Time Management: Balancing Work, Life, and Health

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Today’s Questions

- Why is time management important?
- How do we like to procrastinate?
- How do we spend our time and how do we know how we spend our time?
- What techniques help us to organize our time?
- How can we use our time more effectively?
Who are you?

Reflect
• On a blank sheet of paper, list the aspects of your life (private and professional) that are important to you.
• Rank them from most important to least important.

• What does private and professional wellbeing mean to you?
• What are the tell-tale signs when you are stressed/overburdened?
The importance of self-care

Reflect
What does self-care mean to you?

Practicing good self-care might mean:
• Basic needs - **physical health**
  • sleep, food, water, exercise, hygiene
• Recreational, social, and down-time - **mental health**
• Recognizing stress and symptoms of burnout
  • anxiety, fatigue, lack of purpose, detachment, cynicism
• Be forgiving
Know how you spend your time

How did you spend your time last week?

Assessing your time expenditure:
• List all the **tasks** that you do in a particular week
• Identify **tasks** that are specific to a particular day
• Organize your list into ~6-8 **activities**:
  • Basic needs
  • Teaching
  • Studying
  • Research
  • Communication
  • Personal time
  • Recreation
Schedule everything

- Sketch out a schedule of **activities**, rather than a to-do list
- Don’t lose sight of what’s important!

- Schedule in some down time and some flex time
- There will be days when it all goes awry – that’s okay
- Find the system that works for you
- Ask others how they work and manage their calendars
- You cannot do it all, and that’s okay too

- “I didn’t have the time” vs. “I didn’t make the time”
- i.e., take ownership of your schedule and plan deliberately
What is procrastination?

Reflect
How and why do you procrastinate?
Sapadin and Maquire (1996) identify six types of procrastination:

• The Perfectionist: “BUT I want it to be perfect!”
• The Dreamer: “BUT I hate all those bothersome details!”
• The Worrier: “BUT I’m afraid to change!”
• The Defier: “BUT why should I have to do it?”
• The Crisis Maker: “BUT I only get motivated at the last moment!”
• The Overdoer: “BUT I have so much to do!”

How do we overcome procrastination?

• Divide a large task into smaller pieces
• Make an arbitrary start
• Set deadlines (and make them count!)
• Reward yourself by goal or by time
• Work by ritual
One way to prioritize: The Eisenhower matrix

- **Important, but not urgent**
  - Decide when you will do it
- **Urgent and important**
  - Do it immediately
- **Not important, not urgent**
  - Do it later (or delete)
- **Urgent, but not important**
  - Delegate to somebody else

Graphic from: https://www.joshmedeski.com/posts/eisenhower-matrix-todoist
Finding your own rhythm

Reflect
How do you work best?

Some facets to different working styles:
• Start hard, end easy (“Eat that frog”) vs. Start easy, end hard
• Deadline fulfilment
• External accountability
• Time of day
• Working in silence vs. working with music
• Working alone vs. working collaboratively
• Working in bursts of time vs. working in big blocks of time
• The two-minute rule vs. “The Tyranny of Tiny Tasks”
Some additional resources

Setting work priorities:
https://www.wework.com/ideas/professional-development/creativity-culture/how-to-prioritize-work

Time management techniques:
https://www.brightpod.com/boost/10-popular-time-management-techniques

https://todoist.com/productivity-methods/pomodoro-technique

https://www.usa.edu/blog/time-management-techniques/

and many, many others...