Smarter, Not Harder
Optimizing Your Personal Resources

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Occupational Therapy

Helping people to do what they want and/or need to do

What is your favorite occupation? What do you like to do?
Lifestyle Redesign®

The process of acquiring health-promoting habits and routines in daily life

(Clark et. al, 1997)
Energy is impacted by many inputs: discipline is just one; there are also other things like interest in the activity, rest, overall health

There is time for your priorities – not everything you want gets to be a priority

We are all human, no one expects you to be superhuman
Which is why we need to do resource management – balancing inputs and outputs
Adjusting activity participation in order to balancing energy output and energy input to optimize function, well-being and satisfaction

A dynamic process that occurs over time and is rarely actually at this even stable point

Requires monitoring and attention – produces efficiency d/t increased focus and less need to re-do/re-learn things
Myths
- Balance is daily
- Balance feels even and still
- Balance means easy
- Balance means always well-rested, happy, productive, and growing
More true:
- Balance is in flux, seasonal, over time
- Balance is uneven, dynamic, patchy, requires attention not to trip
- Balance is intentional and effortful, the world is big and full of challenges and opportunities, we are only one human being,
- Balance is not perfection, not an end state, but a process
-
So in order to keep balance, use what you have – weekends, holidays, winddown time before bed

And engage in self-care...
Self care for me is not the same as self care for you.

I kinda enjoy shopping; it is something that I did with my mom growing up and puts me in a kind of flow state – like a giant game of I Spy

For my boyfriend it is super draining – too much info to process, too many options to consider and decisions to make.

IF IN PERSON, TURN TO PARTNER TO DISCUSS YOUR SELF CARE ACTIVITIES
IF ONLINE, TAKE A MOMENT TO WRITE DOWN A FEW
## Self-Care Menu Examples

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Probably Restorative &amp; Not &quot;Sticky&quot;</th>
<th>Maybe Not Restorative or Sticky</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>- Stretching</td>
<td>- Paying bills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Weight training</td>
<td>- Attending a meeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Walking</td>
<td>- Worrying about not finishing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Getting a snack</td>
<td>- Catching up on small tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Having a meal</td>
<td>- Calling/texting certain</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Drinking some water or tea</td>
<td>people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Laying on the floor</td>
<td>- Responding to email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Meditating</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Listening to music</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Tidying the workspace</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Making a meal</td>
<td>- Scrolling through social</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Doing a creative hobby</td>
<td>media</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Calling friends or family</td>
<td>- Browsing the internet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Checking in with your</td>
<td>- Playing video games</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>higher purpose</td>
<td>- Watching a show</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Journaling</td>
<td>- Shopping online</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Cuddling with a pet</td>
<td>- Checking email</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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How do you bring a sense of balance into your life?

balancing on a bike – if you go limp, you fall over; if you lean to far to one side or the other you fall over; if you try to stay still, you fall over

The key is to first put in the effort to learn how to balance and move forward – then gradually you can reduce effort as it starts to feel more natural
Your Self-Care Activities

Which are regularly part of your week?

Which are regularly pushed out?

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Skills for Managing Energy

- Personalize your plan
- Pace yourself
- Switch activities
- Get enough sleep
Plan your day with your energy flow in mind.

Energy level 1-10 – 1 = zombie; 10 = your best, whatever that looks like
Plan to work only as long as you can focus and then take a break rather than pushing through - more efficient

If you really feel like you don’t have time to rest, plan to do easy, engaging or simply different things when you usually get tired

Uphill = get little things done first to build a sense of accomplishment, momentum, clear head
Downhill = get the biggest, most anxiety producing thing done first, so you’re sure it does get done – then coast
You might vary your expectations on this depending on how you feel that day – the most important part is developing an intention for the day
When do you need them in the day, in the week, in the semester? Do some days need more and others less? Do some provide opportunity for more and others less?

Dose: don’t underestimate the power of 2 minutes but also recognize when that’s not enough

Type: what do you need? A mood booster or a chill evening?

20 min bike, 5 min to watch the sunset, 1.5 hours to watch a movie
Switch Activities

Alternate Between

- Easy, Tedious, and Challenging
- Physical, Cognitive, and Social
- Draining and Restorative

Do you prefer long work periods
Get Enough Sleep

The National Sleep Foundation recommends 7-9 hours per night

Keep a regular sleep schedule while you can

Think marathon, not sprint

You can function on less sleep; over time our brain is able to compensate – however, function is never as good as when rested and there are long term health consequences

While you can – may be not possible with certain rotations, but you’d like your body to be used to sleeping when you get into those rotations, so that you’re able to take advantage of the opportunities to sleep when you get there

Marathon – don’t want to burn out and then be stuck catching up
If you get tired or lose focus...

- Take an intentional break
- Take a few breaths
- Take a walk
- Take a short nap
- Take note of your accomplishments

You give so much, sometimes you got to take
If you get tired or lose focus...

Give yourself a break
Give yourself a moment
Give yourself some movement
Give yourself a pat on the back
Give yourself a compliment

You give so much, sometimes you got to take. But that doesn’t always sound great, so you can always reframe.
Skills for Managing Time

- Identify your goals
- Identify what is working
- Identify what is not working
- Identify next steps
My goals are well-defined when it comes to:
  My school work
  My health
  My relationships
  My day-to-day well-being

Identify Your Goals
Identify Your Goals

My goals are not well-defined when it comes to:

- My school work
- My health
- My relationships
- My day-to-day well-being

School?
Career?
Health?
Relationships?
Finances?
Identify Your Goals

- By the end of med school, I would like to...
- By the end of the block...
- By the end of the week...
- By the end of today...
- By the end of this talk...

What feels manageable?
Identify What Is Working

Complete the sentence:

• No matter how busy I get, I always have time for:

• I never procrastinate about:

School?
Career?
Health?
Relationships?
Finances?
Identify
What Is
Working

Complete the sentence:

• I have no problem taking care of myself when:

• I am happiest when I am:

School?
Career?
Health?
Relationships?
Finances?
Identify What Is Not Working

- Procrastination
- Taking on too much
- Difficulty saying “No”
- Unexpected situations
- Not enough organization

- Not enough prioritizing
- Not enough scheduling
- Lack of routine
- No planner
- Difficulty remembering

- Lack of sleep
- Low motivation
- Perfectionism
- Unrealistic expectations
- Mood
- Energy levels

It’s burn out session. Either procrastinating or doubling down which can lead to mental health issues.
Identify Next Steps

- Improve Time Awareness
- Pause to Prioritize
- Schedule as Needed
Improve Time Awareness

- Wear a watch
- Time yourself
- Log activities
- Set time deadlines, not task deadlines

Wear a watch
Time yourself doing activities you might “get lost in” or are easily distracted by (i.e. social media)
Put clocks in your bedroom and work space
Set a time deadline instead of a completion deadline (e.g. study for 1 hour instead of study Ch. 3)
Wear a watch
time yourself doing activities you might “get lost in” or are easily distracted by (i.e. social media)
Put clocks in your bedroom and work space
Set a time deadline instead of a completion deadline (e.g. study for 1 hour instead of study Ch. 3)
List Your Priorities

- Be specific & realistic
- Rank activities
- Break them down
- Make an action list, 5 action steps only

Wear a watch
Time yourself doing activities you might “get lost in” or are easily distracted by (i.e. social media)
Put clocks in your bedroom and work space
Set a time deadline instead of a completion deadline (e.g. study for 1 hour instead of study Ch. 3)
Schedule as Needed

How to add activities to your calendar:

- **First:** meetings, appointments, & events
- **Then:** sleep, meals, & self-care
- **Last:** to-do’s, chores, & assignments
- Don’t forget
  - Travel
  - Prep
  - Transitions
  - Wiggle room
  - Multiply by 1.5 or 2
Start Where You Are

01  Start small
02  Start with one strategy
03  Start with one area of life
04  Reassess as needed

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Thank you!

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References

References