Time Management Skill Building

It is nearly a certainty that one of the issues that your mentee will mention during your mentoring sessions is a challenge with time management. We all wish we were better managers of time, and some of us are better at it than others. Some providers struggle with the organization of their work, while others simply feel they don't have enough time to fit in all their commitments. Even if time management is not your forte, we can learn and share some tips can make our days more efficient, allowing us to spend time in areas that we value.

Gauge your mentees current level of time management skills:
- Have they taken time management courses or read any books on this topic?
- What is their current system of organization? How do they organize their to-do lists? Follow-up on patients?
- What areas do they struggle in? Are they procrastinators? Take too long to finish patient charts? Easily distracted?

Here's a helpful article on how to frame a time management discussion:
https://www.nytimes.com/guides/business/how-to-improve-your-productivity-at-work

Multi-tasking discussion: It used to be a goal to be an adept multi-tasker, but now the evidence shows that multi-tasking actually is more inefficient. It takes longer to complete the initial task as our brain is constantly shifting focus, and it inhibits creativity.
- Does your mentee eliminate distractions as much as possible when doing "deep-thinking" work?
- When possible, turn phones to off/vibrate, don't check email every time a new message pops up, when outside thoughts pop up (e.g. grocery list items) - write them down quickly and move on
- It is better to work in intervals than in large chunks of time
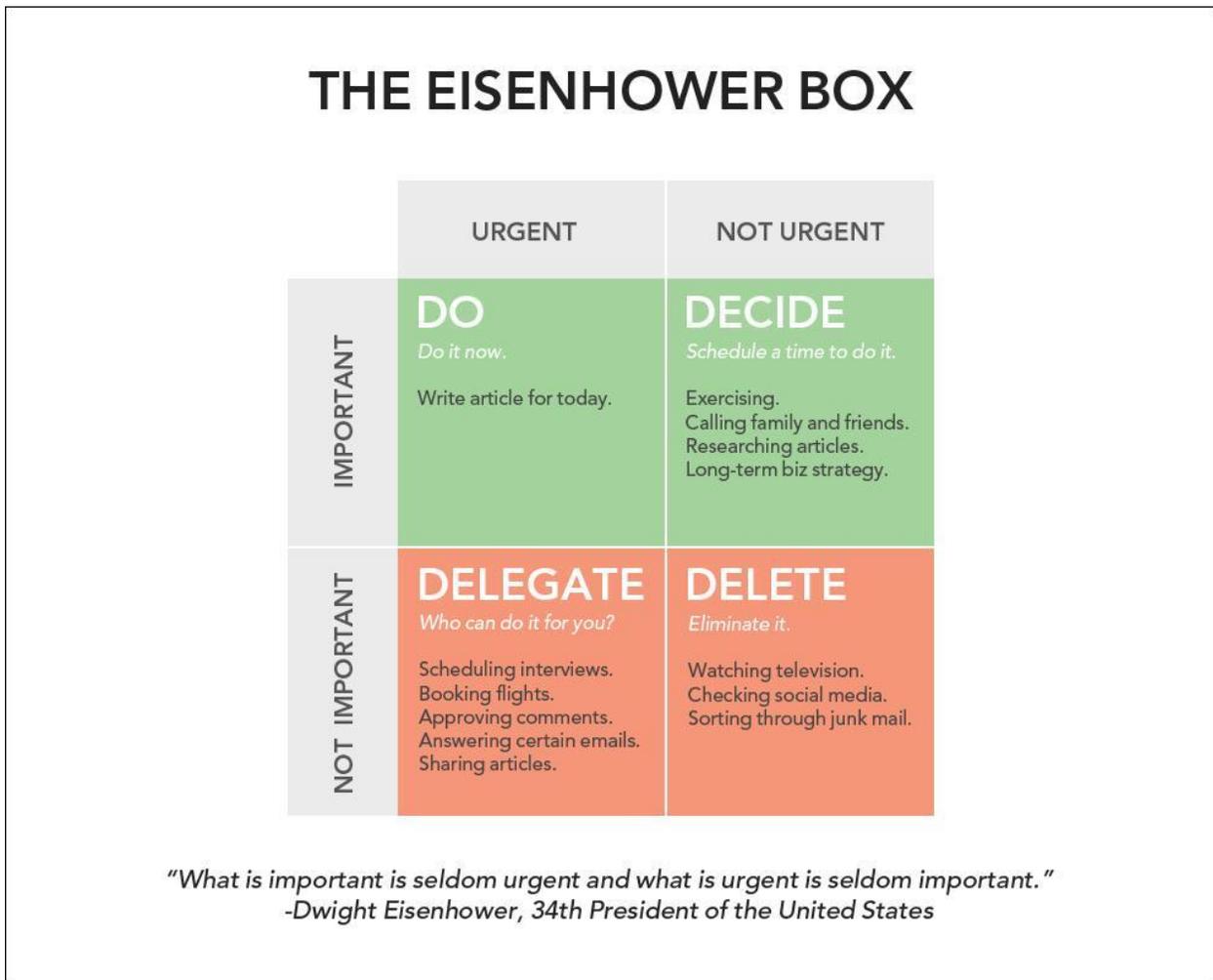
Procrastination:
- If procrastination is a theme, break large tasks into manageable pieces. Our brain tends to want to complete tasks that are easier and more manageable, so if you break a large project into smaller segments, you have a better chance of completing it that day.
- Keep all to-do items in one list (professional and personal in one, if possible); don't carry multiple lists - more difficult to organize, takes longer to switch back and forth from list to list.

EMR/office/computer organization:
- Discuss how it's organized - could the area be improved? Have a simple organization system.
- Computer shortcuts/charting templates: are they using it, is an IT or tech lead available that can provide shortcut tips?
- Email issues - try to "touch once" or if it can't be addressed in 2-3 minutes, schedule it at a later time.

Eisenhower Matrix: This is a common method to organize tasks by urgency and importance; It is a 2 x 2 grid (see below) that most tasks can fit into. We all address box 1 (DO) quickly since it demands

our attention. We all should work to eliminate items in box 4 (DELETE) that are not important and not urgent. The areas that most of us struggle with is in box 2 (DECIDE) and box 3 (DELEGATE). We strive to spend more time on the important (not urgent) items, and these can only be done if they are purposefully scheduled into our calendar. And we can free up time to do these items if we consciously delegate items that fall into box 3. Aim to make fewer decisions in areas that aren't important to you (e.g. by packing the same lunch every day) or outsource when possible (e.g. asking your MA to answer prescription refill emails).

THE EISENHOWER BOX

	URGENT	NOT URGENT
IMPORTANT	**DO** *Do it now.* Write article for today.	**DECIDE** *Schedule a time to do it.* Exercising. Calling family and friends. Researching articles. Long-term biz strategy.
NOT IMPORTANT	**DELEGATE** *Who can do it for you?* Scheduling interviews. Booking flights. Approving comments. Answering certain emails. Sharing articles.	**DELETE** *Eliminate it.* Watching television. Checking social media. Sorting through junk mail.

"What is important is seldom urgent and what is urgent is seldom important."
-Dwight Eisenhower, 34th President of the United States

We all struggle with time management. We can gain some helpful tips on how to be more efficient with time, however, we all find time to fit in what is necessary or important for us. Spend some time determining what areas are of highest priorities and scheduling those in!

Resources:
- Eisenhower's matrix:https://www.eisenhower.me/eisenhower-matrix/

- TED talk: [How to gain control of your free time](https://www.ted.com/talks/laura_vanderkam_how_to_gain_control_of_your_free_time?language=en#t-149922)
  - https://www.ted.com/talks/laura_vanderkam_how_to_gain_control_of_your_free_time?language=en#t-149922