20240909- Lunch And Learn Presentation

Minimizing Stress & Maximizing Focus:
Deep Work and Organization

Outline
- Intro

- Motivation / Questions
  - How many of you say yes to too many things?
  - Last semester, how many of you felt overwhelmed?
  - Do you have time management?
                    to do lists?
  - Who here has heard of time blocking?
  - Who has felt difficulty focusing consistently?
  - Who checks slack, email, text at work
     first thing?
 - Who has difficulty scrolling during the
     work day?

- The most valuable thing: Focus
  - Work Accomplished = Time x Intensity
  - Problem: Can't focus
    - Pitfalls: Notifs, email, slack, Social Media
    - Pitfall: Multitasking and "task switch costs"
      ⤷ exception: Walking & creativity
  - Juggling obligations as an attention splitter
  - Solution: Putting in place infrastructure to:
    - Improve execution

— Take care
of yourself
    - Reduce worry/chaos when juggling
    - Choose what goes on your plate

- The Productivity Funnel

Outline
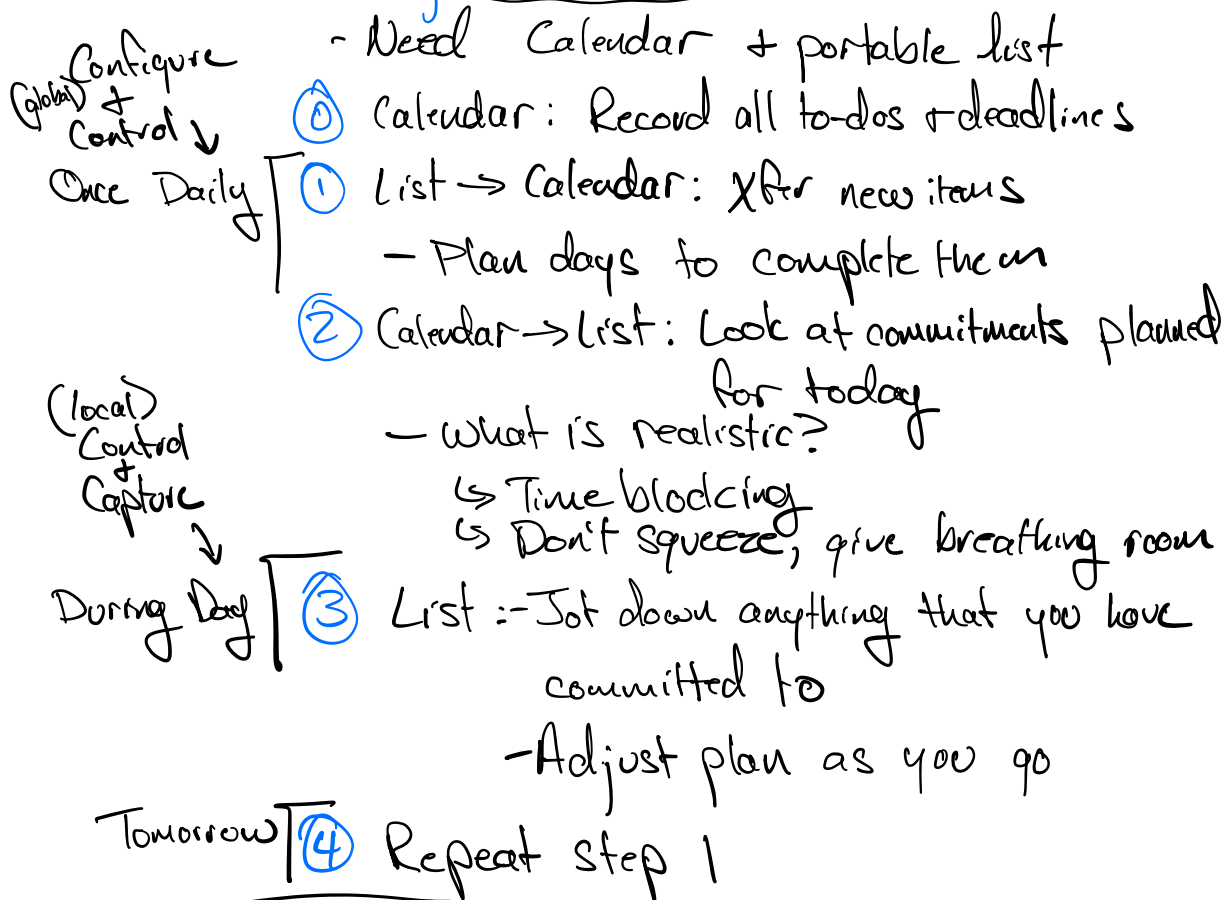 ① Activity selection —
  ② Organization
  ③ Execution
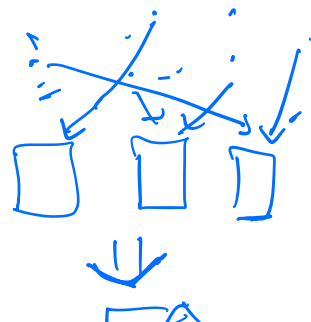
Case of Undergrad

① Courses, Extracurriculars

② Daily TM : Capture, Configure, Control

③ Securing Focus for high intensity, low time commitment accomplishment

– Daily TM Procedure

(global) Configure + Control ↓

Once Daily

- Need Calendar + portable list

⓪ Calendar: Record all to-dos + deadlines

① List → Calendar: Xfer new items
  – Plan days to complete them

② Calendar → List: Look at commitments planned for today
  – What is realistic?
    ↳ Time blocking
    ↳ Don't squeeze, give breathing room

(local) Control + Capture ↓

During Day

③ List :– Jot down anything that you have committed to
  – Adjust plan as you go

Tomorrow ④ Repeat step 1

Benefits

  ↳ Now can focus without overhead
  ↳ Be proactive instead of reactive

Case of Grad School & Postdoc

① Courses, Projects, Extracurriculars
② Daily, Weekly, Quarterly TM
③ Secure Focus

- Problem: Too many commitments, way less structure
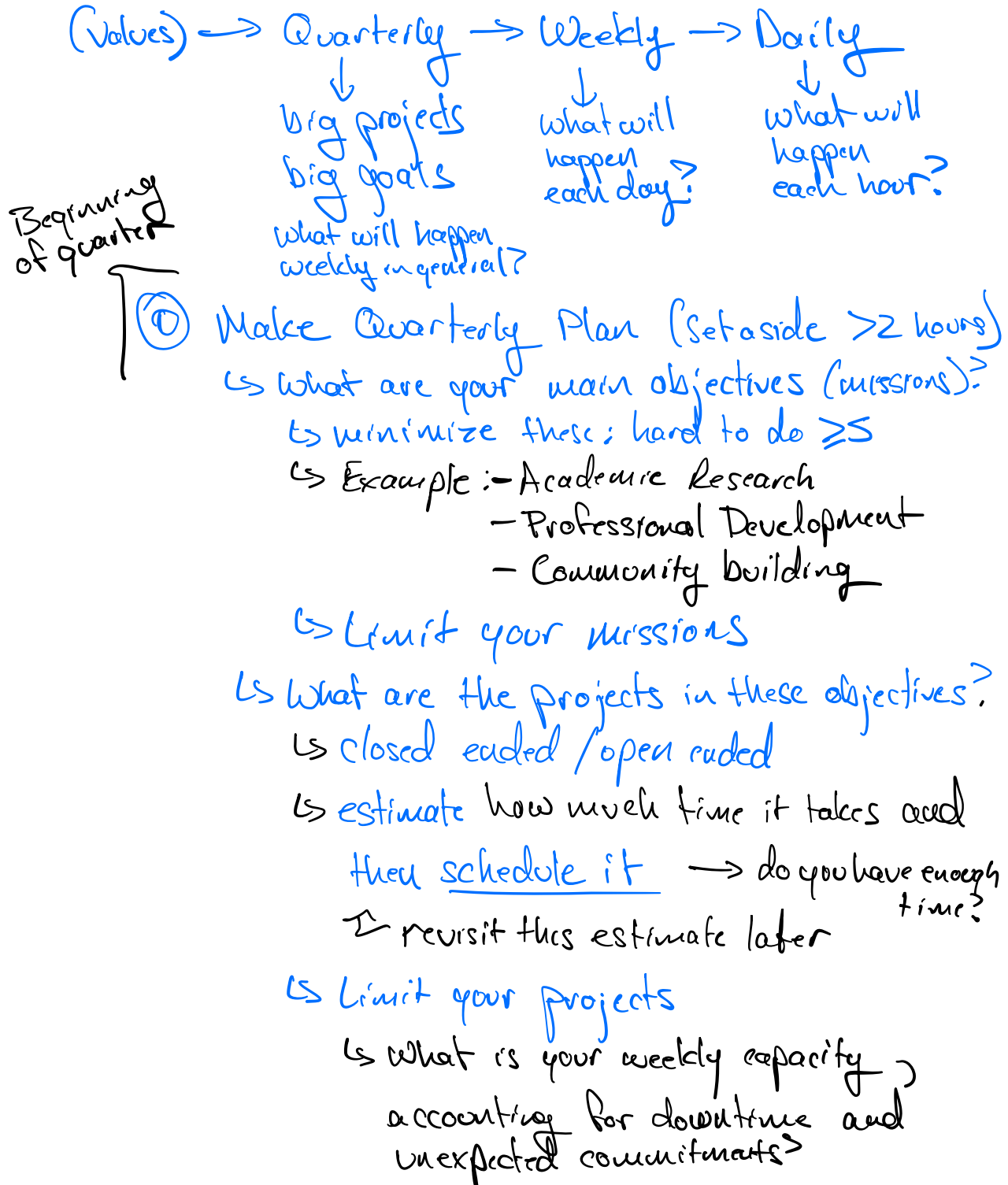 - Create Structure
    → routines
    → set aside for planning
    → Multiscale planning

  - Do fewer things
    → Choose what you will do
    → Choose what you won't do
    → Choose what you will limit/moderate

Multiscale Planning

(Values) → Quarterly → Weekly → Daily
            ↓   ↓   ↓
        big projects   what will   what will
        big goals   happen   happen
                       each day?   each hour?
        what will happen
        weekly in general?

Beginning
of quarter

① Make Quarterly Plan (set aside >2 hours)
⤷ what are your main objectives (missions)?
   ⤷ minimize these; hard to do ≥5
      ⤷ Example :─ Academic Research
                 ─ Professional Development
                 ─ Community building
   ⤷ Limit your missions
⤷ What are the projects in these objectives?
   ⤷ closed ended / open ended
   ⤷ estimate how much time it takes and
      then schedule it → do you have enough
      ⌐ revisit this estimate later   time?
   ⤷ Limit your projects
      ⤷ what is your weekly capacity,
         accounting for downtime and
         unexpected commitments?

Beginning of week

① Make Weekly Plan (≥1 hr)
↳ Consider a routine
  → Dedicate time to projects outside of meetings to establish habits
  → Protect your time for intense focus (deep work)
↳ Prioritize projects & tasks for the week
  → Aim to make small, visible progress
↳ Consider a tool for flexibility and adjustment
  ↳ Todoist, Trello, etc.

End of week

② Review your progress
  → Did you overschedule?
  → How did this week feel?
  → What can you do differently?

Daily

③ End of day, plan next day
  – Time blocking, min block 30 minutes
  – Recommend 1 project per day
  – Observatory musicians ↓   max out at 4hr
    intense, deep practice each day
↳ Limit what you tackle each day
  – Take breaks
  – drink water
  – stand up, walk

→ Can't Prioritize, Everything is Important
— Reflect on values ⟶ Takes time and thought
— Be honest about your capacity
— Focus on your foundations — health esp.
— Do fewer things!