

## **Making Time for Yourself and Others**

### **HCTC Student Success Tools**

#### **Manage others' expectations.**

- ◆ Reconfirm objectives or deadlines—ask: What do you expect specifically?
- ◆ Do not make promises until you really understand what you have to do, what impact the promise will have on your other commitments, and the importance of the promise to your own goal.
- ◆ If you are running late, call and let others know—no surprises.
- ◆ When you have a deadline, remember—everything takes longer than you think!

#### **Always extend your estimate of the time that is required to accomplish your goal/task.**

Do this for yourself as an internal yardstick, and estimate time requirements for all the links in the chain.

#### **Learn to say to “No” to others and “Yes!” to yourself.**

Try saying:

- ◆ “I can do what you want another time, like...”
- ◆ “if only I had known in advance...”
- ◆ “I’ll arrange for someone else...”
- ◆ “I’ll get back to you after i check my calendar”
- ◆ “I can do some of it...”

It is best to pause before answering a request and think about your response. There is no need to rush to reply. Learn to listen to your gut feeling. If “no” is the right answer, then say no.

#### **Build solid time blocks—limit interruptions.**

- ◆ Your top three interruptions: yourself, the phone, other people. So, take responsibility and focus on the task at hand.
- ◆ Use your voicemail to screen calls when you are studying, and only answer calls that are an immediate need.
- ◆ Let others know when you will be available to them. Try a closed door policy with an “I’ll be back” sign.

#### **Help your family and/or roommates to help themselves.**

Develop ways for family members or roommates to contribute to household chores such as cooking, cleaning, grocery shopping, doing laundry or errands.

#### **Brushing your teeth is not fun, it’s necessary!**

- ◆ Keep a daily “to do” list. Avoid making a new list everyday, just update the previous one. Prioritize your responsibilities.
- ◆ Combine some tasks and eliminate others. Be sure to include leisure time activities as time for yourself.

### **Set priorities.**

When determining an order for tasks, ask yourself:

- ◆ Are you doing the most important things first?
- ◆ How urgent is this task?
- ◆ How can I get somebody else to do the task for me?
- ◆ What's the worst thing that can happen if I do not do this?

### **Schedule personal time.**

- ◆ Get accustomed to scheduling all of your time.
- ◆ Give your own personal enjoyment a high priority.
- ◆ Plan ahead and schedule fun!

### **Elephants remember; people do not.**

- ◆ Have a detailed calendar be the basis of your "to do" list for your personal and academic lives.
- ◆ Only make commitments after you have reviewed your calendar.

### **Nobody's system is as good as your own.**

Evaluate each time-saving time tip to see how it works for you. If you feel pressured or uncomfortable, adjust the approach until you can make it a comfortable fit.

### **Seek support.**

- ◆ Think about what you want to change. If you are unsure what to change, seek support from friends, relatives, counselors, advisors, or teachers
- ◆ Try spending some quiet time alone.