have feed the dog or something, but 90% probably or more were being done by the Mom to keep that family functional.

Once she sat down and really looked at these specific tasks by task she could say: *Oh, look. You could be in charge of doing this and you could do that...maybe we do a little fruit basket turnover in a week or two and everybody gets a turn, but there are ways.* I guess that came from my years from working as a Girl Scout leader where I had troops and kaper charts where people had to take turns helping out and getting the jobs done. Really, a family is no different from that. If we can divide out some of those things that need to be done in our family, then we can save some of that time and turn that into some quality time with our family.

I think as parents we need quality and quantity time. When my children were young there was a lot of talk about just...women were starting to leave home and work outside the home, which is neither here nor there with me...but I think there was a little bit of discussion about 'if you have quality time with your children then that's sufficient' but I think we need both.

Lain: Yes, I agree with you. So we have cutting down on the number of things we're doing by prioritizing and we've talked about delegating and outsourcing some of the tasks. I know I'm simplifying quite a bit here. What else can we do to be more efficient in the tasks we have to do? I bet if we go through and red line a bunch of items, we're still going to come up with a lot more to do each day than we could hope to accomplish...at least efficiently. I'm sure many of us are not operating at full capacity or efficiently. What else can we do?

Debbye: It's funny you should say that. I happened to pull out a little list I had in my interview packet today and it's the Busy Woman's SMARTcuts® to Saving 10+ Hours Per Week. I'll just run down the list and give you quite a few of those.

Lain: Great...

Debbye: The first one on the list was to **have your children do their own laundry**. As I mentioned, we did that from the age of 7. We washed by the person and not by the color, which is kind of a unique thing, but I'm a fabrics major so I can tell you it's just fine. That will save you about 8 hours per child in a month. That's a pretty significant amount of time. **Don't shop after work or go to the grocery store every other minute**. You'll get home at least 40 minutes faster every day. You can speed up your shopping for groceries and shop maybe once every 2-4 weeks. You'll save a ton of money and about 17-19 hours a month. Just using my meals-simplified.com...my meal system will help you create a master set of meals. It comes with over 30 recipes there. You can put them on the table

in 15 minutes or less. That's a ton. Cooking nutritious meals is of course going to get rid of the guilty mommies. If you can do those nutritious meals I suggested in 15 minutes or less. I planned ahead for the emergency guests or no power or 'I'm not going to be home tonight...or I have to take a meal to somebody else...' This helps you to figure out what all those emergency contingency plans are going to be so it's no big deal. Inevitably you will get the call from your church or neighbors or whatever and somebody says: *So and so needs a meal brought in.* It's the busiest day of your world, but I already know what I'm taking because I have something that I can keep on stock in my pantry and it's like my signature take-out meal.

Lain: You can't go to MacDonald's in 15 minutes. It's going to take you well more than that to get you dinner from a take-out place.

Debbye: Right. So that will save 10 hours a month. **Organizing your receipts** can save 2-6 hours a month...just the time you don't spend searching around for that receipt that you need to return that pair of socks. I returned something to Home Depot today...those kinds of things. Invariably you can't find the receipt...so getting a system to organize that...**Buying a year's supply** of hosiery or underwear or whatever...Figuring out how much you need for your family to go through the laundry cycle...whatever your laundry cycle might be. I recommend if you're going to do weekly laundry for each person in the family that you're going to need to have about 9 sets of clothing, underwear and socks. If you have a whole bunch more than that, then you need to thin it out because you're having to spend time putting away too much and you're probably also getting into a situation of waiting too long to do the laundry and then it becomes very

overwhelming because you then have 3 days worth of laundry instead of one load. Cutting back... happiness is the place between just enough and too much. I think you need to look in there and see. I keep **emergency things in my car**. We have a new granddaughter, as I mentioned, in the family and so in my car I have a pacifier, a couple of diapers, the Wet Wipes, a blanket, a change of clothes, a Sippy cup...all the things that would try my life into a tizzy. If you have young children keeping a **spare set of clothes in the car** can be a huge lifesaver. Plan ahead for these things that just ruin your day...your kid throws up in the back seat...you're in the middle of this and going to there...If you had a change of clothes in the car it would be no big deal....so just working with a net is what I call it.

Keeping your travel bag prepacked with your toiletries...Getting ready to go on a trip it can save at least an hour for every trip you might take during the year to not have to round up your toiletries and you can forget your hairbrush, toothbrush, and toothpaste. How many times have you taken a trip and gotten off without something important like your underwear? Just **getting yourself organized**...I have a product called Travel-Simplified.com. You can **create rules in your email folders**. This is a huge savings. I don't even know how many hours this would save you if you use rules to sort your incoming emails so that you could tell at a glance. If I'm working with a private client I set up a folder in Outlook and her email gets shot directly into that folder. If she sends me an email I know immediately. I don't have to look through last week for it. I have an email folder for the members in my family so that if their email comes in I can see it quickly. I sort the newsletters that I get because I don't need to look at those until I get to the block of my rhythm schedule where I've set

out some time to go through and read my business emails. Just using things like that can be a huge, huge savings.

You may need to **give up using coupons**. If you are at a certain age and stage where you have a little bit more money than you do time, then maybe it's not a good time for you to use coupons. If you're not working outside the home then saving 50 cents or a dollar is a big deal, but if you are working as an entrepreneur in the home or outside the home or you have a paycheck (I think we're all working Moms.) then I think you need to stop and say: *What is my income per hour? How long am I spending doing my coupons? Am I saving as much as I would be making if I were putting this effort into my work?* The Fairy Godmother will tap you on the head and say: *You have permission for this time and this season to not use coupons. They take too much time.* You may be buying products that are more expensive than you would normally be buying, so maybe it's just not the time for that. All that time and season thing.

I think **rationing your junk food** can save you a lot of time, not to mention money, because you're not going back to the store and buying junk food all the time whether you're stopping at the drive thru at MacDonald's or buying cookies and chips and stuff...just to realize what is the appropriate amount that you've designated as available junk food or munchy food. We use little red sticker dots as part of my meals simplified product (and green sticker dots) to say Stop and Go. I used that when my kids couldn't even read yet just to help them know that these are Mom-approved-eat-at-your-own-freewill...if it has a green dot on it. If it's got a red dot that means you

need to check in with Mom. Either I'm rationing it or I may be saving it. Maybe I bought extra chips for the Super Bowl party and I don't want you guys to eat them before sundown.

Lain: That's a great idea.

Debbye: Full of things in the Meal-Simplified program that will save a lot of money....putting your **recurring your bills on auto draft** so you're not having to stop and pay those and getting late fees and that sort of thing. That could be a big help. I do a lot of my **bills**, if there's no extra charge, I'll put them **on a credit card** and then I just have that one credit card. I use that same technique with my son with his ADD because it makes fewer things that he has to manage. He doesn't have multiple bills coming in. He has that one credit card. He doesn't abuse his credit cards. He knows how much he can count on and then you can also get a card where you can get some sort of cash back or frequent flyer miles or something like that. That can be another good one.

This is one of my mom's favorites: Buying a **year's supply of school's supplies during the sales**. Just before school starts the stores will be putting things on sale. My mother would buy a whole year's supply of notebook paper and maybe two sets of Crayons® and she put them aside in a particular place for us and that was our allotment for the year. We learned to use it up conservatively because that's how much we had. We would have a new box of Crayons® midyear or extra pens or pencils but we kept track of our stuff because we knew that was what we had to use. She bought it all at the beginning of the year when things were cheap. We

didn't end up running to WalMart in the middle of the night because we were out of notebook paper. That happens a lot for my clients. You can **watch your favorite TV shows on Tebow or DVD**. That can save you 20 minutes every episode just not having to watch the commercials.

Lain: That's amazing.

Debbye: Even if you have just one show that you watch that's going to be almost an hour a month that you can gain back just by doing something like that. I particularly watch a lot of TV on DVDs that I get from the local library. You can also watch them now on hulu. That's another quick way to save some time. So there are 13 of them right there.

Lain: That's awesome. It definitely has my mind thinking of similar things like with the school supplies. I do that with the kids' goggles for swimming and if they lose them, that's just it. They either have to pay for it themselves...I buy two pairs each for the beginning of the season and that's it. There are a lot of ways you can carry each of these over into other examples that will work for people's individual lives. It's just great. Wow. I feel smarter already.

Debbye: Good. We want you to be simply brilliant. That's what we promised at the beginning of this teleseminar.

Lain: I do....I do. Why don't you tell us a little bit more about some of your guides and teleclasses. What else do you have going on so if people want to track you down and follow you and get some more tips or follow up with something that struck a nerve with them? Share what else you have going on right now.

Debbye: I have a lot of things going on. We're all multitasking, busy moms. My main website is BusinessMomMentor.com, and that one go-to place where you can kind of keep track of what's happening. All my products would be listed in the Store there. I also have separate URLs that would help people go to some specific thing like the travel or the meals or the planner. I have a \$7 video on Planner-Simplified.com which is just a short 10 minute video that shows you how to make more effective use of a paper planner, which one is my favorite, and how I use it. That's been very popular and is a relatively new product.

As I said, we just did a webinar last week that was called Time Simplified and they all have a dash. So it's whatever...Time-Simplified.com. There's a rhythm to my titles. We have Time-Simplified.com which is a webinar I just did that is 35 minutes. It ultimately will be inclusive of a transcription. That isn't ready yet, but if you order it, you will get the transcription as soon as it's done in a few days.

We also have Meals-Simplified.com. All of these you can get to in the shop area of BusinessMomMentor.com, if you want to go that route. Meals-Simplified is my product that tells you the systems and it's an ala carte smorgasbord of different ways you can do preplanning for meals in

reusable forms so that you will have a small investment of time up front, but I've used my system for 30 years. A couple of hours up front was nothing compared to the amount of time I've saved. They're very simple things and I've now included in my product my recipe collection, my SMARTcut® recipe collection where I have over 30 meals that are on the table in 15 minutes or less. I have hyperglycemia. I can't spend a lot of time getting dinner ready. I really did a lot of searching.

I'm a lifetime member of Weight Watchers so I wanted things that were nutritionally decent. I wanted things that were normal food that your family and husband and kids would eat...things that you knew what they were when you saw it on the recipe sheet. You didn't have to go to the deli department and the gourmet section to ask what on earth that ingredient was. It's normal food and a quick way to have that dinner done. I think that one is probably one of the greatest things that would save you the most time in a hurry...that Meal Simplified. I have a Travel-Simplified.com and that has a video and a guidebook with it. It shows you all my SMARTcut® tips for traveling and making that go fast whether you're traveling with business or family. Those are the things.

We have some others up and coming. I have a Tips blog..BIZMomTips.com is my blog. That's one way you can use an RSS feedburner type thing. Whenever I make a post there it comes right into your email box. You set up a box for me so you don't have to look at it until you're ready to look at it. It just saves it until you can do it. I have BizMomTV.com. It's got some videos on it. I've got lots of ways. I do

personal one-on-one work both virtually and I travel internationally to work with private clients. If someone would really like to get a hold of me they can go to the Contact Me section on my website...BusinessMomMentor.com, and talk to me directly about what their particular need is and what would be the most effective way for them to get the guidance they need. Everybody's got different needs. This is not a one-size-fits-all deal. I think that's what sets me apart from traditional organizers is I don't want to just come in and help you clean out your closet or office or whatever. I want to teach you to fish. I want to put those systems and those ways of thinking in your brain so that you continue that. Your age and stage of your family is going to change and once you kind of get the concept of 'oh, that would be the SMARTcut® way to work, you'll find yourself thinking that way.

Lain: This is great.

Debbye: Now I've probably overwhelmed you instead of simplifying...

Lain: No, it's fantastic. I'm definitely...I've got a list here of things I'm going to check out and take some next steps. I can definitely use a few more hours in my month as I know everyone could. Debbye, thank you so much.

I've been speaking with Debbye Cannon, the Business Mom Mentor, at BusinessMomMentor.com. We've been talking about ways to streamline your life and not to get balance...but to get into rhythm. I want to thank you, Debbye, for taking time to talk with us and everyone for calling in and listening. This is Lain Ehmann with Multitasking Moms Telesummit and

The Multitasking Moms Telesummit
Lain Ehmann
www.multitasking-moms.com
Debbye Cannon
Businessmommentor.com

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30MinuteMartha.com. Debbye, have a fabulous day. Thank you so much for the time. I so appreciate it and we'll talk soon.

Debbye: Thanks, Lain. Bye.