As we continue through this next phase of the COVID-19 pandemic (with changing expectations as some organizations and activities re-open/resume), you may find yourself struggling to adapt in new or different ways than before. This situation has had a variety of consequences—some negative, some positive—that have affected individuals and families differently depending on their personal and professional circumstances. One continuing issue that posed a challenge for many even before the pandemic is how to effectively juggle the many responsibilities and obligations of our busy lives.

For some, COVID-19 has offered a chance to reflect on how we spend our time. For others, the pandemic has added even more tasks to our already-full plates. As a result, most everyone could benefit from learning ways to prioritize or "triage" their to-do list. **This TED Talk by an ER physician is well worth the 12-minute time investment** to consider how to do this in your own life:
https://www.ted.com/talks/darria_long_an_er_doctor_on_triaging_your_crazy_busy_life
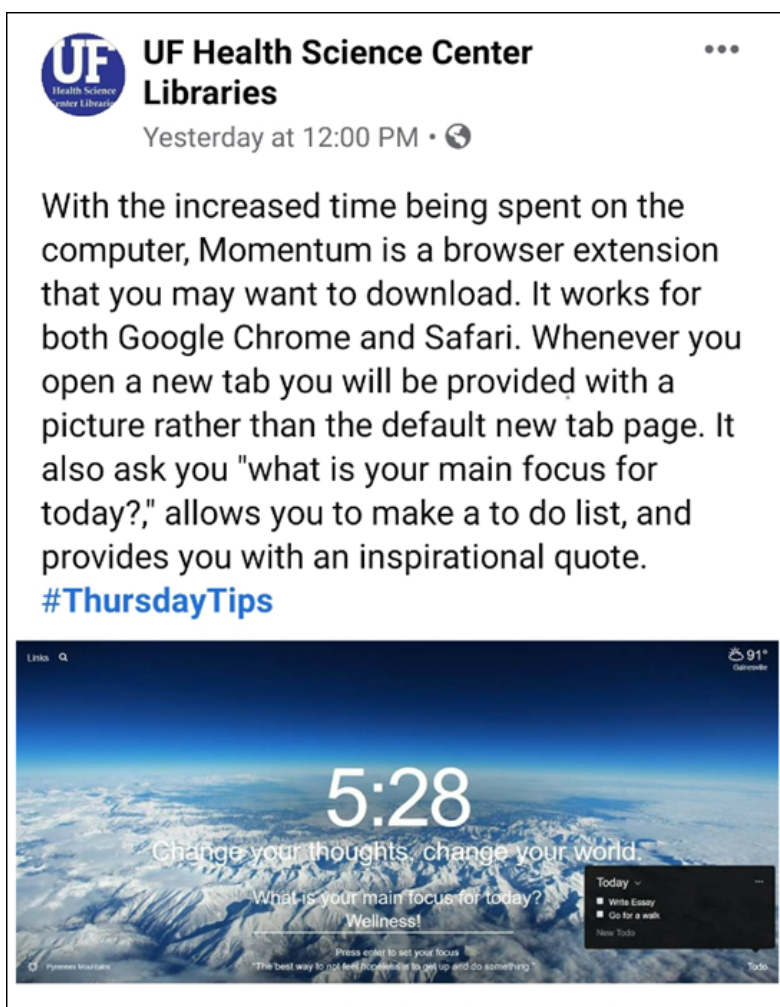
Another helpful strategy is to **recoup "lost time" in your day by practicing digital detox strategies**. The UF/GatorCare Wellness team compiled the following suggestions to implement helpful boundaries to improve productivity and mental health. Enforcing these boundaries can enhance your sleep habits, reduce anxiety and depression (especially associated with excessive media/social media exposure), increase mindfulness, enhance your interpersonal interactions, and improve your attention span throughout the day:

- **Set a technology bedtime and wake up time**. Ideally, avoid using your phone or computer for at least an hour after you wake up, and for an hour before you go to sleep.

- **Turn off notifications to limit distractions**. Sounds, pop-ups, and vibrations from our phones and computers pull us away from what we're trying to focus on.

- **Try apps that limit which websites and apps you can access at certain times of day**. Forest (https://www.forestapp.cc/) and Freedom (https://freedom.to/) are both great options.

- **Create and enforce No-Phone Zones**. Some potential No-Phone Zones could be: in the car, at the dinner table, or in the bathroom.

- **Stop phubbing**. Phubbing or "phone snubbing" is when you use your phone to distract yourself from any kind of social situation. When you're spending time with someone, whether in person or via phone

or video chatting, try to be completely present and resist the urge to check your social media, email or news when someone is talking to you.

- **Create speedbumps that cause you to slow down before acting**. It's easy to get into the habit of compulsively checking your phone or the news. Ask yourself the three W's when you're reaching for your phone or opening that news tab:
    o What for? (I'm taking a photo, I'm checking the news, I'm checking my texts)
    o Why now? (Ask yourself why you need to do this now, instead of later)
    o What else? (Ask yourself what else you can do right now)

The UF Health Science Center libraries shared another helpful strategy that involves **installing a browser extension designed to keep you on track** (and avoid getting "sucked in" to tempting unproductive activities). You can read more about it below:

UF Health Science Center Libraries
Yesterday at 12:00 PM · 🌐

With the increased time being spent on the computer, Momentum is a browser extension that you may want to download. It works for both Google Chrome and Safari. Whenever you open a new tab you will be provided with a picture rather than the default new tab page. It also ask you "what is your main focus for today?," allows you to make a to do list, and provides you with an inspirational quote.
#ThursdayTips

Stay well,
Lisa J. Merlo, Ph.D., M.P.E.
(Legal Name = Lisa Merlo Greene)
Director of Wellness Programs, UF College of Medicine
Director of Research, Professionals Resource Network
Associate Professor of Psychiatry
University of Florida
Box 100256

Gainesville, FL 32611
352-294-4932
lmerlo@ufl.edu