

Time Management and Family Life

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Guiding principle: know yourself

- what's really important for you to do over the next few years?
- what would you like others to say about you after the next few years?
- what's important to those you care about?
- what are your values?

Using time effectively

- remember that creating and maintaining a strong research program takes lots of focus
- much of your research time may be devoted to your students
- there will be many distracting chores!

Using time effectively: working with students (I)

- build a positive working relationship with your graduate students
 - every student is different! be prepared to adapt
 - set clear expectations (preparing for meetings, funding, proofreading notes, managing timelines/deadlines, handling collaborations, etc.)
 - prepare to ensure meetings are productive
 - respond promptly to student needs (letters of reference, award nominations, writing feedback ..)
 - build a research group in which people help each other

Using time effectively: working with students (II)

- praise good effort! promote your students!
 - provide constructive feedback when work doesn't meet your expectations
 - support students through rough patches
 - don't be afraid to ask for help from your students when appropriate (occasionally covering classes, paper reviews)
- when things go wrong
 - act promptly; seek advice, support from mentors

Using time effectively: handling “chores” (I)

- set aside concentrated periods for your work
- in service tasks, (program committees, other committees): focus on ways that YOU can make a difference
- figure out how to manage teaching chores (special requests, late homeworks, grading, cheating)
- when you have a trip, plan to keep meetings to a minimum on the day after you get back (if possible)

Using time effectively: handling “chores” (II)

- a strategy for learning to say "no": say "let me think about it"; then assess and consult
- when you do say "yes", be clear up front about the scope of the job and the level of commitment you can bring
- use the opportunity to take on something new as a chance to let go of something else
- work with people who seem to be good at getting things done; it does rub off

Family time!

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- it's possible - and very rewarding - to have a great family life and great career

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on balance

- take advantage of flexibility that academic schedules allow
- find the things that you enjoy and can share with your family
- remember your time becomes yours again as your kids get older - balance is regained!

strategies for staying sane

- find a caregiver you really trust, especially during the early years
- learn the benefits of parallel processing (oversee kid homework crises while cooking)
- foster kids' independence in daily tasks
- share responsibility around the house
- figure out which things can "give" - no need for perfection!