Stress
Burnout Syndrome
Avoiding Getting Overwhelmed

PV236 – TIME MANAGEMENT & EFFECTIVENESS

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Stress

Society vs. mind

- Acceleration of life pace (Paul Virilio – Dromology)

- Fast progress in technology & science
  - Boomer: "*When I was a little kid, I was curious, I was playing with all kind of technical appliance, a radio for example. Today's kids don't do that anymore. How will they become radio-engineers…?*"
    - Yes, but radios 40 years ago were much simpler than anything nowadays' kids can play with ☺
  - Knowledge grows linearly, but potential combinations grow exponentially → increased specialization in engineering and science

- Increased communication (media/social media, advertising…)

- Globalization

Society vs. mind

Our brain is a result of exponential growth, too:

- 550 M years of brain evolution
- 60 M years of primate brain evolution
- 200-400 K years of Homo sapiens brain evolution
- 50 K years of cultural development
- 10K years since agricultural revolution
- 150 years since industrial revolution
- 50 years since computer revolution

- We live in modern society, but our brain is mostly the same as it was thousands of years ago

What is stress?

Living organisms:
- Intake information from their environment
- Process, accumulate and transform information into internal structure (i.e., they learn → **evolution**)
  - Information initiate reaction (fight vs flight)
- Get rid of excess information

- Excess information that cannot be "dissipated" (relaxed) causes damage (stress)

- Hans Selye
  - Nobel Prize laureate in medicine
  - author of stress response (alarm – resistance – exhaustion)
  - Origin of "civilization" and psychosomatic diseases

The Stress model - discussion

Internal structure

Coping strategy / Relaxation

intake

excess

Source of stress

Psychosomatic health
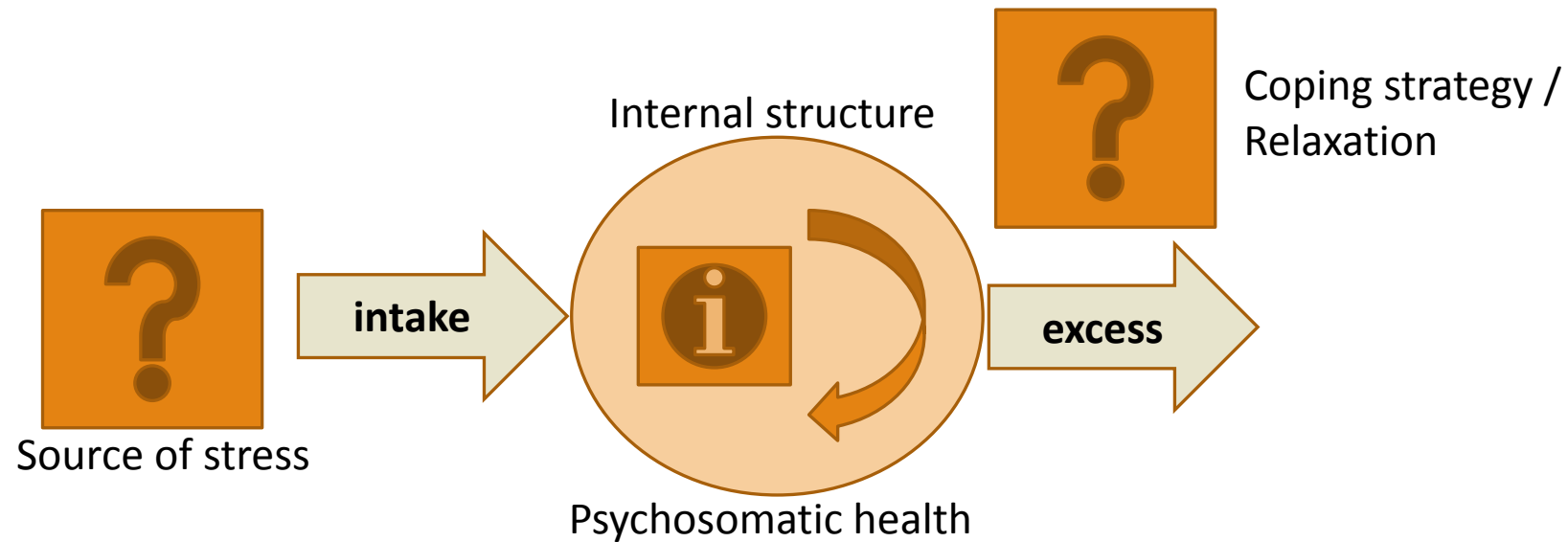
Healthy techniques of managing stress

- increasing awareness about what happens to me

- direct efficient solution

- looking for alternative solutions

- avoiding stressful situation

- seeking emotional & social support

- maintaining narcissistic equilibrium (discussed already) → Burnout Syndrome

Burnout Syndrome

- accumulated emotional exhaustion from work-related stress

- feeling of pressure that is
  - out of control
  - not possible to avoid

- Symptoms:
  - feelings of being worn-out, depleted of energy, discouraged
  - negative attitude towards work and co-workers (paranoia, blaming others, problem-evading…)
  - unhappiness at work, mood-swings, lack of concentration…

- Long-term consequences may include:
  - depression
  - sleeping disorders
  - psychosomatic diseases (migraine, eczema, non-specific digestion problems…)
  - weight-gain (or loss)
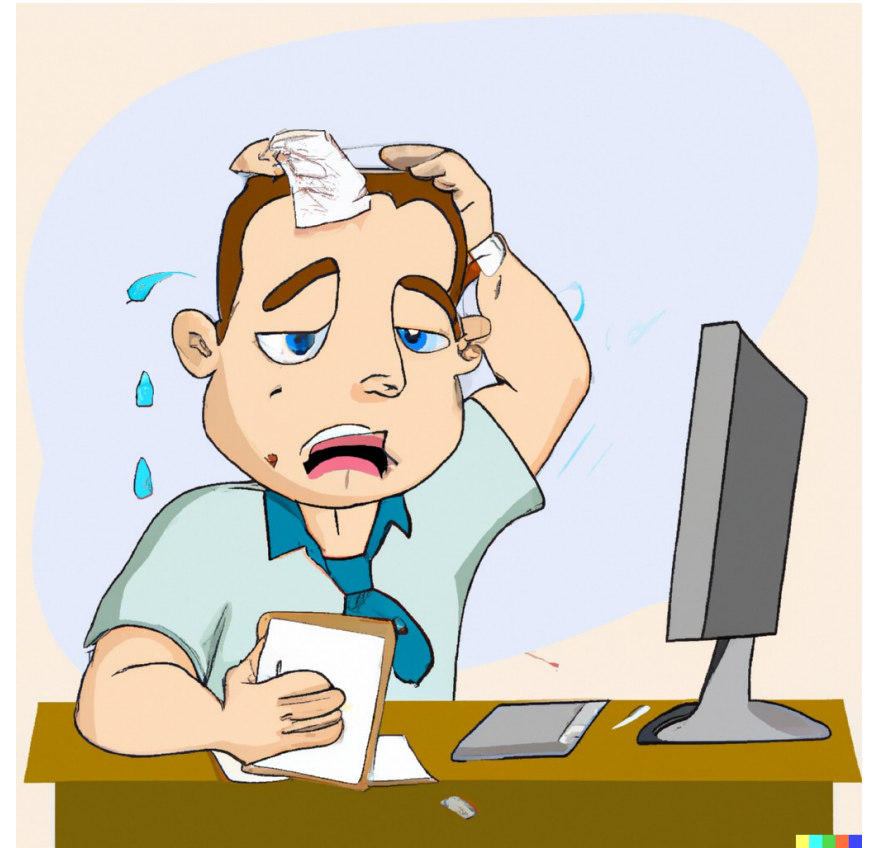 - decreased immunity

How not to manage stress?

How not to manage stress?

- denying reality

- not seeking help

- refusing offered help

- self-destructive behavior (substance abuse, promiscuity…)

- social isolation

…

Avoiding Getting Overwhelmed

How can we use TM techniques to avoid getting overwhelmed?

Why do we get overwhelmed…?

- Procrastination

- Poor planning → Feeling of "*lack of control*"

- "Wrong" time management
  - Using TM techniques to fill-in all available time with work AND/OR Forgetting about leisure activities

- Being high performer, but losing "the big picture"
  - *Do I really need to do these tasks to achieve what I aspire for?*
  - *"Anti-Time Management" by Richie Norton*

Why is it better to make plans?

- Better control
  - *Think about your hardiness level*

- More efficient prioritization

- Saving time

- Avoiding "constant firefighting"

- Lower risk of making mistakes

- Less anxiety & procrastination

More complex project need more time planning
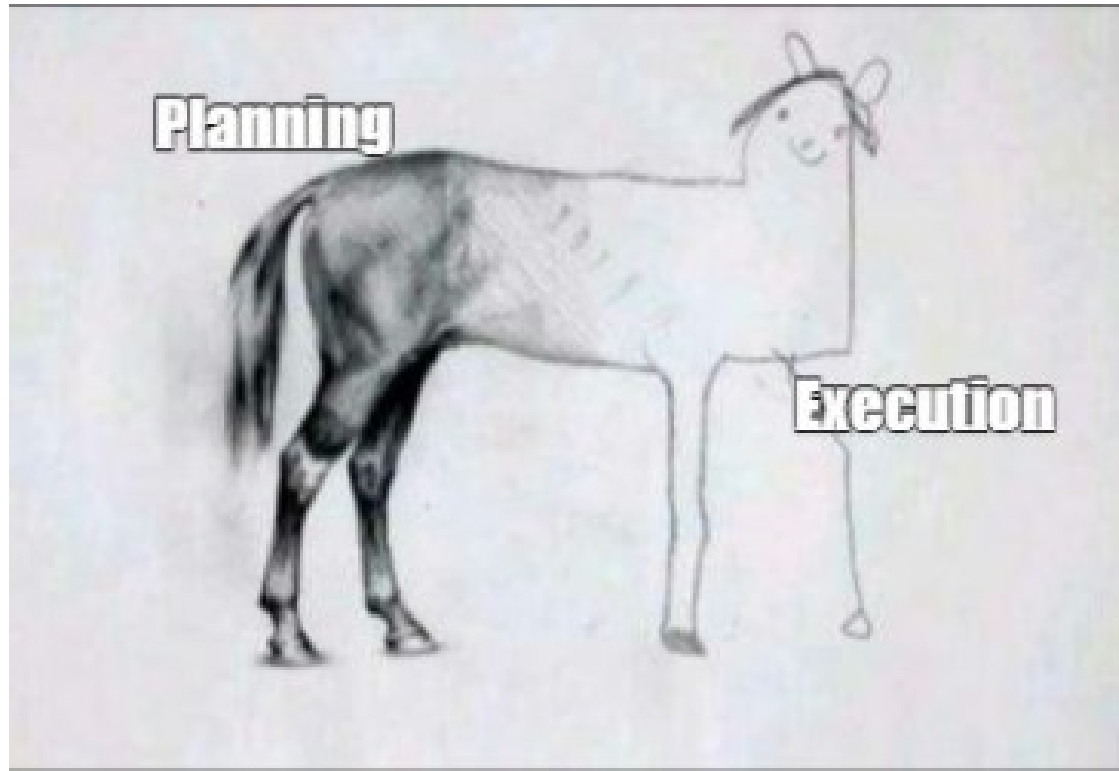
Golden rules of planning

- Plan with deadlines

- Record things down in writing

- Know your strengths & weaknesses

- Merge similar activities into blocks

- Plan only for 60 % of time, the rest goes for
  - Time buffer
  - Unexpected tasks
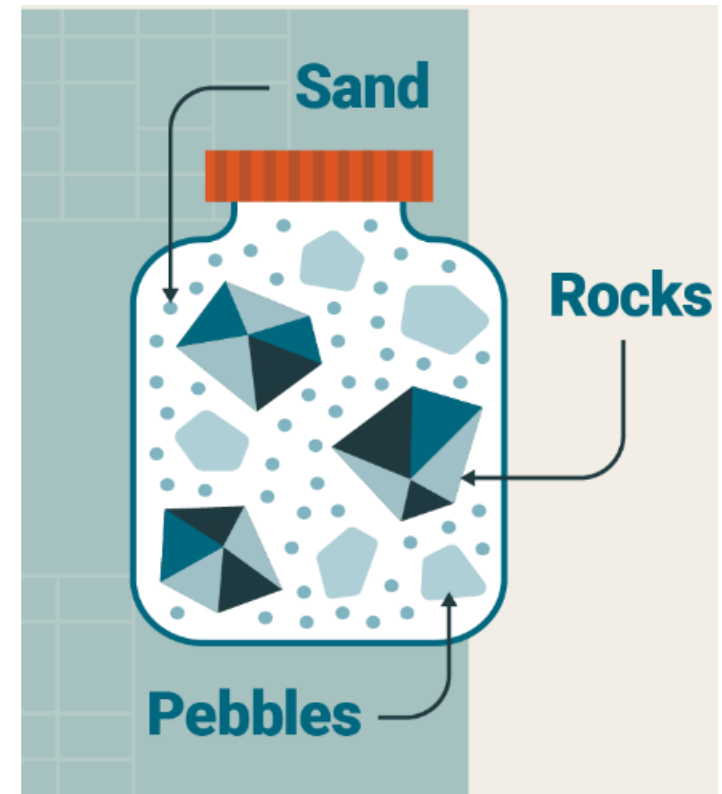 - Time eaters/disturbances/etc.

Pickle Jar Theory

Rocks – most important task(s) of the day – place them into jar first

Pebbles – everyday agenda, non-critical tasks – second
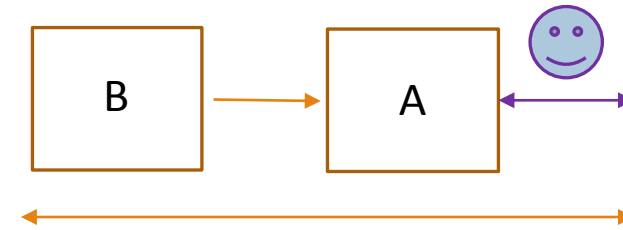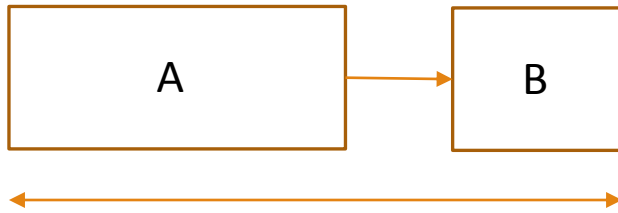
Sand – communication overhead, procrastination, unplanned disruptions – last

"*Plan only for 60 % of time*"

Inspiration from Project Management

- Plan consecutive tasks to save time

- Think about activities that can happen simultaneously

Inspiration from Project Management – Diploma Thesis Preparation

- Work Breakdown Structure
  - Introduction   2D
  - Theory   14D
    - Conceptual Framework   5D
    - Description of existing approaches   5D
    - Review of most used tools   3D
    - Choosing best tool   1D
  - Case study   28D
    - Company overview   3D
    - Organizational structure   1D
    - Processes mapping   14D
    - …   …

…but beware of Parkinson Law

"Work expands so as to fill the time available for its completion"

- Deadline cutting
  - Set personal deadlines earlier (e.g., 33 % sooner) and use extra time meaningfully

- Limit "overhead activities"
  - Max 20 minutes a day to reply to emails

Eat a frog!

"If it's your job to eat a frog, it's best to do it first thing in the morning.

And If it's your job to eat two frogs, it's best to eat the biggest one first."

HOW TO EAT THE FROG

1. IDENTIFY YOUR FROG 🐸

a.k.a. your hardest, most important task for the day. Just one!

2. EAT IT 🍴

Do your most important task first thing in the morning. Don't give yourself the chance to put it off for later.

3. REPEAT EVERY DAY 🔁

You'll be amazed how quickly small steps taken consistently add up to big accomplishments.

Does this work for you?

What are your time eaters / distractors?

What are your time eaters / distractors?

- No goals and priorities

- No daily/weekly/monthly plans

- Doing too many things at once

- Lack of motivation

- Perfectionism

- Small talks / IM / Social networks

- Poor time estimation

- No delegation

- Can't say "no"

- Bad listener – can't focus on what others say

- Bad organization – dunno where things are

- Meetingitis – too many meetings

- Too many "downtimes" – idle times between tasks

Note: Some are internal (in our head), some are external

Coping strategy for internal distractions

1. Introspect yourself what behavior/feelings distract you.
2. Is there a pattern?
3. Do you understand why do you behave/feel like this?

Note:
- You gotta know yourself
- Things one do that are emerging suddenly or that are hard to rationally explain are caused by some **emotion**

Homework:
Fight your time eaters / distractors!

1. **Identify yours (internal, external)**

2. **Can it be prevented?**

3. **Find a coping strategy how to deal with it.**

Homework:
Fight your time eaters / distractors!

DISTRACTION	CAN IT BE PREVENTED?	PREVENTIVE MEASURE
Room-mates want to play PS5	Yes	Plan game sessions
FB Notifications	Yes	Disable notifications
Boss wants you to do something	Hardly	"I'll do it once I finish this task I'm working on right now, supreme leader"
…		