Getting it together, Keeping it together
– Time Management and Motivation

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How has it been?

- What have you found helpful / challenging about managing your own time?
- What has kept you motivated?
- Have you felt that the motivation got lost somewhere on the way? If so, what helped you?
Possible Challenges

- Getting started
- Proceeding
- Writing
- Feeling lost
- Managing negative emotions
- Uncertainty
- Handling feedback – impostor syndrome?
PROCRASTINATION?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4P785j151zk
Setting and splitting objectives

Big Picture = goal?
Subobjectives?
One at the time!
Proceed systematically.
Keep evaluating your plan.
SMART Goals

Specific
Measurable
Achievable
Relevant
Timed
Time management

1. Start with the long term objective (supergoal):
   “I will graduate in May 2023”
2. Define sub-goals.
   “I’ll concentrate on my first article during this Spring”
   “I’ll write the abstract during December”
3. Focus on one task at a time.
   “This week I’ll read literature/articles”
   “I’ll analyze results in June”
   “Today I’ll go to the library”
   “I’ll read 50 pages before next Friday”
5. Follow your progression.
   “I read two articles, good job!”
   “I need to reserve more time for these kind of tasks in the future”
Practicalities

Effective hours?
The most effective hours: focused work, learning new things, being creative
The less effective hours: e-mails, meetings, smaller tasks
Learn to work with your natural rhythm, not against it.

Environment?
Home? Office? Silence? Alone or with people?

Breaks – pomodoro!
Basic pomodoro: 25 mins work + 5 mins break / find your own?
A proper break after 1,5-2 hours
If you get stuck...

Some ideas:
- Talk with your supervisor, colleagues and friends
- Clarify the structure of your thesis
- Read about your research topic to find a new angle to it
- Read a good (writing) guide
- Loosen strict requirements
- Learn to live with difficult feelings
- Make sure you have remembered to rest
- Identify what skills or competences you need?
- Remember mercy & kindness towards yourself!
Motivation
Enable motivation

How we think motivation works:

Motivation → Action → Getting things done

How motivation actually works:
What motivates me?

Intrinsic motivation
- Own will to do things, action in itself is rewarding

Extrinsic motivation
- The needs & acceptance of others. Rewards / punishments.

(Deci & Ryan, 2000)
Supporting intrinsic motivation

Hold on to the things/substance in your research that enhances enthusiasm and interest in it

→ What motivated you to doctoral studies in the first place?

**Self Determination Theory** (Deci & Ryan):

3 innate psychological needs to allow optimal function & growth:

**Autonomy** – being the causal agent of own life; find your own way to work!

**Competence** – skills, asking for help, handling criticism

**Relatedness** – meaningfulness, teamwork, having an effect on society / science
Handling feedback – Impostor syndrome?

Very talented and ambitious people might carry some of these feelings with them (over 70% of people at some point of their career!)

- The need to be the best
- Fear of failure
- Denial of own abilities
- Doubting own achievements
- Fear of being exposed as “fraud”, feeling guilt and fear about success

Fear of failure and critical feedback might stop us from trying some things.

On the other hand, our mind might try and sabotage the positive feedback as well.

“I just got lucky”

“They just haven’t noticed I’m really not up to my tasks”
Impostor syndrome – what to do?

- Recognizing you’re not alone with these feelings
- Self-worth is not defined by others
- Critique towards work is not critique towards you as a person
- Identifying & re-framing thoughts
- Support from friends & family
- Professional help, if necessary
Counselling services

Appointment requests online:

**Study psychologists**
https://www.oulu.fi/forstudents/studypsychologists

**Study & career counselling**
https://www.oulu.fi/forstudents/study-career-counselling
Thank you!