Gaining Control of Your Lifestyle and Workstyle

DP 019 - Developmental Intervention

By

Michael R. Slavit

The Clearinghouse for Structured/Thematic Groups & Innovative Programs
Counseling & Mental Health Center
The University of Texas at Austin
100 East 26th Street
Austin, Texas 78712 • 512-471-3515
http://www.utexas.edu/student/cmhc
ACKNOWLEDGMENT

A special note of "thanks" to Jo Ann Cope for sharing ideas which she uses in leading workshops in procrastination at the Reading and Study Skills/Learning Services (RASSL) at the University of Texas at Austin.
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I. Introducing the topic in a way to ensure optimal participation.

Because many time-management techniques involve writing lists, planning schedules, and other highly detailed tasks, considerable resistance may be encountered from those participants to whom such tasks may seem odious or compulsive. Therefore, a series of introductory comments have been provided by which flexibility of approach to time management, the importance of self-acceptance, and self-inquiry concerning the value of productivity can be emphasized very early in the workshop. It is hoped that by including such concepts during their introductory remarks, trainers will ensure involvement and participation by as many trainees as possible.

A. Productivity and personal congruence.

Congruence is a word which Carl Rogers often chooses to denote the compatibility of a person's inner experience and outward behavior. In this workshop, we will not advance the idea that it is desirable to structure our lives to ensure optimum productivity. While the authors of this manual do often identify productivity as one of four major goals of most human development experiences, it is not our intention to promote the value that you "should" produce, produce, produce. We hope that this workshop will help you develop the skills to place productivity in its proper position in your value system, among other goals such as awareness, joy, and meaning.

By helping you to clarify for yourself the relative importance of productivity in your life, and by helping you to explore and practice time management skills, we hope to enable you to achieve congruence of your values and behavior.
B. The choice of written schedules or "internal" monitoring.

We will be introducing you to several concepts involving the organization and categorization of tasks (high/low priority), time (long-term, short-term, immediate), space (desk tops, files, drawers, appointment books), and personal values. Many of the concepts will include suggestions which involve considerable list-writing. You may find the detailed aspects of these methods to be very helpful. On the other hand, you may find the detailed work to be tiresome and intrusive. We will also be teaching you a few internal monitoring techniques which may enable you to more effectively manage your time without utilizing methods which you may find objectionable.

And, there is a middle ground. You may wish to begin to alter certain of your habits by using the detailed writing techniques for a period of time, switching to an internal monitoring system after you have "gotten your new organizational methods into gear." Or, you may wish to usually rely on internal monitoring, and to switch to writing techniques during periods of unusually high demands.

All possibilities exist for you relative to the use of the techniques which will be introduced. You can therefore rest assured that you will not be preached to, and that no one will be telling you that your basic choice of lifestyle "should" be different. You can choose to manage time, space, and events more effectively within the context of practically any lifestyle you choose.
C. Using rational thinking to render time management and the concern about productivity more enjoyable.

It will be advantageous to assess, during the introductory phase of the workshop, the participants' familiarity with the tenets of Rational Thinking, or Rational Emotive Therapy. Even if the participants are familiar with the topic, it will be useful to review and illustrate the concepts, since many individuals understand the concepts intellectually on an abstract level without really understanding the ideas on a concrete level. The following is a summary of some of the points which trainers may wish to emphasize on this topic.

1. One of the basic irrationalities common to many humans, as identified by Albert Ellis, is "It is necessary to be competent and achieving in all situations, and it is terrible and awful if you are not." If we still hold this belief, then time management will not be a series of enjoyable techniques which can make life more delightful. Rather, they will be a series of necessary-but-oppressive techniques needed to avoid the "disaster" of less than full competence.

2. Learn fully the distinction between a necessity and a preference. In the final analysis there is no such thing as a necessity. You may prefer to be liked, admired, respected, competent, and achieving. But, it is not necessary for you to be so. Or, as Dr. Ellis is fond of asking, "Where in the universe is it written that you, _______, SHOULD or MUST be competent?!" Again, time management techniques are best treated as a means to achieve a desirable, preferred end (increased productivity), but not as a means to achieve a necessary end and avoid disaster.

3. Learn to recognize and eliminate IMPERATIVES from your vocabulary (should, must, ought, have to). The moment you think that events should be different from the way they are, you are setting up an
irreconcilable difference which can only result in loss of peace and happiness. Although you may prefer to be more organized and productive in the future, and may decide to learn techniques to achieve that goal, you may as well accept yourself exactly as you are, right now.

4. Learn to make the rational process part of your everyday thinking. Strive if you will to make yourself as productive as possible, and to influence events to turn out as favorably as they can. But, accept yourself exactly as you are, and accept events exactly as they turn out.

As Murphy's infamous law predicts, "If anything can go wrong, it will." And, since you are human, you will make mistakes and be less than perfect. To demand perfection of yourself or of events is to decide in advance to be frustrated and unhappy.

Making these thinking patterns your own may not spare you appropriate feelings of frustration, disappointment, and sadness. However, rational thinking, when diligently practiced, can very easily help you to face adversity feeling merely frustrated or disappointed, and not to experience terrible anguish.
D. Possibilities for moderation and rhythmicity.

Time management is not an all-or-none skill. We are not forced to make a choice between a highly managed, structured lifestyle and a totally unstructured way of being. And, we may even effectively vary our use of time management and structure to suit various purposes and accessions.

In order to make this point as understandable, real, and emphatic as possible, we will give several hypothetical examples of moderation and rhythmicity according to different variables:

1. An example of moderation relative to purpose: Mr. A, a medical technologist, likes to take part in many outdoor activities, such as mountaineering, white-water canoeing, and skiing. Mr. A can tolerate a certain amount of structure and detailed planning, but feels uncomfortable and "locked in" if he does too much of it. However, when Mr. A fails to plan ahead thoroughly, he finds himself at home many weekends, wishing he were outdoors (due to a failure to arrange a canoe rental, failure to arrange in advance for a climbing partner, or any number of failures to attend to details). Mr. A finds no need to apply time management to his work, where his tasks seem to be completed according to routine, or according to casual adjustments made by "mental notes" but without writing lists or experiencing worry. Because he can handle his work life in a comfortable manner without additional detailed planning, Mr. A decides he can tolerate some detailed planning in order to improve his recreational life. So, he establishes a file box with names, addresses, and phone numbers of recreation areas, national parks, sporting goods dealers, outing clubs, and other outdoor enthusiasts. He begins planning week-end trips a month in advance, and establishes a list of equipment to buy, rent or repair; persons to contact; licenses to acquire; etc. for
each trip. Mr. A sets up certain times of the week to attend to those
details, and reviews his task lists every evening. Although he started
out disliking these detailed tasks, he soon finds that there are very
few weekends in which he is not free to breathe mountain air or taste
river spray. In short, he decides that the "risk" of doing the detailed
planning resulted in a worthwhile "payoff" of an enriched outdoor
recreation life. Mr. A has applied time management moderately in his
life. He still may not time manage household tasks, family obligations,
or his work. He did apply time management for a specific purpose.

2. An example of rhythmicity relative to occasion: Ms. B, a school teacher,
finds herself listing, managing, and planning tasks more than she
really prefers at her work. Therefore, she manages her personal, social,
and recreational life without detailed planning. When it occurs to her
to take care of a certain task, such as routine maintenance of her car,
grocery shopping, or inviting friends to entertain, she does the task.
But she refuses to list, plan or otherwise manage these events. Ms. B
usually feels comfortable with her lifestyle. But, twice a year she
experiences considerable anxiety, which she attributes to a lack of
confidence that she can complete all of the tasks which accumulate.
These two times per year are Christmas and the end of summer, just before
the start of the new school year. As Christmas approaches, Ms. B feels
anxious about travel plans, Christmas card and gift lists, putting anti-
freeze into her car, and writing and correcting final examinations. As
summer draws to a close, Ms. B feels overwhelmed by the necessity of
getting her boat out of the water, doing some advanced planning of
classes, filling out her professional wardrobe, ensuring that her teaching
contract is in order, and moving to a new apartment. Finally, Ms. B
decides to continue to handle tasks and obligations in an unstructured
way ten months of the year, but she decides that promptly on August 1
and December 1, she will make a detailed list of all the tasks she wants to complete. She specifies resources she will need to complete the tasks, and definite times she will set aside to complete them. She checks, amends, and re-writes her lists when needed.

Although she continues to feel somewhat "put upon" by the apparent need to structure her life so strictly two months per year, she decides that she prefers this "put upon" feeling to the anxious, overwhelmed feelings she formerly felt before applying time management. And, she still has 10 months per year to handle her nonprofessional matters in the unstructured fashion which she usually enjoys. Ms. B. has developed a cyclical use of time management techniques according to occasions.

3. An example of moderation in response to a cyclic condition:

Mr. C, a school psychologist, enjoys a highly successful, busy, and organized career. He has one full-time job, one adjunct teaching position, two consulting jobs, and occasionally does a lecture. He organizes his professional tasks in detail, keeping files, calendars, and appointment books. He organizes his tasks according to semesters, weeks, and days. He is usually energetic, but comfortable. He finds time to exercise and stay fit, and believes that the exercise contributes to his energy and alertness.

However, on occasion, at irregular intervals, averaging about twice/year, Mr. C. goes into a "slump". He loses his usual energy, feels some anxiety and feels overwhelmed by tasks which he usually accomplishes with relative ease. Every time Mr. C. goes into a slump, he wonders how he got there and whether and when he will regain his usual energy and feelings of competence. Mr. C. does not suffer from clinical symptoms of acute depression - such as sleep and appetite disturbances - during these episodes; he just loses his motivation and energy.
Mr. C. has read Dr. Nathan Kline's book, *From Sad to Glad*, and he believes Dr. Kline's concept that occasional depression is evidence of a need for the human organism to restore itself due to the vast complexity of tasks of which it is capable. But this does not comfort Mr. C. during his depressed episodes. He continues to fight the depression - to look at his usual long lists of tasks, and to make negative self-evaluative statements about himself when a day ends with no accomplishments.

Finally, Mr. C. decides to accept the depression - to "go with it" - and to set significantly lower expectations for himself when these episodes occur. In effect, he uses time-management in reverse order, scaling down to a few tasks per day. Mr. C. decides, when he feels he is in a "slump", that he will be satisfied with the day's accomplishments if he writes one report and runs one mile. Although far below his normal day's achievement level, Mr. C. accepts this very small list of expectations as sufficient "for a day during a slump". Mr. C. begins to feel less anxious during his occasional depressed episodes. Best of all, because he has accepted a lower set of expectations during these times, he makes far fewer negative self-evaluative statements, and the depressed episodes, though still occurring, last for less time.

In essence, Mr. C. has changed an inner directive which formerly said "You should be maximally productive all the time." The scaling down of the usual time management techniques was made possible by the dropping of this former irrational directive, and helped to improve the quality of Mr. C.'s life.
II. SELF-INQUIRY

Practically any new skill is relatively meaningless until seen in the context of the individual's own particular phenomenological field. When we have learned through experience what our own values, beliefs, preferences, expectations, and boundaries are, we can make responsible and effective use of such skills as time management. Therefore, we have designed the second phase of the workshop not only to introduce some time management issues and techniques but primarily to foster the participants' exploration of their own priorities, attitudes, internal sentences, and habits.

A. Guided Fantasy in Internal Monitoring

(2 major goals):

1. Introduction to a technique of internal self monitoring;
2. Focusing the participants' life priorities.

This exercise may be introduced in any way which the trainer sees as appropriate. The following is a verbatim account of our suggested way to introduce the exercise:

"We told you early in the workshop that we would be teaching you an internal monitoring technique relative to time management. I am now going to lead you through an exercise in which I will ask you to try out such a technique. In order that you may have the fullest opportunity to experience this technique, I am first going to lead you through a relaxation exercise. This will serve two purposes. It will give you a well-deserved break after you've put up with so much lecturing; and it will help you to screen out needless distraction so that you may experience the technique with full attention and comfort."

"Now I will ask you to spread out a little bit so that you will not interfere with one another and to loosen any articles of clothing, such as neckties, which may provide a distracting constriction. If you are
wearing contact lenses, you may wish to remove them if it causes you discomfort to close your eyes with them in. Good.

And now, arrange yourself as comfortably as you can in your chair, or you may lie down on the (carpeted) floor. Try to ensure that your back and neck are in a comfortably aligned position, and that you are fully supported and need no muscular tension to maintain your position. Very good.

"And now I'd like you to begin by taking a few slow, deep breaths . . . take a slow, deep breath . . . exhale, and relax . . . again . . . a slow deep breath . . . exhale, and relax. Excellent."

(We will skip the verbatim account of the actual progressive relaxation exercises. For a full account of those exercises, we refer you to Improving Relaxation and Control of Anxiety: A Leader's Manual, by Michael Slavit, available through the Clearinghouse for Structured Groups).

"And now I'd like you to let your mind wander over the situations and events in your life relative to your physical health and your recreational life. Be fully accepting of whatever situations exist pertaining to your physical and recreational life, and just consider this aspect of your existence."

"If you become aware that there are some changes you'd like to make in this area, think about the first, achievable step you'd like to take toward the desired change. When you have identified clearly in your mind what your first concrete, achievable step will be, just return your attention to your breathing and relax . . . more and more . . . even deeper than before. At this moment your only job is to relax."
To complete this exercise, the trainer need only repeat the instructions given for "physical and recreational", using the following categories:

2. professional
3. financial
4. intellectual and spiritual
5. Social
6. marital and familial.

"Now that you have considered those six aspects of your life, and have planned at least one achievable task in each area in which you wished to do so, consider again the concept that any such alterations of your life may be preferable, but are not necessary.

And now spend the next few minutes stretching your muscles and becoming fully aware again of your surroundings. And, when you are ready, open your eyes."

The trainers will then wait for reactions to the exercise, and will ask for such reactions if they are not emitted. At some time during the discussion, it will be advantageous to reemphasize the concept that by internally monitoring these six categories of one's life - or any variation of categories meaningful to the individual - it will be possible to reorder one's priorities and/or manage one's time without setting pencil to paper. Another concept to be mentioned is that this internal monitoring itself need not be scheduled, but that an individual may wish to try this process whenever he or she feels anxious or unfulfilled.

B. Raising consciousness of how we set ourselves up to fail.

(Method: Brainstorming)

Now that we have helped the participants to experience an internal monitoring system, and to identify specific steps to be taken, this will be an appropriate time to explore the topic of how we set ourselves up to fail. Since the format of the workshop has been lecture, discussion, and a passive exercise, the more active task of brainstorming will probably be effective. And, if the previous exercise has been successful
in helping participants to develop some short-term goals in a related, non-judgmental atmosphere; there may well be a great deal of energy invested in the task of exploring how we fail to achieve desirable goals.

The question may be asked: "How do you set yourself up to blow your schedule and to fail?"

The following ideas will probably be advanced, and it may be advantageous for the trainers to emphasize them, or to advance themselves if they are left out:

1. overcommitting one's self
2. setting unrealistic expectations (perhaps based on irrational beliefs about competence and achievement).
3. failure to allow enough time in a schedule for "unexpected" events which take time. (It may be helpful to learn to schedule in enough time to handle the "unexpected" events, which we really do expect, but cannot foresee specifically.
4. failure to allow ourselves enough "psychic space" - to allow ourselves some time for "rest and rehabilitation".
5. failing to be flexible, and to alter the priorities, or at least the order in which we can accomplish them, according to external events. Rigidity may be due to an unwillingness to let go of an irrational belief identified by Albert Ellis: "People and events should turn out better than they do, and we must view it as terrible and awful if we do not find good solutions to life's grim realities." Another way of explaining this point concerning rigidity is to ask the participants if they can recall beginning a task with high expectations and abandoning the task when the expectations are not met. We can clearly improve our productivity and effectiveness by continuing with plans and projects even after we see that they cannot be completed
according to our initial hopes and expectations.

C. **Attitudes and Cognitions about Maintaining Control in One's Life.**

Having brainstormed the various ways in which we set ourselves up to "blow our schedule" and fail, it will now be a good time to explore the internal sentences which people are saying to themselves and which fuel the drive to fail. Since some of these concepts will have been introduced in section I.,C. on Rational Thinking, and will probably have been touched on immediately following the previous brainstorming exercise, the trainers may not be compelled to actually advance important concepts here, but may only have to underscore and embellish comments made by the participants.

One helpful concept which will probably have to be offered by the trainers is that achieving congruence through time management may often consist of either bringing "actions in line with intentions," or bringing "intentions in line with actions."

D. **Using Baseline Data to Identify Needs.**

Having gone through parts A, B, and C of the Self-Inquiry stage of the workshop, participants now probably have heightened their self awareness sufficiently, and been introduced to enough new concepts that they have enough baseline data from which to plan new skills, or habits. In particular, participants are probably now more aware of whether they wish to increase their productivity to meet their expectations, or to moderate their expectations to make a more congruent fit with their level of productivity.

Using the "baseline data" existing in the participants heightened awareness, it will now be helpful to ask the question: "What do you, as an individual, need to work effectively?" This section of the workshop, along with the "baseline data" collection, may best be explored in small groups, or even dyads. The trainers can best judge the group's potential
of working in small groups or dyads by watching the degree of energy which builds from the previous exercises. If many individuals wish to contribute, and are "competing for air time," it will be best to break the group into smaller units so as to allow everyone adequate opportunity to share their ideas.

After asking the group members to consider what they, as individuals, need to work more effectively, it would be helpful to reemphasize the following: Any work schedule or regimen is most beneficial if the individual allows himself "psychic space." This may consist of recreation time, coffee breaks, times to continue work at a lower intensity, or a few minutes to daydream. Allowing sufficient "psychic space" can prevent time management from becoming "self-oppression."

III. Exploring Specific Techniques

Now that the message to adhere strictly to techniques has been moderated by the introductory material, and the participants have been led through a process of self-inquiry, some specific techniques will be taught. Further exercises in self-inquiry will still be used during this phase of the workshop.

A. Priorities

1. Setting Major Life Priorities

   (this exercise is a close adaptation of an exercise described in chapters 5 and 6 of Alan Lakein's book, How to Get Control of Your Time and Your Life).

   Ask the participants to assemble 3 sheets of paper. Then, proceed as follows:

   "I am going to lead you through an exercise described in a book by Alan Lakein. The exercise is designed to help you to re-examine and set more firmly in your mind your life goals and aspirations. As we proceed with the exercise, allow your thoughts
and fantasies to run freely. There is nothing indelible or permanent about this exercise. You are re-assessing priorities - not signing a contract.

"For the next 2 minutes, write down all of the lifetime goals of yours that you can think of. You may list general goals, such as "happiness", or specific goals such as "walking the entire Appallachain Trail." Write down whatever comes into your mind. . . begin.

"And now, I want you to spend two additional minutes re-stating three life goals. You may wish to amend to or combine some of your goals. For instance, if you listed among your life goals:

1. happiness and contentment,
2. building a home, and
3. living in the mountains;

You may wish to restate a goal such as: 'Building a home in the mountains and living peacefully there for a year or more.' Begin.

"Now that you have a set of 3 life goals to consider, pursue, revise, or abandon; I would like you to take a second sheet of paper and list things which you would like to do during the next five years. Again, let your imagination roam freely, and do not censor your responses. Begin.

"Now, spend another two minutes picking out and restating three of these goals".

"Finally, I want you to take your third sheet of paper. I would like you to image as vividly as you can that you have 6 months to live. You have an incurable condition which will not cause you any loss of health or abilities, but from which you will suddenly expire in 6 months. All final planning, such as wills, burial arrangements, and financial arrangements for your family are complete. Spend two minutes writing down the things you are going to do for the next 6 months. Begin."
"Now, spend a few minutes looking over your lifetime, 5-year, and 6 month goals. Remembering that you may re-arrange, edit, or completely revamp these goals whenever you wish, consider ways in which your short and long term goals are consistent or incompatible with one another."

"If your answers to the 6 month question are dramatically different from your 5-year and lifetime goals, you may have a goal conflict, and it will be in your interest to do some thinking about these issues."

"In the event that such an apparent conflict exists between what you would really like to be doing, and what you are choosing to work toward based on your assessment of the "reality" of your situation, I would like to give you an example which you may find comforting."

"The author of the manual for this workshop had a friend whose ambition was to have a 42 foot ocean-going sailboat, and to live on the boat, sailing from continent to continent. But, when this individual examined his current finances, family obligations and the demands of his profession, he became despondent because he could envision making no progress whatsoever toward his ambition. Then the author suggested that his friend make a small commitment of time and money on a regular basis toward the goal. For instance, the author suggested that his friend could, with limited time and funds, subscribe to and read a yachting magazine, take a course in navigation, go to "bric a brac" shops or yard sales near the ocean and buy a few pieces of hardware which might be useful in the future, and do a small amount of woodworking to keep sharp the skills which would be needed to build, rebuild, or repair his dream vessel. Doing these things would not hinder this individual's ability to pursue his more immediate and more easily achievable goals. They would have some immediate value, and they would help to keep alive and provide actual progress toward the dream. The author's friend responded quite favorably, having been released from what he has seen as an unresolvable conflict
between long and short term goals".

This is a key concept in gaining control of our lives. We can spend a major amount of our time and effort on tasks which seem immediate or continuous, but we can also make discrete steps toward long range goals.

(As a further example of this concept, the trainers may wish to describe the discrete steps which can be taken toward writing a term paper or an annual report even while attending to the usual routinies of day to day tasks.)

2. Role-Stripping Exercise (small groups)

This is another exercise in raising the participants'consciousness about their priorities. Depending on the length of the format of the workshop, one or the other of these exercises may be excluded. Both may be used effectively.

The participants will all be asked to list the seven most important roles which they occupy in their lives. (Example: therapist, son, friend, student, lover, protege, brother).

The participants will then be asked to gather in small groups of between 2 and 4 individuals. Their first task will be to choose 2 roles to drop, and to explain their choices to the others. It can be explained to the participants that in actuality a role does not often need to be dropped entirely, but may often be relegated to a low priority. However, in order to achieve as much values clarity as possible, the participants can be asked to think about dropping the two roles entirely.

After each group member has described his reasons for dropping two roles, the next task will be for each person to choose 2 more roles to drop, and to share those choices with the other group members.
Having completed either, or preferably both, of these exercises concerning priorities, the participants will surely have heightened their awareness of life choices, and, hopefully, will have achieved more clarity in their evaluation of their priorities.

Another hoped-for outcome of these exercises is that, having been asked to assign priorities to very important life goals and personal roles, the task of prioritizing the more specific and mundane tasks within a role, such as office manager or student, may now have a smaller emotional charge.
B. Organizing Time.

The participants will now be led in a discussion of devising specific, time-oriented techniques to help them to achieve their goals. It is suggested that the trainers ensure that the following ideas are advanced:

1. Daily lists of tasks to accomplish are found by many individuals to be helpful. It is also helpful to have a routine time for preparation of a list, such as:
   a. Last thing before retiring at night.
   b. First thing in the morning.
   c. First thing upon arriving at work.
Waiting until arriving at work is helpful for those who wish to let early morning preparations be relaxed and peaceful. Last thing before going to bed is helpful for those individuals who will not "let go" and sleep unless they feel they have a definite "plan" for the next day.

2. Tasks listed are best divided into discrete, achievable units. Listing a task which is so large or complex as to render it non-achievable in the day tends to lead to frustration.

3. Tasks on a list may be designated by priority signs, such as:
   a. I - immediate.
   b. ST - short-term.
   c. LT - long-term.

4. Daily, weekly, monthly, or semester lists may be written. The problem with too many lists is that it involves a great deal of cross-referring between and among lists.

5. After a task is completed, it may be helpful to draw a bold, visible checkmark beside it. This may be done with a flourish, to remind us that we are organizing our lives to make life more delightful as well
as more efficient. After three to five days, daily lists may be re-read, and items which have not received a checkmark may be placed on a new list if they are still relevant tasks.

6. It is advantageous for a person to be aware of his or her peak hours of efficiency, and to schedule difficult tasks requiring maximum concentration during those peak times.

7. It may be helpful to use a chart, with blocks for time periods, and to "block out" scheduled time. We can then see where our unscheduled time is, so that we can then work on our task lists.

8. If a certain amount of privacy is important to you, it may be helpful to block out private time versus public time, and to guard against losing all your private time. Remember that you have a need for a certain amount of "psychic space," and that if time management means no psychic space, time management may also mean self-oppression.

9. Be aware of the length and intensity of tasks. It may be important for you to intersperse lighter, shorter tasks among the heavier, longer tasks. In this way you will ensure your self of more reasonable demands on your mental and emotional resources, and the act of accomplishing a few light, short tasks may "buoy you up" for the heavier, longer tasks. The analogy for this is found in the account of a friend of the author who received instructions from a stone mason. A large, heavy stone (the analogue of a long, heavy task) is best supported by two lighter stones (the analogue of short, less tedious tasks). To a stone mason, a small stone is a "bitch" and a large stone is a "bastard." The mason thus delivered his primary rule by saying, "Remember, it takes two bitches to hold up a bastard." So, remember, it may take a sense of accomplishment on a few, light tasks to "buoy you up" for an assault on a heavier task.
Exercise: Brainstorm. What can you do with five minutes?

Purpose of exercise:

1. To identify the nature and variety of useful tasks which can be completed in short periods of time.
2. To elicit a diversity of opinion as to whether it is to a person's advantage to be so task-oriented as to consciously make the most efficient use of five-minute blocks of time.
3. To emphasize the issue of choice in time-management. A person may choose to carry around 10-cent postcards, and to use five-minute intervals to write to friends and relatives with whom he or she might otherwise not correspond. Or, a person may choose to use five-minute intervals to relax, meditate, or to reaffirm the joy of existence in other ways. And, a person may choose to do some of each of the above.

This may be the appropriate time to advance the concept that people's time-management habits may be seen to fall on various continua:

rigid -------------------------------------------- disorganized
perseverating -------------------------------------- procrastinating
self-oppressive ----------------------------------- self-indulgent
achievement-oriented --------------------------- non-achievement oriented

These continua are self-explanatory and easily embellished by comments from the trainers. The purpose of such explanations is to provide as many ways as possible for the participants to assess their own lives and to fully appreciate the meaning of gaining control over one's life.
C. Organizing Space

The space in which we work has a definite effect on the efficiency with which we work in that space.

1. Making our work space compatible with our needs.

   In an earlier phase of the workshop, we asked the question; "What do you need to work effectively?" It was at that time that we first advanced the concept of "psychic space," and the idea that if we do not give ourselves what we need, we will likely be more self-oppressive than self-enhancing.

   In a loosely structured discussion format, it will probably be fairly easy for the trainers to elicit and emphasize some key points. Examples:

   a. If a workspace is bleak or barren, and we find ourselves wandering out of it to gain a feeling of refreshment, our efficiency will be impaired. Therefore, attention to physical appearance may be important for some individuals.

   b. Lighting that is adequate will help us to work to our potential, as will proper temperature and ventilation.

   c. If we are physically comfortable sitting (or standing) in our work place, and have all of our tools, files, papers, and paraphernalia within easy reach, our efficient work will be facilitated.

   d. It will be advantageous to enjoy being in our work place, to feel competent there, to feel as though we belong there. It may even be helpful for us to visualize our work place, and to vividly imagine ourselves working there competently, happily, and comfortably. Then, when the time comes to actually perform our work there, it will very likely be easier for us. (Depending on the nature of the participant population, it may be helpful for the trainers to familiarize themselves with Zen and other Eastern techniques, since some parti-
Participants may ask about the similarity between such systems and the latter point.)

2. The paperwork aspects of work space.

Drawers, files, and supplies can be most effectively used if they are divided and available according to priority. Once again, loosely structured discussion will probably reveal important points, of which the following may be examples:

a. It may be advantageous to establish a file folder for all papers which are to be kept.

b. Labelling all file folders will save waste of time thumbing through a bunch of them. Don't worry. If you discontinue to use that category, you can easily stick a blank label on it and re-use the folder.

c. Put a date on every piece of paper you put information on. Preferably, put the source of the data also. In the future, you'll be glad to know where and when you received the information.

d. If you need to stop midway through a project due to any reason, such as lack of resources, put this work in a file folder or tray marked "pending" and re-check these projects periodically.

e. Try to work in such a way as to handle each piece of paper as few times as you can, once if possible. What this really implies is that it's to your advantage to make decisions about documents, rather than to continually place the paper back down on your desk, only to be picked up again.
D. Dealing with other persons.

1. Avoiding feelings of intrusion on our time and space.

   It is helpful for us to assume full responsibility for ourselves. If we are desirous of having time to ourselves to complete a project, and someone is making an implicit demand on our time, we may avoid feelings of intrusion in any of the following ways:

   a. Manipulation, or unclear message-giving. We may look at our watch, shuffle papers on our desk, and hope that the person says, "Well, I'll let you get back to your work," and leave.

   b. Assertion, or clear message-giving. We may say, "I'm having difficulty paying full attention to you. I'm thinking of a project I'd like to complete, and I'd rather talk with you another time."

   c. Changing our internal sentences. We may decide that we would rather be with the person than work on the project, and be content with that decision. (Not to be content with that decision would be to experience feelings of intrusion.)

   One concept which is helpful to recall here is that of risk versus payoff. If we are considering dealing with another person in a way which might jeopardize the relationship in order to move a project forward, we may wish to assess the importance of the project (payoff) versus the potential risk to the relationship.

2. If we are in a supervisory position, we can improve our time management by delegating responsibility, and by developing and displaying feelings of confidence and trust in the persons to whom we delegate.

3. If our time availability is limited, we can save both time and bruised feelings by stating that fact openly at the beginning of an interaction, thus setting an expectation for the time and length of an appointment.
E. **Flexibility of Approach**

*Exercise in smaller groups.* The purpose of this exercise will be to demonstrate that there are numerous tactics and schedules by which to achieve tasks. Divide the group up into small groups of 2 to 3 persons each. Give directions as follows: "I am going to briefly describe a person, and a set of goals for that person. Your task is to set up what you think will be a reasonable schedule to achieve the goals and to meet what you infer to be the person's needs. Listen carefully to my description, and then work in your small group to devise a one week schedule, in detail, starting with Monday a.m."

"Laura K. is a 28 year old single woman who works as an accountant. She works 40 hours per week, but is only required to spend 20 hours per week at her company's office, which is 45 minutes from her home. Laura likes to get vigorous exercise 5 or 6 times per week, which she can do by either swimming (at a club 15 minutes from home - 1 hour from work) or playing tennis (assume availability of court anywhere). Laura's peak hours of energy and concentration are 8:00-10:00 a.m. During the coming week she needs to complete a lengthy report (8 hours heavy concentration), and she wants to spend at least 10 hours with her mother and father, 10 hours with a boyfriend, and an hour with her insurance agent. She does not tolerate long obligation periods without a break, and she enjoys relaxation.

"Make assumptions which you feel are consistent with the information provided when you feel the data provided are sketchy. Begin immediately, and write a detailed schedule."

After the groups have been given approximately 10-15 minutes to complete this task, reconvene the entire group and ask to have some schedules read. This exercise will serve to demonstrate that there are several possible strategies to completing a week's living in an effective..."
and enjoyable way. It will also serve as one more exercise in self-inquiry, as the assumptions which the participants make about Laura K. will probably reflect their own preferences and needs.

This will be an opportune time to discuss the concept of PERMISSION versus OBLIGATION. Time management can do either.

IV. Wrap-Up of Workshop

A. Exercise in Small groups: Purpose: to encourage participants to think specifically about how they may endeavor to use some of the concepts which they learned in the workshop.

Question the group members: "How do you intend to implement some of the techniques and concepts to which you have been exposed?"

B. Discussion - possible pitfalls to be avoided.

Be sure that overzealousness is among the pitfalls discussed.

C. Workshop Evaluation

D. Expression of hope by the Trainers that the participants (1) have learned about themselves; (2) will continue to seek clarity about what they really want out of life; and (3) will be both rational, and gentle to themselves, in applying new concepts to their lives.
SESSION #1

I. Introduction.
   A. Productivity and personal congruence. 1 minute.
   B. Choice of written or internal monitoring. 1 minute.
   C. Rational thinking. 5 minutes.
   D. Examples of moderations and rhythmicity. 8 minutes.

II. Self-inquiry.
   A. Guided fantasy in internal monitoring. 15 minutes.
   B. How we set ourselves up to fail. 15 minutes.
   C. Attitudes and cognitions. 15 minutes.

   BREAK

   D. Using baseline data to identify needs. 15 minutes.

III. Exploring specific techniques.
   A. Setting major life priorities. 15 minutes.
   B. Role-stripping exercise. 20 minutes.
   Assignment of homework. 5 minutes.

   120 minutes.

HOMEWORK: 1. Write down irrational beliefs which may contribute to unrealistic expectations.
   2. Re-assess major life priorities.
FORMAT A (2 SESSIONS)

SESSION 2

Discuss Homework. 10 minutes.

III. Exploring specific techniques (continued).

B. Organizing time. 20 minutes.

C. Organizing workspace. 15 minutes.
   1. Making workspace compatible with needs.
   2. Paperwork aspects of workspace.

D. Dealing with other persons. 15 minutes.
   1. Avoiding feelings of intrusion.
   2. Delegation of responsibility.
   3. Setting time expectations.

B R E A K 10 minutes.

E. Flexibility of approach (exercise in small groups) 20 minutes.

IV. Wrap-up of workshop.

A. Exercise in small groups (planning implementation). 15 minutes.

B. Discussion of possible pitfalls. 5 minutes.

C. Evaluation. 10 minutes.

D. Final message from trainers. 5 minutes.

120 minutes.
SESSION #1

I. Introduction.
   A. Productivity and personal congruence. 1 minute.
   B. Choice of written or internal monitoring. 1 minute.
   C. Rational thinking. 23 minutes.
   D. Examples of moderation and rhythmicity. 15 minutes.

II. Self-inquiry.
   A. Guided fantasy in internal monitoring. 20 minutes.
   B. Break 10 minutes.
   B. How we set ourselves up to fail. 20 minutes.
   C. Attitudes and cognitions. 25 minutes.

Assigning Homework. 5 minutes. 120 minutes.

HOMEWORK: 1. Write down irrational beliefs which may contribute to unrealistic expectations.
   2. Determine and write down areas in which you feel you can most and least use additional structure and organization.
   3. Do some thinking about major life goals.
SESSION #2

Discuss homework.  

II. Self-inquiry (continued).
   D. Using baseline data to identify needs.  

III. Exploring specific techniques.
   A. Setting major life priorities.  

   B R E A K  

   B. Role-stripping exercise.  

   C. Organizing time.  

Assigning homework.  

10 minutes.  

20 minutes.  

20 minutes.  

10 minutes.  

30 minutes.  

25 minutes.  

5 minutes.  

120 minutes.  

HOMEWORK:  

1. Re-assess major life priorities.  

2. Use some specific time organization for one week.
SESSION #3

Discuss homework. 10 minutes.

III. Exploring specific techniques (continued).

C. Organizing space. 15 minutes.
   1. Making workspace compatible with needs.
   2. Paperwork aspects of workspace.

D. Dealing with other persons. 15 minutes.
   1. Avoiding feelings of intrusion.
   2. Delegation of responsibility.
   3. Setting time expectations.

E. Flexibility of approach (exercise in small groups) 25 minutes.

BREAK 10 minutes.

IV. Wrap-up of workshop.

A. Exercise in small groups (planning implementation). 20 minutes.
B. Discussion of possible pitfalls. 10 minutes.
C. Evaluation. 10 minutes.
D. Final message from trainers. 5 minutes.
References


