



Hi graduate friends,

The holiday season is quickly approaching. For some graduate students, this will be a time to get some much-needed rest and relaxation while for others it can be a time to attend to a few important tasks that have been on the back burner for a while. It's important to ensure you avoid feeling overwhelmed by effectively prioritizing what you can realistically accomplish over the next few weeks. If there was one thing you could get off your to-do list, what might that be? Is this goal realistic, specific, and attainable in the time you have?



The following tips are designed to give you the freedom and balance you need to fully enjoy the holiday season.

### **1. Get organized before the holidays**

Being disorganized is a huge waste of time. Take control of the task(s) that need to be completed over the holidays and develop a *reasonable* list of steps to tackle this task. Creating an organized, step-by-step list, will help to breakdown a larger task into small and reasonable components that will feel easier to accomplish. Remember, micro-tasking is the key to productively completing large tasks.

### **2. Schedule it!**

Firmly plan to complete each task by writing down your intended goal. Try using this weekly calendar found [here](#). Pick a start time, estimate how long it will take, and select a completion time (for example, Tuesday between 6:30 pm and 8:00 pm complete introduction revisions, pages 1 - 7).

You'll be able to relax knowing that everything that needs to be done is scheduled to be taken care of over the next few weeks.

### **3. Adhere to *your* schedule**

This is a critical step in effective planning over the holidays! Follow the plan you just created. You will have those times when you "don't feel like it" but stick to your plan as best you can.

### **6. Reward yourself, but after the work is done**

Whether it is some quiet time, watching TV, a massage, or anything else you enjoy. Every day should have something scheduled for self-care or personal enjoyment.

### **7. Remind yourself why you are doing everything**

When following your plan, remind yourself this is your plan and your way of having everything you want this holiday season. Write yourself a note that you can read every morning before getting work done. This note can offer some much-needed words of encouragement before starting a new task.

Happy Holidays from all of us in Learning Development & Success!



Aldean Ellis (he/him), from your [Learning Development & Success](#) team!

*GRADUpdATE is a monthly e-newsletter dedicated to helping students succeed in graduate school. This information is provided by Learning Development & Success, Room 4100, Western Student Services Building, Western University, Canada.*