



# Effective Time Management: When to Say Yes and When to Say No

Gregory D. Kennedy, MD, PhD

John H. Blue Chair of General Surgery

Professor and Director of the Division of Gastrointestinal Surgery

University of Alabama at Birmingham

# Disclosures

---

- I have no relevant disclosures



# The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People

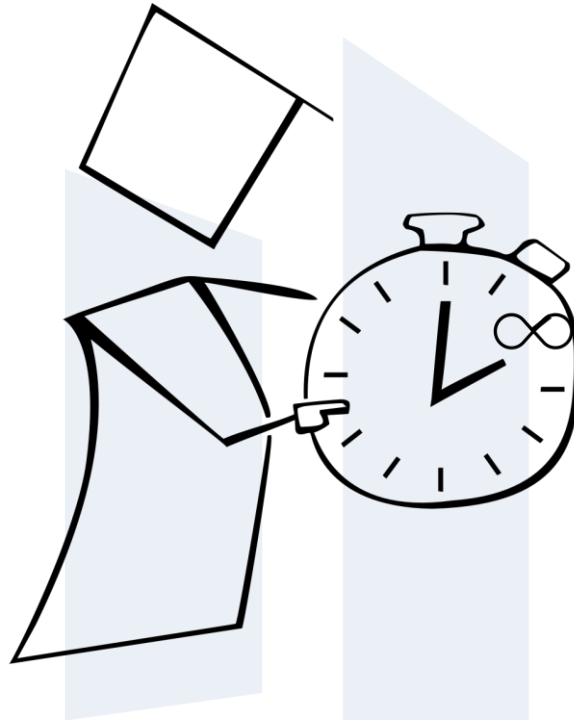
- Leadership
- Management



# Personal Leadership- 3 Core Principles

- Be proactive— take charge of your destiny.
  - Focus on things you can control and don't let those you cannot negatively impact your thoughts
- Begin with the end in mind
  - Personal mission statement
- Time management
  - Allows you to accomplish the first 2 principles

# The Crux of the Issue



# Impact of Poor Management

- Poor time management:
  - Burnout
  - Symptoms of depression
  - Poor quality of life



# Avoidance of Burnout

- Shanafelt and colleagues surveyed those in the ACS membership with active email addresses
  - 25,073 members initially emailed with a 28.7% response rate (7197 responders)

**TABLE 5. Factors Independently Associated With Burnout**

Independent Factor*	Odds Ratio (95% CI)†	P
Male	0.707 (0.588–0.849)	0.0002
Hours worked per week (for each additional hour)	1.018 (1.014–1.023)	<0.0001
Nights on call per week (for each additional night)	1.087 (1.055–1.121)	<0.0001
Specialty‡		
Pediatric surgery	0.607 (0.400–0.921)	0.0190
Urology	1.752 (1.293–2.374)	0.0003
Ophthalmology	1.726 (1.104–2.700)	0.0168
Has seen primary care provider in last 12 months	0.827 (0.726–0.942)	0.0043
Wellness strategies§		
Find meaning in my work	0.445 (0.387–0.512)	<0.0001
Take a positive outlook	0.596 (0.515–0.691)	<0.0001
Incorporate a philosophy of stressing work-life balance	0.633 (0.536–0.748)	<0.0001
Focus on what is most important in life	0.806 (0.697–0.932)	0.0031
Take vacations	0.857 (0.749–0.982)	0.0259
Nurture religious/spiritual aspects of self	1.189 (1.017–1.390)	0.0294
Discuss stressful aspects of work with colleagues	1.319 (1.104–1.575)	0.0023
Regular meetings with psychiatrist	2.244 (1.460–3.449)	0.0002
Engage in reflective writing/journaling	3.865 (3.375–4.425)	<0.0001

\*Factors in model: age, sex, relationship status, children, subspecialty, years in practice, hours worked per week, number of nights on call per week, compliant with CDC aerobic exercise recommendations, compliant with CDC muscle strength training recommendations, saw primary care provider in last year, up to date all age-appropriate health care screening, rated importance of each wellness promotion strategy.

†OR > 1 indicate a higher risk of burnout; OR <1 indicate a lower risk of burnout.

‡Compared to general surgery.

§Rate this strategy “essential” as compared to less than essential.



**TABLE 6.** Model of Independent Factors Related to High Overall QOL\*

Independent Factors†	Odds Ratio (95% CI)‡	P
Married (vs single)	1.736 (1.409–2.139)	<0.0001
Hours worked per week (each additional hour)	0.983 (0.979–0.986)	<0.0001
Nights on call per week (each additional night)	0.924 (0.899–0.950)	<0.0001
Years in practice (each additional year)	1.020 (1.014–1.026)	<0.0001
CDC compliant with aerobic exercise guidelines (vs not)	1.250 (1.104–1.414)	0.0004
Wellness strategies§		
Take a positive outlook on things	1.772 (1.560–2.014)	<0.0001
Incorporate a life philosophy stressing balance	1.578 (1.365–1.823)	<0.0001
Find meaning in work	1.523 (1.339–1.732)	<0.0001
Focus on what is most important in life	1.442 (1.266–1.642)	<0.0001
Take vacations	1.368 (1.201–1.558)	<0.0001
Participate in recreation/hobbies/exercise	1.246 (1.088–1.428)	0.0015
Talk with family/spouse/friends about feelings	1.244 (1.101–1.405)	0.0004
Protect time away from work with spouse/family/friends	1.198 (1.051–1.365)	0.0068
Regular meetings with psychiatrist to discuss stress	0.460 (0.298–0.710)	0.0004
Looking forward to retirement	0.376 (0.329–0.429)	<0.0001

\*Overall QOL score  $\geq 8$  out of 10 (see methods).

†Factors in model: age, sex, relationship status, children, sub-specialty, years in practice, hours worked per week, # nights on call per week, compliant with CDC aerobic exercise recommendations, compliant with CDC muscle strength training recommendations, saw primary care provider in last year, up to date all age-appropriate health care screening, rated importance of each wellness promotion strategy.

‡OR > 1 indicated a higher likelihood of having high overall QOL; OR < 1 indicate a likelihood of having high overall QOL.

§Rate this strategy “essential” as compared to less than essential.

# Time Management Strategies

- Set Priorities
- Set short and long-term goals
  - Realistic
- Plan and be organized
- Minimize time wasters

# Set Priorities



# Be Honest

- Something will have to give for you to accomplish what you want
  - Know what you are willing to give up
  - You have to make a decision up front what your clinical program will look like if you're going to have a successful research program
    - No one can have 4 R01s and do 500 major operations/ year

- Traps
  - Not recognizing your strengths and weaknesses
  - Setting a BHAG for everything you do
    - Become Howard Hughes funded investigator
    - Win every teaching award
    - Be the best and busiest surgeon in the hospital
  - Letting short-term problems overwhelm long-term goals
    - Revisit goals

# Plan / Organize

	Typical week c. 2007						
	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6	write	write	conferences	write	dictate	write	write
7							
8	lab	lab	elective cases	operate PRN	elective outpatient	Family time-- whatever we are doing	Family time-- whatever we are doing
9							
10							
11							
12							
1				Clinic	inpatient case		
2							
3							
4							
5							
6	family time	family time	family time	family time	family time		
7							
8							
9							
10							

# Minimize Time Wasters

## “Put first things first”

	important	less important
urgent	urgent patient issue grant due within the week presentation due within the week important local meeting (dean, ceo, chair, etc)	immediate billing trainee evaluation forms interview candidates clinical documentation <b>email</b>
less urgent	grant submission due in next 6 months prepare agenda for upcoming meeting national committee work revising trainee manuscript planning new research project meeting with clinical team regarding new initiatives	Non-urgent letters of recommendation routine paperwork routine committee meeting



# When to Disrupt the Schedule

- Stay focused
  - Establish an agenda and only say yes to those efforts that fit your agenda
- Beware of rigidity
  - Can breed contempt between you and your colleagues
  - Can be seen as someone who is not a team player

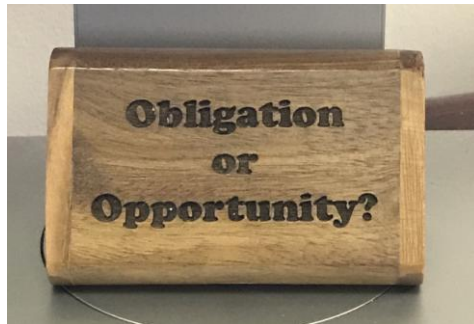


# Healthy Time Boundaries

- “Healthy time boundaries are somewhat flexible, allowing for the insertion of a new decision based on your priorities.... Your greatest obligation in your use of time is to yourself, so that you are filling the days of your life with the pursuits and activities that reflect your deepest values....”

# Stay Engaged

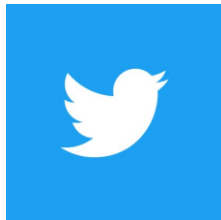
- As you get busy it gets easy to disengage
  - Remember this is an opportunity to learn and improve your management skills



# Conclusions

- Set priorities and be organized
  - Remember what is important in life
  - Stay away from the traps
- It is all YOUR time—use it wisely
  - Put first things first
  - Follow your passion
  - Stay engaged

# Questions or comments? Please contact me:



**@gdkennedy88**

**gkennedy@uabmc.edu**

**text: (608)235- 4674**