***Managing Mindfully***

*The ABCs of Sustainable Time Management*

***Attention***

Maintaining a core of inner attention helps you respond appropriately to outer demands. Use a range of attention states -- single-point absorption, lightly flitting multi-tasking, and everything in between.

# *In the moment: The Pause Button*

# At the interruption moment, fix a word/image in your mind and 'park' it so you know exactly where to pick up the thread.

# *In the near term: CDR—Catch, Distribute & Review*

Clear attention ‘static’ by *catching* stray thoughts as they arise in a note. *Distribute* notes to where it will make sense to *review* it.

*Over time: Tickler Systems*

Have one file for each month, one for each week. Park task reminders (tickles) in the proper file. At the beginning of the month, distribute tickles into the weeks. At the beginning of the week, group tickles by day to access them day by day. Electronic ticklers work similarly.

***Boundaries***

Firm and flexible boundaries protect you and connect you to others.

*Task Boundaries: Three-Phase Closedown*

Set a timer for a few minutes before the end of your session. Within the time, work freely. When the timer goes off, look to

The Past—acknowledge progress thus far, for continual encouragement and satisfaction

The Future—catch the next step so when you come back, you can pick up right where you left off

The Present—clear any papers you’ve spread out, put the next step catch on top, and set the task aside.

*Interpersonal Boundaries: The Full Tank*

Keep your personal “resource tanks” full -- physical, emotional, mental, spiritual. Should you get overwhelmed, irritated, or discouraged, replenish your resources. If overwhelmed, firm up your boundary -- step up. If irritated, soften your boundary -- step back. If discouraged, focus on what's done, not what's left to do.

***Choices***

Whenever we say Yes to one thing, we say No to everything else, and who likes to say No? Consider these when making a choice.

# *Stakeholder priorities*

Consider all stakeholders' priorities—your boss, those you supervise, the organization as a whole, customers/clients, and of course, you.

# *Quality levels*

Use a range of levels -- Business-As-Usual (perfectly appropriate), Quick-And-Dirty (the bare minimum), and Bells-and-Whistles (the snazzy version when resources are abundant).

*The 80/20 rule*

In any collection of items – books on a shelf, clothes in a closet, items on a list – 80% of the significance resides in only 20% of the items.

*All good*

When things didn’t go as planned, we wake up. "Bad" situations offer the greatest potential for real change, so it's all good.

*Untangling the factors*

Consider these factors one at a time when making a choice: Important, Urgent, Beneficial, Attractive. When a task is Important and Unattractive, contain the time you spend on it. If it's highly Attractive, do it -- no matter what. Beware the ‘faux’ factors of Quick and Easy. Task boundaries equalize the Quick factor; breaking projects down equalizes the Easy factor.

*Feelings//Desires//Impulses*

***What brings a smile***

Note what brings a smile to your face -- what lifts your spirits or makes you happy.

***What am I feeling right now?***

Note your feelings in this moment.

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When a negative, discouraging, or challenging thought arises, find a thought that feels better. Replace it with a smile bringer.

***What I want***

Identify something you desire/want. What's more essential beneath that desire? Beneath that? Beneath that? Identify what could you actually do, have or be right now that's on the way to satisfying that desire.

I want ...

Beneath that is ...

Beneath that is ...

Beneath that is ...

Here's what I could do, have, or be right now that's on the way to the desire:

***Wait for the impulse to act***

From a better-feeling place, wait attentively for the impulse to act. When the impulse comes, do it.