

# LESSON IN LIVING

## FIVE KEY TIMES

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What does this title indicate? What is a "KEY TIME?" *A Key Time is a pivotal point in our day. It is a time when we change direction. It is usually repeated day after day.* There are generally FIVE of them. They are: ARISE and RETIRE, LEAVE and RETURN, and MEALS. If we gain control of these Five Key Times, the rest of our days will go much more smoothly.

It works well when we have a ROUTINE for each of these Key Times. As we follow the same routine day after day, we build skill and speed. Pretty soon, we can enjoy creative thinking while we are busily engaged in our routines.

It helps even more to have HAPPY HABITS worked into each of these routines. Some of the Happy Habits I inserted into my routines are: breathe, stretch, posture, drink and smile.

Once we solve the question of what is to be included in a routine, we would do well to MEMORIZE each one. This is easiest when we cluster "reminder words" into groups of three. For example, here is my current ARISE routine: Stretch-Breathe-Pray + Bed-Spot-Drink. "Spot" means a short workout on trouble areas. "Drink" means a glass of lemon and water. When I was younger, I first included tennis and then aerobic dancing in my ARISE routine. Since I became a senior, I walk (shuffle?) and do spot work instead.

Here is my current RETIRE routine: Walk-Phone-Plan + Journal-Groom-Pray. Armed Forces personnel follow routines. Hospital personnel follow routines. Missionaries follow routines. Why shouldn't we?

Note that activities engaged in once, twice, or three times a week are not labeled as Key Times. Instead, they are blocked out on the Weekly Schedule form. Only activities to be repeated daily are listed as routines in our Key Times. It works best to know how much time each routine takes and block it out on the Weekly Schedule. (I block 30 minutes each for my ARISE and RETIRE routines.)

In some stages of our lives we are bombarded with interruptions. We need to take these into account when we allot time. It will ease much of our stress. When I was raising our six children, they first dawdled and took too long to groom for the day. We made up routines which they memorized. When they became detoured, I asked them where they left off. They mumbled their routine until they caught up and soon they were back on track again. Getting ready for the day then took only a fraction of the time it used to. I hope this LIL helps busy parents and homemakers.

*This was written in 2005 when Elma was 85-years-old. The entire LIL series may be found on [intonmilano.com](http://intonmilano.com).*