

**TIME MANAGEMENT AND STRESS MANAGEMENT
IN CHILD WELFARE PRACTICE
REFERENCES**

Time Management

Harvard Business School (2005). Time Management. Boston: Harvard Business School Press.

(K 1, K2)

About the study/citation-

This book discusses the issues related to time management specific to the work environment, such as time robbers, including procrastination, scheduling your time and using goals as a guide.

Findings/content-

- Goals are the starting point for productive time management. They direct a person to where he or she should be focusing his or her time.
- Goal setting is a formal process of defining outcomes that are worth accomplishing.
- Goals differ in time frames and level of importance.
- Critical goals are essential to success. They must be achieved in order for your business or work environment to run successfully.
- Enabling goals create a more desirable business or business opportunity.
- Nice-to-have goals make improvements that improve business.
- Goals should be:
 - 1) Written down in specific terms
 - 2) Time-framed
 - 3) Measurable
 - 4) Important

- 5) Aligned with organizational strategy
 - 6) Challenging yet achievable
- Goals can manage time by:
 - 1) Break goal into a manageable set of tasks
 - 2) Prioritize
 - 3) Put tasks into sequential order
 - 4) Estimate how much time each major task will take.
 - The books also discusses into detail about time robbers and improving how a person schedules his or her time.

Implications for CWS-

Setting goals as a part of time management can increase work productivity and improve the management of case loads.

Long Beach City College (n.d.). Resources and Tools for Distance Learning Students: Time management tools. Retrieved on May 15, 2009 from http://de.lbcc.edu/resources_tools/time_mgmt.html#

(K2)

About the study/citation-

This website offers information on time management tools for distance learning students, such as a time monitoring journal, monthly planner, time management schedule, daily to do list, and information on barriers to effective time management. Although these are targeted to distance learning student, these tools can be used for others as well. There are printable forms on the website for the time management tools.

Findings/content-

- There is a page on procrastination which discusses the causes of procrastination and the ways to avoid procrastination.
- The following are the causes of procrastination:
 - 1) Tasks seem too difficult

- 2) Lack of motivation
 - 3) Afraid of failure
 - 4) Don't see the point
- The following are the ways to avoid procrastination:
 - 1) Make a plan
 - 2) Divide project into "chunks"
 - 3) Create intermediate deadlines
 - 4) Be held accountable
 - 5) Create a reward

Implications for CWS-

The worker can use these and other time management tools in order to better manage work load deadlines and complete required documentation in a timely manner.

Time Management Zone (n.d.). Master the 10 Basic Skills for Successful Time Management. Retrieved on May 18, 2009 from <http://www.timemanagementzone.com/master-the-basics.html>.

(K1)

About the study/citation-

The information provided discusses the activities that need to be mastered in order to have a truly effective time management system. These activities are described in detail.

Findings/content-

- The ten activities discussed are:
 - 1) Understanding what goals are and how to establish them- a goal is described as the purpose towards which an endeavor is directed; objective. Six basic elements for goal setting are discussed, which includes setting goals that are measurable; set only 3-4 main goals; set your goals in step with: life goals, annual goals, monthly goals and weekly goals; establish the actions to be taken to achieve each goal; write goals down and regularly review goals, adjust and update.

- 2) Understand the principle of time activation- Any time a task or calendar item comes to your mind, you immediately time activate in your daily planner. The steps required for time activation to work include: 1) an idea comes to your mind or an action that needs to be completed; 2) think of when this needs to be done by; 3) go to your daily task list and put this task on the list for the day it is due; 4) During your planning and reflective time the evening before, you prioritize that task along with others.
- 3) The power of daily planning and reflective time- Spend ten minutes daily in planning and reflective time. Every day on your task list you need to time activate the daily tasks during the planning and reflective time.
- 4) The curse of to do lists- Don't find yourself with a very large task list. As you time activate tasks, put them in categories. No more than 3-4 categories of tasks for any given day. In every category, you rank each task by importance. Basically, you prioritize your tasks.
- 5) How to effectively use a calendar- Each time management system needs to have two calendar elements: master month at a glance calendar and day or week at a glance calendar. Any time you have an appointment or thought of a task to complete, you need to put it immediately in your master month at a glance calendar. Steps for how to note the events are discussed. These events or tasks in the month at a glance calendar will be transferred to the appropriate day in the day/week calendar during the planning and reflective time.
- 6) Understanding how to use memo or note tabs- what is put under this section and how they are categorized will depend on the planning system a person has, i.e., paper-based vs. computer/PDA-based.
- 7) How to effectively use contact management- The important elements to effective contact management include: to have easy access of key contact information; always have key contact information at your fingertips; keep contact information current; contact information must be complete; discussions and decisions are tracked and recorded in your contact record or daily journal. Further information is discussed in contact management in paper-based and PDA-based systems.
- 8) The benefits of keeping a journal of daily activities- The main benefit and reason for keeping a daily journal is that it provides a place to track important meeting, messages, etc, for later recall. Another benefit is that it becomes a history of your life and your progress towards achievement of your goals.

- 9) Use time management to relieve stress- By effective time management , the time management system bares the burden of remembering to get something done. As one becomes more effective in time management, reaching goals will significantly reduce stress levels.
- 10) Measure your time management effectiveness- adjust and succeed- One can measure the effectiveness of his or her time management system by asking themselves these questions: What can I do differently? Am I seeing success in achieving life goals? Am I truly mastering the basic skills of time management and applying them daily? Am I reducing stress in my life? Do I have more time for the more important things in my life? Am I progressing in my work and personal goals to where I want to be in this point in my life?

Implications for CWS-

Since workers have a tremendous work load along with job stress, following the basic elements of time management can improve case management responsibilities and reduce stress levels.

Tracy, B. (2004). Goals: How to get everything you want- Faster than you ever thought possible. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler Publishers.

(K2, K3)

About the study/citation-

The book discusses using goals to improve one's life, improve managing time well and how to use goals to move towards one's definite life purpose.

Findings/content-

- How to deal with roadblocks for achieving goals or resolving problems include:
 - 1) Identify a major goal and then ask, "Why aren't I there already? What is holding me back?" List everything you can think of.
 - 2) Look into yourself and face the possibility that it is your own fears that are your biggest roadblocks.
 - 3) Identify the constraint in yourself or the situation that sets the speed at which you achieve your goal.
 - 4) Develop several definitions of your major problem. Ask, "What else is the problem?"

- 5) Define your best solution as a goal, set a deadline, make a plan of action, and start working on the plan. Work every day until the problem is resolved.
- Deadlines
 - 1) Put a deadline on every task.
 - 2) Work every day to meet those deadlines
 - 3) Measure your progress each day
 - 4) The greater clarity you have with deadlines, the more you will accomplish and the sooner it will be done.
 - Deadlines are “best-guess” estimates of when a task will be completed. The more you set and work toward deadlines, the better you will be at achieving goals and completing task every time.

Implications for CWS-

When a worker can set and keep deadlines, work productivity will improve and work-related stress will likely decrease.

Stress Management

Arrington, P. (2008). *Stress at work: How do social workers cope?* NASW Membership Workforce Study. Washington, DC: National Association of Social Workers.

(K1, K3, K7)

About the study-

The 2004 benchmark national study of licensed social workers provided information about social workers' roles and work environments. The study also raised questions about the social work workforce that required further exploration. The NASW Membership Workforce Study was an effort to respond to such questions and to gain more insight into the social work workforce. The NASW Membership Workforce Survey was administered online from August 30, 2007, to November 30, 2007. NASW members were invited to participate through *Memberlink* newsletters, Specialty Practice Section alerts, mailed copies of the *NASW NEWS*, and the NASW Web site. Survey responses were anonymous. The survey received a total of 3,653 responses.

Findings/content-

- In small amounts, stress can be helpful, providing a source of motivation, particularly in situations where a person might feel like “throwing in the towel” (Jaffe-Gill, Smith, Larson, and Segal, (2007).
- An excessive amount of stress can be harmful and can threaten the professionals’ physical and mental health, and also place them at risk for injury, behavioral and/or major health-related problems over time.
- Seventy percent of social workers employed in health care settings reported stress-induced fatigue. Thirty-eight percent of social workers in mental health acknowledged that psychological problems are a stress-related health problem. Additionally, one-fourth of individuals employed as child welfare/family social workers reported they experience some form of sleep disorders.
- When male and female social workers were compared to one another, in terms of the stress-related health concerns they experience, 68 percent of women and 58 percent of men said they experience symptoms of fatigue (Figure 4). Additionally, 37 percent of female and 34 percent of male participants stated that they experience psychological problems when they are stressed.
- Study participants living with high levels of stress identified several strategies that assisted them in managing the stresses of their day-to-day work. For social workers of all races/ethnicities, exercise is the leading method for reducing and dealing with stress, followed by meditation and therapy. Puerto Rican social workers are more likely to use meditation than other races/ethnicities, while other Hispanic/Latino social work professionals are more likely to participate in therapy.
- In addition to exercise, meditation, and therapy as useful strategies, participants also stated they use other types of coping strategies, such as gardening, listening to music, watching television, massage, camping, fishing, painting, pilates, yoga, reading, spiritual development, and martial arts, to help reduce stress.
- Hispanic/Latino social workers are more likely to participate in therapy.
- Participants identified additional stressors, including the following:
 - Having more responsibilities than they can handle with ease (15%)
 - Needing to complete routine tasks that have little intrinsic value (14%)
 - Having few opportunities for advancement and/or promotion (14%)
 - Being expected to work long hours (13%)
 - Receiving few resources to adequately accomplish work tasks (11%)
 - Having conflicting or unclear job expectations (10%)
 - Getting minimal support from co-workers and/or supervisors (9%)
 - Being unable to balance professional and personal life (8%)

Implications for CWS-

It is important for workers to understand the effects of stress on work and their personal lives and how to cope with these stressors. Workplace stress can negatively impact the worker's ability to effectively manage his or her caseload, thus, impacting work performance.

Causes of Stress- What are the causes of stress (2007). Retrieved on May 18, 2009 from <http://www.work-life-balance-tips.com/causes-of-stress.html>.

(K2, K5, K7)

About the study/citation-

The website contains information related to the causes of stress, including the four main causes of stress, life causes of stress and how to cope with stress. The tips in this website offer ways to balance work and life.

Findings/content-

- In general, the four main causes of stress are:
 - 1) Threat- physical, social or financial stress
 - 2) Fear-fears lead a person to imagine the outcomes. If a person imagines negative outcomes, stress is caused.
 - 3) Uncertainty-having certainty is one of the six basic human needs
 - 4) Cognitive Dissonance- it occurs when there is a need to accommodate new ideas. A person will experience stress, fear and feeling upset as outcomes to the dissonance.
- Life causes of stress:
 - 1) Health-injury, illness
 - 2) Family change- divorce, marriage
 - 3) Arguments- with family members, boss, etc.
 - 4) Physical causes- new working hours, lack of sleep

- 5) Money- financial problems
 - 6) Level of responsibility increases- promotion, birth of child
- 12 strategies that are proposed to reduce and cope with stress:
 - 1) Acknowledge your feelings
 - 2) Seek support from those around you
 - 3) Be realistic about your desired results
 - 4) Set differences aside
 - 5) Stick to your budget
 - 6) Plan ahead
 - 7) Learn to say no
 - 8) Don't abandon healthy habits
 - 9) Take a breather
 - 10) Rethink solutions
 - 11) Forget about perfection
 - 12) Seek professional help where appropriate and necessary
 - Tips right now to help to cope with stress:
 - 1) Avoidance- traffic, certain colleagues, the unimportant things
 - 2) Behavioral changes- be aware of changes in self and colleagues, raise awareness of your own feelings, manage your time and state limits in advance
 - 3) Accept- accept that you may be struggling and talk to someone, learn from your mistakes, see stress as an opportunity
 - 4) Adapt- adjust your standards, practice stopping negative thoughts, practice positive reframing, adopt a mantra and repeat it daily, list those things that bring you joy and pleasure, insert humor and fun, and try to look at the big picture.

Implications for CWS-

The worker should be aware of the main causes of stress, how to reduce the likelihood for experiencing stress and how to cope with stress. Managing stress will often improve productivity and job satisfaction.

Collins, J. (2009). Addressing Secondary Traumatic Stress: Emerging approaches in child welfare. Arlington, VA: Children's Voice. Retrieved on May 19, 2009 from http://66.92.43.14/ucla/cwla_voice_trauma.pdf

(K3, K6)

About the study/citation-

This article discusses the issue of secondary traumatic stress (STS) for child welfare workers. How STS develops, why it matters to the child welfare sector and what is being done to address STS is also discussed.

Findings/Content-

- A recent survey was done with a sample of workers in the Administration for Children's Services (ACS) office in New York City. The study found that one week after what workers identified as their most stressful work-related event, 60% reported clinically significant PTSD symptoms. Of that 60%, half of the workers continued to experience clinically significant PTSD symptoms an average of 2.15 years later.
- Secondary Traumatic Stress (STS) is the result of exposure to trauma experienced by others, usually within the context of the workplace.
- Symptoms of STS are often indistinguishable from those found in people as a response to traumatic events they directly experienced.
- Child welfare workers are particularly at risk for developing STS since they are exposed to trauma usually daily as a part of their job.
- One of the reasons child welfare workers prematurely leave their jobs is thought to be due to the exposure of STS.

- CWLA reached out to a number of child welfare agencies across the country. Of the 25 states responding, there was a growing recognition that STS is an issue, but there is a gap between the recognition and what is being done in practice.
- On current practices, most states reported that they have no protocol to address the issue, some states provide one-time trainings to caseworkers on what secondary trauma is, how to recognize it, and prevention tools. Few states reported multileveled systems that included numerous supervisory and caseworker trainings, ongoing support groups, etc.
- The Resilience Alliance Project was developed to address STS and reduce attrition among child welfare staff. The project found that workers were impacted on many levels, such as an overall loss of perspective, impacting the worker's ability to assess safety and risk, distrust among workers and supervisors, increased absenteeism, decreased motivation and also an increase in attrition.
- The skills-focused resilience intervention, developed by Chemtob and his colleagues, uses three prisms to view the work of child welfare workers. The three prisms are optimism, mastery and collaboration.
- The impact of STS over time tends to break down the ability of workers to collaborate with each other.
- The project indicates that targeted interventions can reduce STS effects on individual and occupational areas, but interventions require administrative and leadership-level support and staff buy-in.

Implications for CWS-

The worker needs to be aware of the impact of STS on the child welfare system and how STS can impact work performance and one's personal life. The worker can prevent or reduce the occurrence of STS with appropriate self-care.

Covey, Stephen R. (n.d.). Books: The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People. Retrieved on May 18, 2009 from <https://www.stephencovey.com/7habits/7habits.php>

(K7)

About the study/citation-

Stephen R. Covey's book "The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People" is discussed. Each habit is discussed in detail and its relevance to effective stress management and time management.

Findings/content-

- Habit 1: Be Proactive- This habit is about taking responsibility for one's life. Proactive people know that they choose their behavior; whereas reactive people find external sources to blame for their behavior. Proactive people focus their efforts on their Circle of Influence. They work on the things they can do something about, such as health and their children.
- Habit 2: Begin with the end in mind- This habit is based on imagination. It is based on the principle that all things are created twice. There is a mental creation first and then a physical creation second. Begin with the end in mind means to begin each day, task or project with a clear vision of your desired direction and destination. The best way to incorporate this habit is to develop a personal mission statement.
- Habit 3: Put first things first- Habit 3 is the second, physical creation. Habit 3 is about life management: your purpose, values, roles and priorities. If you put first things first, you are organizing and managing time and events according to personal priorities that were established in habit 2.
- Habit 4: Think win-win- Win-win sees life as a cooperative arena, not one that is competitive. When a person approaches conflicts with a win-win attitude, they possess these traits: integrity, maturity and abundance mentality.
- Habit 5: Seek first to understand, then to be understood- Communication is the most important skill in life. Most people listen with the intent to reply, not to understand. During a conversation, because a person checks what they hear against their "autobiography," he or she may prematurely decide what the other person means before that person is done communicating.
- Habit 6: Synergize- This is the habit of creative cooperation. It is teamwork and open-mindedness. Synergy lets us discover things jointly that we are much less likely to discover on our own. Differences should be seen as strengths, not weaknesses.
- Habit 7: Sharpen the saw- this means preserving and enhancing the best asset one has-you. It means having a balanced program of self-renewal in four areas of life: physical, social/emotional, mental and spiritual. Living life in balance means taking the necessary time to renew yourself.

Implications for CWS-

If a worker can incorporate these habits in his or her life, then these can help the worker become more effective in work and on focusing on self-care. This can assist in an overall reduce level of stress.

Jenkins, S.R. and Baird, S. (2002). Secondary Traumatic Stress and Vicarious Trauma: A validation study. *Journal of Traumatic Stress, 15(5), 423-432.*

(K4, K6)

About the study/citation-

This article discusses the concepts of vicarious trauma (VT) and secondary traumatic stress (STS) and measures these along with the experience of burnout for a group of counselors. This study examines the associations among measures of the trauma-related constructs of secondary traumatic stress and vicarious traumatization in a sample of sexual assault and domestic violence counselors. These measures are compared with each other and with measures of burnout and general distress to evaluate the concurrent and discriminant validity of the two trauma-related measures. The sample consisted of 104 counselors from eight sexual assault and/or domestic violence agencies . Complete data on the major measures were available for 99 participants. The Compassion Fatigue Self-test for Psychotherapists (CFST) was modified to address “staff and volunteer” instead of “therapist” was used to assess secondary trauma. Vicarious trauma was measured with the TSI Belief Scale, Revision L. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was used. It is a self-report inventory appraising the three burnout dimensions of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced sense of personal accomplishment, as well as a total score. Others measures used include the Symptom Checklist-90- Revised, and TSI Life Events Checklist.

The definitions for each of the constructs are as follows:

- Secondary Traumatic Stress describes the sudden adverse reactions people have to trauma survivors whom they are helping or want to help. Figley (1983) first defined secondary traumatic stress as the emotional duress experienced by persons having people having close contact with a trauma survivor, particularly concerned family members, a natural response to a survivor’s traumatic experiences with which helpers may identify and empathize (Figley & Kleber, 1995).

- Vicarious traumatization was defined by Pearlman & Saakvitne (1995) as the permanent “transformation in the inner experience of the therapist that comes about as a result of empathic engagement with clients’ material.”
- The term “burnout” was first used by psychologists in the occupational stress literature to describe emotional consequences to specific to “people work” for human service workers and mental health professionals who work intensely with other people’s problems. Burnout can be defined as a defensive response to prolonged occupational exposure to demanding interpersonal situations that produce psychological stress and provide inadequate support.

Findings/content-

- There was concurrent validity between TSI-BSL and CFST, moderate convergence with burnout but useful discrimination, and strong convergence with general distress, but adequate, independent shared variance.
- The study’s results suggest that STS and VT are experienced both similarly and somewhat differently by trauma therapists. The observed symptoms appear to result from assimilating other’s traumatic experiences, having general distress plus some burnout, as a shared symptom manifestation.
- STS and VT differ in terms of conceptualization in their relative emphasis on emotional/social versus cognitive symptomatology, and differ in these measures’ item content and correlates.
- It is proposed that using the TSI-BSL and CFST-CF together could help in distinguishing therapists struggling with the cognitive impact of trauma work from those who suffer from mostly PTSD symptoms and negative experiences with clients.
- Limitations- lack of precise information about the response rate for each agency and the characteristics of nonrespondents, who might be more distressed than those included. The generalizability of these findings from a primarily White, female and heterosexual sample of counselors to a more varied populations requires more testing to be done. Also, longitudinal data would be necessary to assess symptom development over time in relationship to specific stressors.

Implications for CWS-

The worker needs to be aware of the signs and symptoms of vicarious traumatization and how it can contribute to burnout. In order to be effective in one’s job, the worker needs to do self-care in order to prevent burnout.