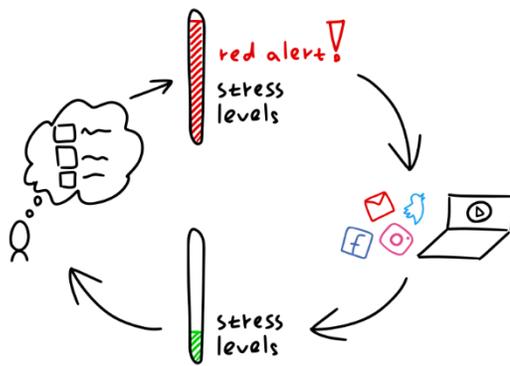


Zainab Khan
The Struggle Is Real

Being a student isn't as easy as it sounds. Along with absorbing new ideas from five classes five days per week, many students have hobbies, jobs, etc. Not to mention a social life. Trust me, I am not one to go and party every weekend but even talking to family counts too. Considering this, 24 hours never felt like enough time. Reserve "eight" hours for sleep, eight for school, and suddenly we're left with a measly eight hours for everything else.

Without being able to manage my time, my life started spiraling out of control. By the time I was finished eating dinner and trying to learn a useless TikTok dance, I felt no motivation to study. Many days similar to this carried on and I started to feel the kickback. A 63 in Chemistry here and a 73 in Calculus there, and out the window my grades went. The resulting stress was not ideal, and did not help with everyday chores such as cleaning my room. I had a plan.



Step one: Get a visual of my time allocation for one week. I needed to get an idea of where most of my time was being wasted so I could manage it more effectively. I created a spreadsheet that had a slot for each hour of the day for seven days. It looked a little something like this:

5	CHOIR PRACTICE	EXTRACURRICULAR	BECAUSE WE ARE REQUIRED TO GO BY MR. CONLON
6	DINNER	HEALTH	CAUSE I AM SUPER HUNGRY!
7	WATCH NETFLIX	SOCIAL WELLBEING	BECAUSE I HAVE NO SELF CONTROL AND TIGER KING IS ADDICTING
8	WATCH MORE NETFLIX	SOCIAL WELLBEING	
9	TIKTOK	... "SOCIAL WELLBEING"	I LEARNED THE RENEGADE DANCE AND STALKED SOME ACC'S
10	YOUTUBE	SORT OF ACADEMIC	STARTED WITH INTENTIONS OF WATCHING KHAN ACADEMY...
11	FACETIME	SOCIAL WELLBEING	I WAS BORED
12	DO ENGLISH HW	ACADEMIC	IT WAS DUE AT MIDNIGHT

As you can tell...it was rough So I decided to set a screen time restriction. I was only allowed to visit certain apps for a restricted amount of time per day.

Step two: Figure out what I want. Sure, saying "I want to study more" *sounded* great, but I needed clear goals to follow through. I set three goals, 1) Obtain a B in all courses, 2) Keep room clean, 3) Get a 1 on my solo.

Step three: Create a game plan. I needed a way to execute my goals and measure progress. To obtain a B in my classes, I decided to buy a planner and revise each subject for at least one hour per day. For my room, I decided to make sure I cleaned at least once a week and helped my mom with chores twice a week. For my choir solo, I set aside 30 minutes per day to practice my solo outside of school.

Thankfully, by defining my goals and diligently working towards them, I was finally getting some control of my life. In school, I was able to get a 1 on my solo and a B in Chemistry and Calculus. My teacher told me she noticed the effort I was putting in so she bumped me to an A. My mother thanked me for being more considerate. She told me it made her feel less stressed to take care of the house now that she had help. I think taking time to reflect on my actions and coming up with a detailed plan helped me the most to overcome this challenge.