



# My Take on Jamaican Time

*I dedicate this article to the exquisite hosts at Bromley, Alex and Johnathan, their wonderful friends and staff, especially Connie, and the dozen sparkling souls I spent a whole week with: Mickaela, Val, Robin, Vicki, Taylor, Kathleen, Paige, Emily, Steve, Cheryl, Mckensie, and DJ! Much love to all of you for teaching me so much!*

Sorry, but I have to brag a little about taking time for myself (as I so often recommend to others) and jumping into a week-long Wellness Retreat in Jamaica that my good friend, Mickaela Summers created. I'm hoping this will become a regular thing for her and her good friend, Val Hickman, because it comes so naturally to them, and I've since committed to doing this for myself at least once a year. It was the best vacation I've taken so far in my life! I came back home rejuvenated, to say the least.

While there, we learned the term, "**Jamaican Time**", explained to us that if someone says they're coming over or doing something later, it could be anything from a few minutes to three days, and no one has any anxiety over the exact time. Not by coincidence, some other widely-used phrases used there are, "No Problem," "No Worries," and "Ya, Mon." Wouldn't it be awesome if these were the normal replies in the U.S. too? And wouldn't it be great if we could always operate on our own time, or at least most of the time? It's sad that we don't expect it and that we're often surprised when we get what we want, in this country, isn't it?

I came home promising myself I'd do my best to operate on Jamaican Time, as much as possible, but I've expanded the definition, based on my observations of the wonderful group of people I spent time with there. I'm going to call it, "Mary Anne Time" and I suggest you name your own time and methods after yourself, too. No matter what, you need to incorporate whatever your dream of "time" includes; it needs to be as individual and unique as you are. Only you know what it's best for you, no matter what!

That's the first point, to **spend the present moment doing whatever is fun and happy for you**, no matter what anyone else is doing, and no matter what anyone else expects of you, at the time. Now, obviously, we all have certain responsibilities, but even so, we can find lots of ways to keep our focus on something positive, such as focusing on the fun you can have with people or thinking about your dreams, rather than on mundane tasks. Truly, the majority of our time is ours, to choose what to do. Whether it's free time or chore time, usually we can still ask ourselves, "What do I really feel like doing, right now?" I always try to do this when looking at housework, since sometimes I'm just in the mood to do dishes rather than laundry, etc. As long as I'm doing something productive with my time, who cares what order it gets done in?

It's all about staying **TRUE TO YOURSELF**, at all times, or at least, as often as you can. It's about not being concerned with what anyone else is doing over what you want to do. This trip gave me every example possible, from sometimes wanting to cleanse and heal, to other times wanting to indulge and express every side of my being. Some times were for serious, deep, still meditation, while other times were meant to scream and yell or play and dance. Some times were meant to share, while other moments called us to keep our thoughts to ourselves or even spend some time alone. At times, we were inspired to teach one another, while other moments were for learning. Time was spent growing, along with time spent staying in our comfort zones. Nature called us sometimes, while touristy, socializing needed to be felt other times. Some moments were made to be warm and dry and basking in the sun, or taking on the protection of cloud cover, while other moments were made to swim in the rain. Many precious moments were spent flying and falling, with

the next moments supporting or catching, literally! We all had both sad, heart-tugging moments, tears and all, and ecstatic, belly-filled laughter, often accompanied by tears as well!

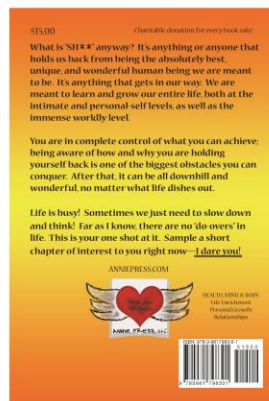
For an entire week, I watched the majority choosing to honor themselves by doing whatever their hearts were calling them to do; the positive environment overwhelmed me to the point I have a new dream. My new dream is to live the second half of my life here, surrounded as often as possible by people that respect themselves enough to do whatever their hearts call them to do, without any regard to judgment by themselves or others. In my mind, this is the essence of unconditional love of self and others. Additional love comes in to play through the **automatic benefit to others when we follow our heart**. Trust it, try it, and pay attention to all the good that appears for everyone!





Throughout the entire trip, I savored being on “Mary Anne Time” wherever it called me to, moment-to-moment. It was incredible, and I had to scold myself a little for not learning this valuable, self-loving act sooner. Before this trip, I had slowly learned to give myself some time to choose whatever I wanted, here and there, but really only in recent years of realizing how important this is to my well-being, and to the rest of the world. Somehow, it just sank in deep on this trip, possibly from the whole group always encouraging one another to follow their heart and do whatever they wanted to. It’s right in line with the Jamaican phrase, “Anyting you want!” How fitting! **All I have to do for myself, at every moment, is “Anyting I (my heart) wants.”** In other words, do whatever makes your heart feel full and joyful, as it allows us to be the REAL person we are meant to be. This includes choosing to really be how we want to be, in all moments, rather than self-inflicting pain when we decide to be stressed. Stress is self-made; no excuses here. No one else can create it for you, even when you have something you need to do, or somewhere you need to be, even if you don’t think you’ll enjoy it. You still get to choose what you do with all of your moments! Why sabotage your precious moments?

I’ll forever think of Jamaican Time as leaving the whole stress of what time or day it is, and the fear of what others think behind, as it really robs us from focusing on what we really want to be doing or thinking about, and it’s the ultimate sin against ourselves. My cell phone didn’t have any service, even to display the time, and it was such a blessing. No one minded ringing a bell for meals or when it was time to get up, or to tell me what time it was if I had to be ready to go play in the river or waterfall. Someone is always keeping track of time, so I really don’t need to, all the time. I can’t even

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tell you how relaxing and freeing it is, to not care. Just making yourself live moment to moment, choosing to do whatever you want honors your heart and your true essence. Please give it a whirl whenever you can, and **just enjoy BEING!** I also recommend saying this out loud, replacing my name with yours, of course, “I show myself love and respect; I’m on Mary Anne Time!”

**Much Love, Mary Anne**

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