

<https://campuslife.wvu.edu/resource-portal>

HEALTH AND WELLBEING SERVICES

**CAMPUS AND
COMMUNITY
SAFETY**

**FINANCIAL
ASSISTANCE**

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

**RESOURCES FOR SELECT
STUDENT POPULATIONS**

HOUSING

Including a nice app for
finding a place to live!

**FOOD AND
NUTRITION**

TRANSPORTATION
e.g. Tells you how to
get everywhere

**MORGANTOWN
SERVICES AND
AMENITIES**

Need help? It takes a village!

Not sure where to go? Miranda in 111



Personnel/Title IX issue: Maura (chair)
in 111 or trusted professor

Maura



Financial aid issues: The HUB

Emergency money issues: There is a up
to \$1500 per person for emergencies

Class questions: Academic advisor,
Paul Miller



Useful Websites

- <https://physics.wvu.edu/internal>
 - Departmental quicklinks & forms (access requests, etc)
 - "Who Can Help?": descriptions of what each staff member does
- <https://physics.wvu.edu/internal/wellness-resources>
 - List of resources and resource portals in/at WVU & the surrounding region
- <https://physics.wvu.edu/about/climate>
 - Summary of where/how to address issues concerning Title IX, the Civil Rights Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act, and ethics AND how to access support from the Carruth Center, RDVIC, and other entities
 - Info about anonymous/confidential reports as well as responsible employees (sometimes called mandatory reporters)
 - Info about academic accommodations
 - Helpful contacts/offices for climate-related issues
- <https://campuslife.wvu.edu/resource-portal>
 - This is the awesome resource portal I mentioned! In general, Campus and Community Life is a fantastic source of information about what's happening and who can help for just about any issue.
 - Some of my favorite parts of the site:
 - [Housing Support](#) (includes the housing map)
 - [Emergency Resources](#) (how to handle almost any concern — an expanded version of our climate page, in many ways; includes links/info about emergency funding, etc)
- <https://hub.wvu.edu/>
 - The WVU Hub is the one-stop go-to shop for help with student accounts and financial aid. Departments can provide very little support to our students regarding their accounts, so the Hub has a robust website & a big team of staff to help answer questions or solve problems.
- <https://eberly.wvu.edu/students/career-development>
 - The Eberly Career Development Center hosts a lot of events and workshops. It's also possible to schedule an appointment with them to meet 1:1 with a specialist for resume reviews, interview practice, etc.!
- **Just for fun:** <https://stemcollab.wvu.edu/stem-learning-center/spark-badge>
 - The STEM Learning Center has a badge program that is an outstandingly simple way for STEM undergrads to get involved in the university community, practice science communication, meet other students, and polish their skills. (plus, they get a cool t-shirt and enamel pin - besides resume experience - for participating!)
 - They're also frequently seeking undergrad physics students to work as tutors. We have so many students move through our 100-levels and our tutors are in high demand! Something for the students to keep in mind, re: paid work!

Last Time John Said:

Learn to be a Successful Student

I agree: Most research jobs where you are leading the science require at least a Masters and it's hard to get in if you don't have reasonable grades. Anyone want to ask me my opinion about anything else John said last week? (x10 hrs)

- Research is important but learn to be an effective student first.
- Get mostly "A"s in all your classes, especially math and physics classes.

Easier Said Than Done

Today's Goal: Help You Explore Ideas on How

Experts can disagree on best practices.

~80% of advice is useful. Identifying which 80% is tricky. On something important, a second opinion is useful.

AWIS

ASSOCIATION FOR WOMEN IN SCIENCE

YOUR NETWORK, YOUR RESOURCE, YOUR VOICE



ELSEVIER



The Kentucky Derby

My Credentials

Besides my life experience I
have also been trained to
give work-life satisfaction
workshops



You Likely Already Have Some Ideas on How
to Learn Challenging Material

What are some?

Today, we'll discuss a few commonly used
ones well-known to help people.

Remember that participation is part of your
class grade. 😊

Week 3:

How to Improve Your Learning Strategies

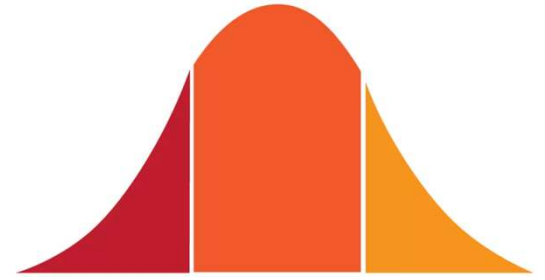
Today, we'll focus on three techniques:

Self Reflection/Meta Cognition (Research)

Fighting the Inner Critic/Procrastinator (discussed
in WVU's recent teaching conference)

Time Management (Requested Last Year!)

There are few true geniuses.



- I did REALLY well in high school.
- I also did pretty darn well in undergrad.
- Grad school was a bit of an eye opener for me.
- Your eye opener could be sooner or later, but you will have one someday.

*Eye
Opener*



The Good(?) News: Struggle is Universal in life. It doesn't make you any less than. What doesn't kill you makes you stronger. Just don't die.

Advice from Scientists

- Resilience (grit) is not about never struggling, but about not giving up when challenges arise. –Aimin Shi (Newport Optics)

Grit has been thought to be the best predictor of success, over grades.

But challenges kind of suck, how do you get through it?

- Surround yourself with people who believe in you and encourage you. –Malak Galal (Photonics Test Engineer)

This isn't high school. You have more options for friends. Pick good ones. You may keep in touch with some of them for your whole life!

A fundamental idea that you will encounter over and over again, is that learning is not something that just happens to you, it is something that *you do to yourself*. You cannot be “given” learning, nor can you be forced to do it. The most brilliant and inspired teacher cannot “cause” you to learn. Only you can do that. What follows are some fairly explicit “learning activities” or behaviors.... But there is also a basic assumption underlying these ideas that you do want to learn something while getting a diploma. Without that desire, nothing will work. -*from Learning (Your First Job) on website*



PHYSICS



HOME



191 CLASS



293 CLASS



ADDITIONAL
MATERIALS



BACK TO
RESEARCH

Guidance on Learning

[Learning to Learn](#)
[Learning \(Your First Job\)](#)



Guidance on Best Practices for Course Assignments

[Guidance on how to provide valuable discussion in perusal](#)
[Lab notebook rubric](#)
[Rubrics for graphs and experimental setups \(setups was for 2025 cohort\)](#)
[Rubrics for group presentations and abstracts for Fall 2025](#)

Magnetism Resources (Share Good Materials You Find with Holcomb to Include)

[The Magnet Academy](#)
[Course tutorial, focused on magnetism and thin film characterization](#)
[Beginner's guide to interpreting magnetic susceptibility](#)
[Matlab magnetism tutorial that is reasonable for beginners](#)

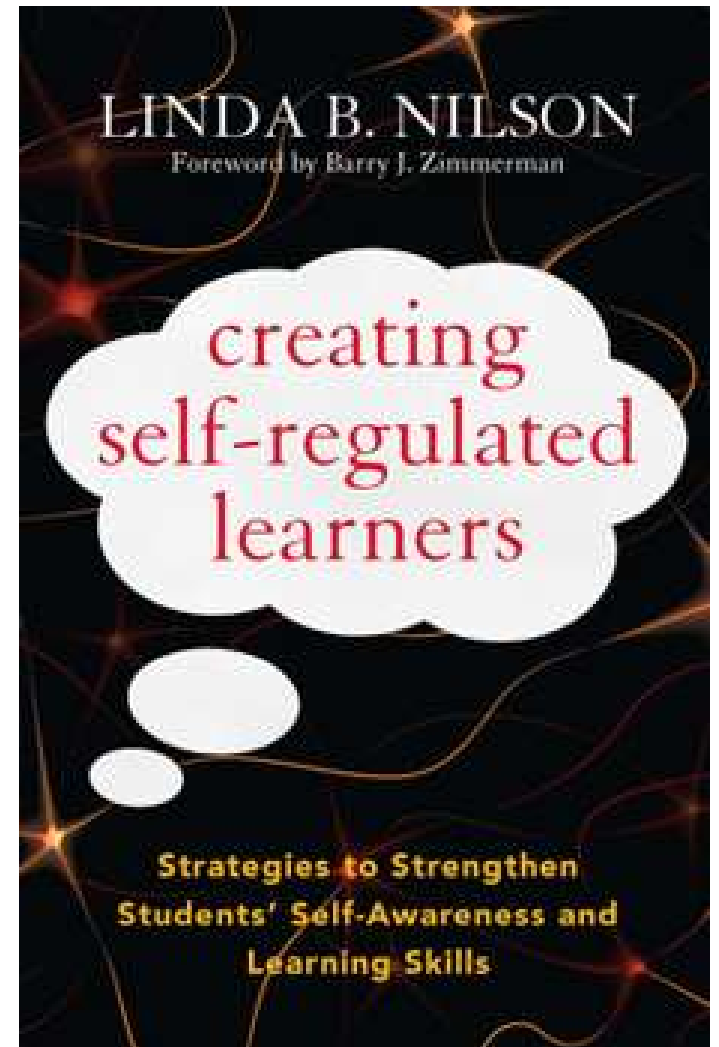
MOKE Resources

[Understanding linear, circular and elliptical light](#)
[Understanding how light interacts with a material](#)
[Introduction to MOKE--discusses basics of light and different geometries](#)
[MOKE experiment with photoelastic modulator but has some nice MOKE discussion](#)

Resources on Fitting Data (Also See Lecture Slides)

More on learning

- I've tried to build in several of these techniques into either 191 or 293 classes activities and assignments.



Mention as possible alternative to AI assignment

Take Away:

Learning isn't supposed to be easy or fast

- But this makes students anxious and/or frustrated
- So, part of teaching yourself how to learn better is figuring out how to fight the nonproductive emotions

Mental Toughness: Sometimes We Have to Do Hard Stuff



What does this preparation look like for you?

Guided “Learning How You Learn” Assignment

(First 191 assignment due in two weeks)

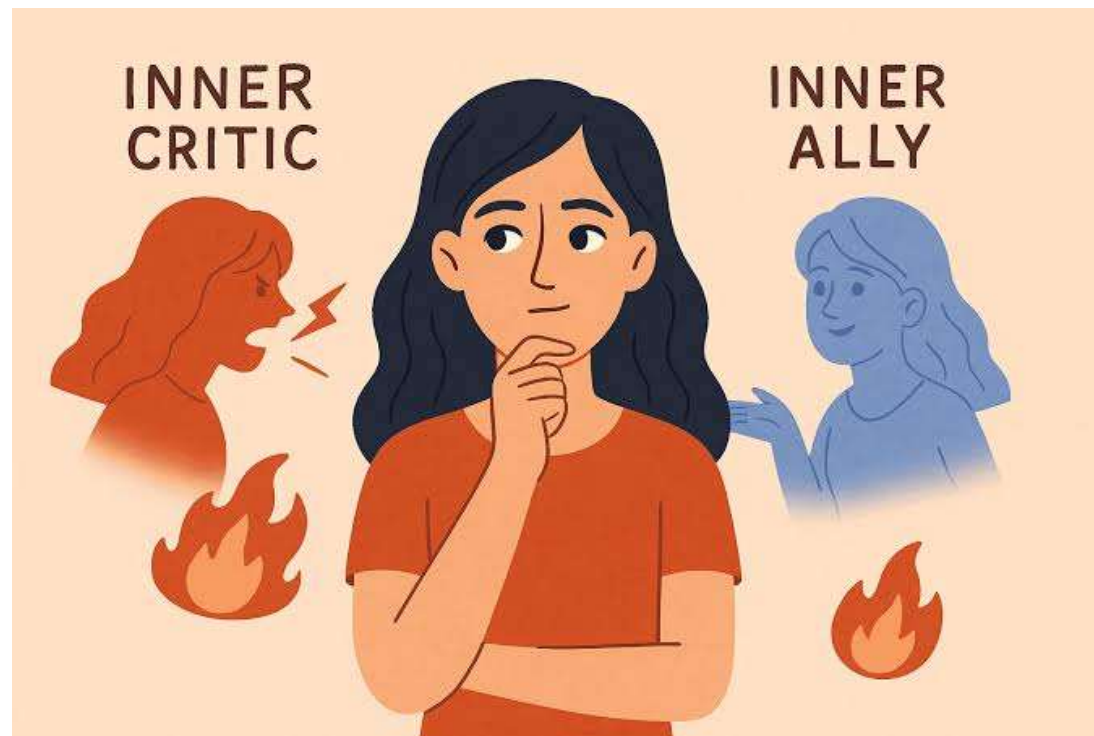
Purpose: This assignment is designed to help you build skills used by successful students/researchers: planning, staying focused, monitoring progress, and reflecting on what works for you. You will complete one focused study session of your choosing and reflect on it.

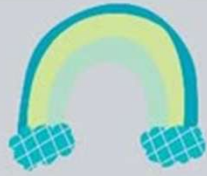
What kind of work can I use this for? studying for an upcoming exam or quiz, working on a problem set, etc.

Constraints (please follow these)

- Complete one individual (not group) study session only for this reflection. Session length: 2–4 hours
- Work should be for a course you are currently taking
- While not required, handwritten responses are encouraged
- **Part A: Plan (before you start):** What course and specific task will you work on? What is your **concrete goal** for this session? How long do you *expect* this task to take? What do you expect to be easiest/hardest? Name 1-3 things you will do to reduce distractions or interruptions.
- **Part B: Time Log (during the session)** Keep a simple record of what actually happens. You do **not** need to track every minute—just note changes. (Example: 2:00–2:45 — Problem solving, 2:45–3:00 — Break / interruption, etc.)
- **Part C: Reflection** Did you reach the goal you set? Why or why not? How did the actual time compare to what you expected? **Focus:** What interfered most with your focus? How well did you manage it? **Strategy:** What approach or strategy worked best? What didn’t work as well? **Understanding:** What material now feels solid? What is still confusing? **Next time:** What is/are 1-3 specific things you would do differently when working on a similar task?

When doing this assignment, you may find yourself interrupted by some disruptive thoughts.





MOLDER

Tries to fit a certain standard set by family, community or culture, and fears showing your true self will lead to rejection and abandonment.



TASKMASTER

Pushes you to keep going and fears if you stop, you will become lazy or other people will judge you as a failure.



GUILT-TRIPPER

Criticizes you for past wrong-doings and lives by the standards set by your family, community or culture.



UNDERMINER

Undermines your self-confidence and abilities so you stay small and don't take risks.



PERFECTIONIST

Sets high, usually unobtainable, standards and struggles to call things completed or finished.



DESTROYER

Attacks your self-worth, says you are flawed and undeserving of basic respect and understanding.



INNER CONTROLLER

Tries to control your impulses around things like eating, drinking, spending, and sex.

Most but not all people experience **at least 1** of these as an inner critic (be happy if that's not you)

Does anyone recognize the voice? It can change over time.

INNER CRITIC

VS

INNER GUIDANCE

- thinks in black + white, either/or
- focuses on problems
- does not recognize or celebrate progress
- uses shame, guilt, and fear to motivate
- "the voice of reason"
- focuses on lack/scarcity/never enough

- recognizes complexity/gray area
- focuses on solutions
- celebrates progress and small victories
- uses desire, love, and compassion to motivate
- "the voice of passion"
- focuses of gratitude, what is possible, and what feels good

www.mandysciacchitano.com

5 Ways to handle the Inner Critic

SAGAR



Self Love & Care

- Nourish yourself with hobbies that you like
- Work on your development
- Treat yourself with respect, especially in your self-talk



Awareness of strengths

- Know your strengths
- Optimally use your strengths to gain confidence



Gratitude to Self

- Appreciate yourself for effort, not just outcomes
- Acknowledge the difference you make to people around you



Affirmations

- Practice Affirmations for building confidence
- "I love and approve of myself"
- "I am worthy just as I am"



Reframing

- Reframe how the inner critic is seeing things by pointing out a different perspective, calling upon your strengths, and being aware of assumptions

Critic: "I'm going to fail the test tomorrow."

Reframed: What can I realistically do in the next two hours to improve my chances? Later: What can I do before the next test?

Critic: "I got a bad grade. I'm terrible at this."

Reframed: This grade tells me how I performed on one assignment, not who I am.

Inner critic: "I've wasted too much time.

There's no point starting now."

Reframed: "I can't change the time I've lost, but I can decide how to use the next hour."

Inner critic: "Everyone else understands this."

Reframed: "I don't actually know what everyone else understands. If so, I have so many people to ask for help. What's one question I could ask to clarify my confusion?"

Once we get past the anxiety, then what?

- Just because we finally figure out how to ignore/redirect the inner critic or avoid whatever learning trap you might fall into, doesn't mean we can magically learn.
- What other struggles might you have?

Time Management Starts with Prioritizing

While social/fun activities are important too, you need to make sure you leave enough time for studying.

PLAN AND PRIORITIZE

What are the top 5 things that you need to do in the next week in each category?

WORK (*ex: look for paper for 293 project*)

PERSONAL (*ex: grocery store*)

1.

1.

2.

2.

3.

3.

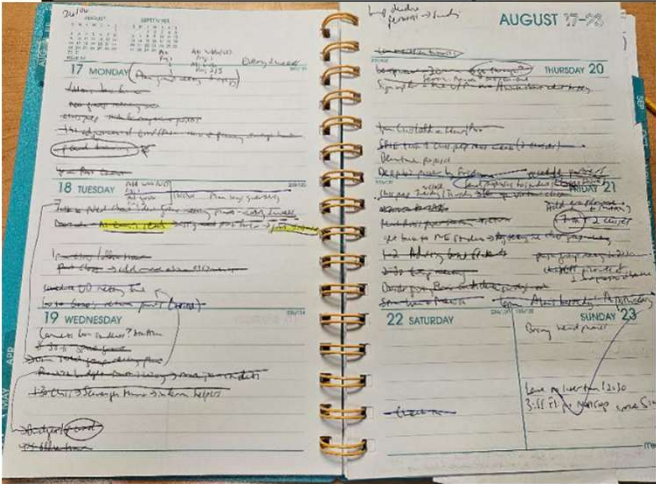
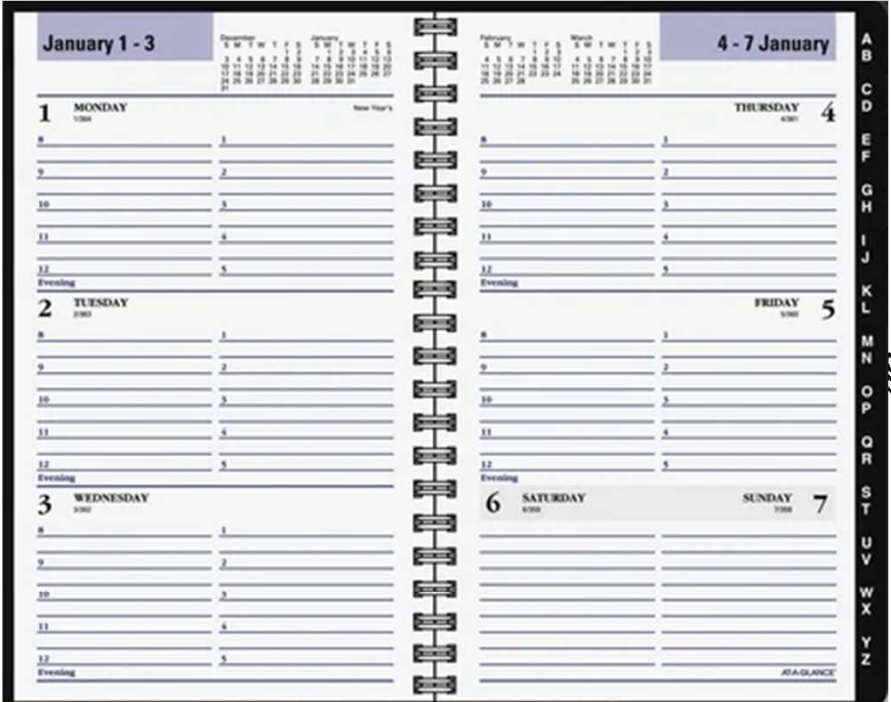
4.

4.

5.

5.

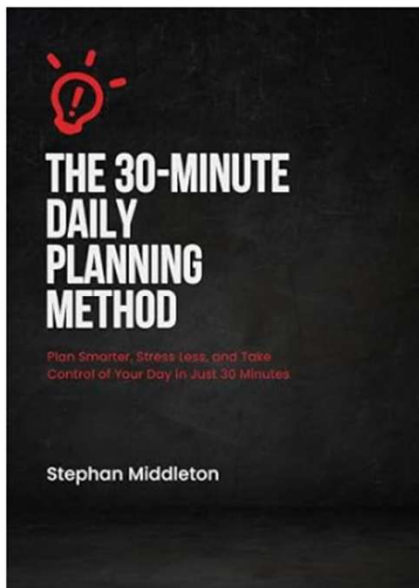
Time	Monday	Tuesday	Wed	Thursday	Friday
8-8:30					
8:30-9					
9-9:30					
9:30-10					
10-10:30					
10:30-11					
11-11:30					
11:30-12					
12-12:30					
12:30-1					
1-1:30					
1:30-2					
2-2:30					
2:30-3					
3-3:30					
3:30-4					
4-4:30					
4:30-5					
5-5:30					
5:30-6					



I use my planner as a rough estimate of this. I don't always stick to it perfectly, but I try to get close.

The 30 minutes a day strategy

- This is a very common method for making progress on things you've been putting off.
- Examples: Exercise, finances, writing a paper
- It doesn't seem like 30 minutes is all that much, but if you REALLY focus (no distractions allowed!) for 30 minutes, you can actually get a LOT done!



The 30-Minute Daily Planning Method: Plan Smarter, Stress Less, and Take Control of Your Day in Just 30 Minutes (30-Minute Productivity Fixes — Book Series)

by [Stephan Middleton](#) (Author) | Format: Kindle Edition

Part of: [30-Minute Productivity Fixes — Book Series \(7 books\)](#)

Plan Smarter. Stress Less. Take Control — In Just 30 Minutes a Day.

Feeling overwhelmed by your daily to-do list? Struggling to balance work, family, and personal goals? *The 30-Minute Daily Planning Method* is your no-fluff guide to organizing your day quickly and effectively — without the burnout.

In this practical, easy-to-follow book, you'll discover:

- A simple 30-minute routine to plan your day with clarity
 - How to prioritize what actually matters (and ditch the rest)
 - Time-blocking tips that *actually* work
 - Strategies to reduce decision fatigue and stay focused
 - Tools for sticking to your plan — even when life gets messy
- Whether you're a busy parent, entrepreneur, student, or working professional, this method helps you create calm from chaos and move through your day with purpose.

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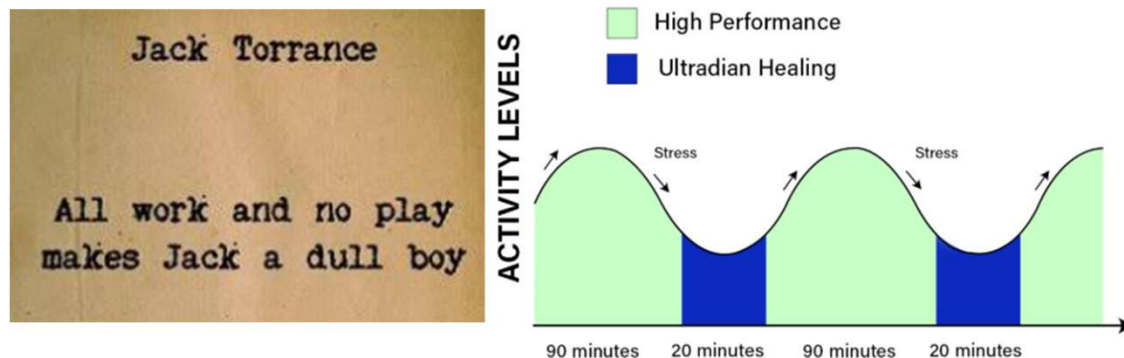
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Not all break are equally refreshing. Try to notice when breaks are less helpful and try to do less of those activities.

What are some of your favorite break activities?



Reflection is scientifically shown to improve your learning.

Today in your notebook (graded near end of semester), write down some of the strategies discussed today that you want to try.

I ran out of time for this, but I strongly encourage you to consider reflecting on your own when you have time.

