

# STRATEGIES for MINDFUL LIVING

Courtesy of UAB Employee Assistance & Counseling Center

## Time Management Tips from the EACC

Whether you are working remotely or in the office, time management is a key skill for helping you manage stress and maintain balance in your life. We've gathered some tips to help you create a time management plan that works for your life.

**Build in planning time.** People who struggle with time management often get stuck in a revolving door of demands and obligations because they're "too busy" to take the time to plan. And the less they plan, the more their time slips away. Escape this Catch-22 by setting aside a few minutes each week to budget your time.

**Keep a time log.** If it's really true that "time is money," why not handle your time as you would your expenditures by tracking how it's allocated? You can't plug a leak if you don't know where it is.



**Prioritize.** The world moves fast these days, and it's easy to get sidetracked. The key to staying on track is to keep a written and prioritized list of what you need to accomplish.

**Set Goals.** Long term goals aren't enough. Effective time management involves breaking down larger tasks into a series of smaller ones. Daily and weekly goals will help you keep you motivated by providing you with a series of personal accomplishments. It's also an

effective way to track progress and improve efficiency.

**Focus on a single task.** When possible, limit your focus to one thing at a time. Effective multitasking requires being able to switch between different tasks rather than trying to do everything at once.



**Use a timer.** Setting a timer is a great way to help you focus and stay on task. Set a timer for 15 minutes and see how much you can do on a single project. A timer is also a great way to stay on track with limiting time on social media or other activities where it is easy to lose track of time.



**Plan time for spontaneity.** Create a few blocks of time in your schedule that are not filled with commitments. This will allow for flexibility when unexpected demands arise.

**Delegate.** Control freaks get killed by the clock. Remember, you can't do it all. We often want to wait until someone can do the task perfectly. A good rule of thumb is that if someone else can do a task 80 percent as well as you can do it then it is time to pass that task on to them. This ensures that the task is done and still gives the other person room to learn and grow.

**Let yourself be less than perfect.** If you try to complete everything to perfection, some things will not get done at all. Establish what an acceptable level of completion is and then move on to the next task. If you have time you can go back to improve on it later.



**Know when to quit.** Sometimes maximizing efficiency requires knowing when to take a break. There's no use pushing on when you're out of energy. Give yourself permission to unwind periodically when you feel your productivity slipping. In the long run, you'll be happier, healthier and able to accomplish more by recognizing when you require some down time.