

# LESSON IN LIVING

## MULTI-TASKING

Elma Allen Milano

Remember when grandmas spent their last years crocheting and doing other needlework as they sat rocking contentedly? Though they knew it not, they were actually spending their last days productively as they sat there "multi-tasking."

When I was raising my family, I taught them to care for more than one task at a time. I called it doing "while" things. For example, "while" soaking in the bath tub, why not practice memorizing? "While" doing the dishes, why not learn songs? I have added to my memory bank by using my walking and soaking times for memorizing. It takes repetition to make it a happy habit, but it is worthwhile.

Today, they give the sophisticated title of "multi-tasking" to the habit of caring for several jobs at once. If we focus on making this a happy habit, we will find ways to increase our productivity. We can ponder on ways we can double up on our tasks. When we do so, we will be amazed at how many opportunities there are.

One thing for sure is that we can sing or whistle a happy tune as we work. My father and his mother made this a way of life. Dad was known as the "Whistling Cop" while on the Los Angeles Police Department as he happily rode his motorcycle all over that rapidly growing city during the prohibition and depression years. His mother raised twelve children under difficult conditions. There was a happy radiance about her as she sang/whistled while working. Here was a favorite tune:

### I HAVE TWO LITTLE HANDS

Bertha Kleinman

*I have two little hands folded snugly and tight  
They are tiny and weak yet they know what is right  
During all the long hours 'til daylight is through  
There are plenty of things for these two hands to do.*

*Kind Father I thank thee for two little hands  
And ask thee to bless them 'til each understands  
That children can only be happy all day  
When two little hands have learned how to obey.*

With all our modern conveniences, it is very easy to multi-task. We can do our laundry without chopping wood, making a fire, or standing over a big tub of boiling water. We can do dishes without washing and wiping. We can travel without hitching up a horse. With modern fabrics, we do very little ironing. Let us be thankful for these appliances, which make it so easy for us to MULTI-TASK!

*This was written in 2006 when Elma was 86-years-old. The entire series of Lesson in Living is on [lintonmilano.com](http://lintonmilano.com).*

