ac4d

Strategies & Tactics for Thriving in Chaos

Time Management

Make a written list of what you have to do each week; scrub it at least once each day (cross out items that are done, add new items, re-arrange ideas as necessary)

Prioritize your work based on importance (impact, amount to learn, commitment to other people)

Do the things at the top of the list first

Make a visualization of your weekly schedule, blocking out time for school, work, personal

Time-box activities, by first establishing a duration and then setting a timer

Be more aware of how casual time is being used (conversations, off-topic discussion)

Plan tomorrow the night before

Productivity & Speed

Identify shortcuts in digital tools (hot keys, more effective workflows, using templates) to improve the efficiency of the work

Isolate yourself from distractions (turn off the internet on your laptop, turn off your phone, put on headphones)

Remember that it's easier to edit than create from scratch. Get rough versions of your ideas out quickly so you can spend time iterating and not staring at a blank canvas

Prioritize task types by when you're best able to do them. Do critical thinking when you're refreshed. Do grunt work when you're fading in the late hours

Try to do a "broad stroke" across the whole project or task, and then go back to fill in the details later

Don't reinvent the wheel. Use toolkits, UI kits, grid frameworks, etc to save time and focus on the problem when needed, details when needed

Define what success looks like at the beginning, and then reevaluate periodically

Collaboration

Be explicit about your expectations of each other ("I understand that you are going to do X by this date - is that correct?")

Keep a visual, public list of who is doing what, and by when

Assign time to reflect on the work you are doing at a conceptual level (discuss how you feel about the work and the working cadence)

Be direct on things you are upset about or disappointed in from your teammates

Write down criticism (of your work or your working style) and continue to process it after-the-fact

Recognize that there's time for exploration, and time for production - and call out when one time is over and the other has begun

While everyone should participate in everything, make sure that each task has only one owner who is accountable for delivery

Ask to see group members' work, and initiate critique proactively (but constructively)

Motivation

Identify the parts of the process that you enjoy the most, and make sure there's time to do those at regular intervals

Write your aspirational goals on the walls, publicly, so you can always remember why you are doing such hard work

Spend time looking at other work and try to pay attention to daily experiences you have - they will often inform your work moving forward. Ask yourself: was that a good experience? What would change to make it better?