

## Finish on time: From efficiency to effectiveness

Effectiveness: **doing the right things** (it moves you closer toward the goal)

- **Focus your energy on a single main task** rather than spreading it across multiple tasks, as multitasking takes more time and effort than concentrating on one task at a time.
- **Balance the three parameters—quality, quantity, and timeframe—**by adjusting them to fit your focus. If you want to prioritize quality, reduce the quantity, which allows you to stay within the original timeframe.
- **Be clear on your goals** in your to do list
- **Devote 45 minutes per week** to the things that are important but not urgent like preparation for the dissertation
- And devote **at least 15 minutes** on your project everyday
- **Do things that really count** (do the right things at the right speed)
- Get **feedback on the early draft**
- **Focus on the end product and work backward:** make a physical copy of the end product and work backward from there: ex: the thesis: a folder with empty pages (number of pages you want and the parts) or start with an empty ppt, then the title of each slide... (fill it step by step)
- **Work in units of 45 minutes** (intense work) take at least 5 minutes break between units and prefer tasks that require more focus when you're the most productive
- **Apply the 80/20 principle**

**Apply the 80/20 principle to three central areas in the research process**

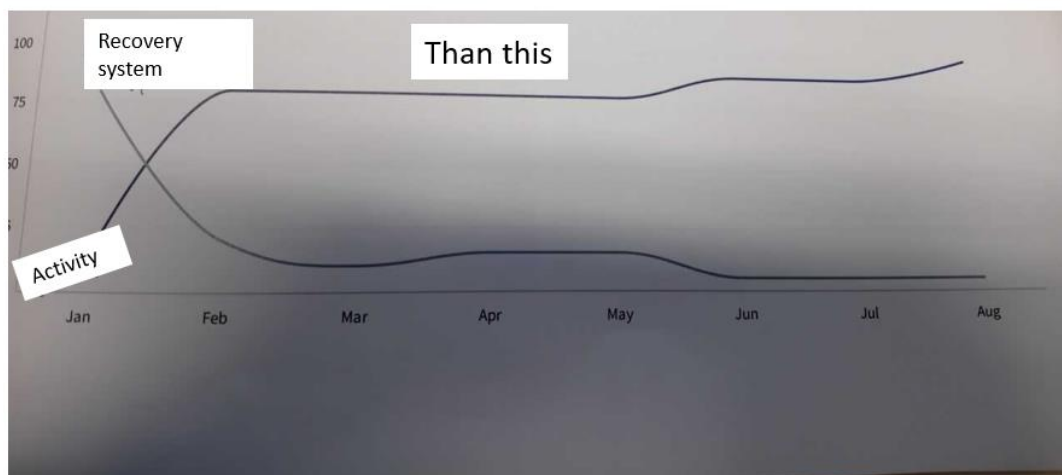
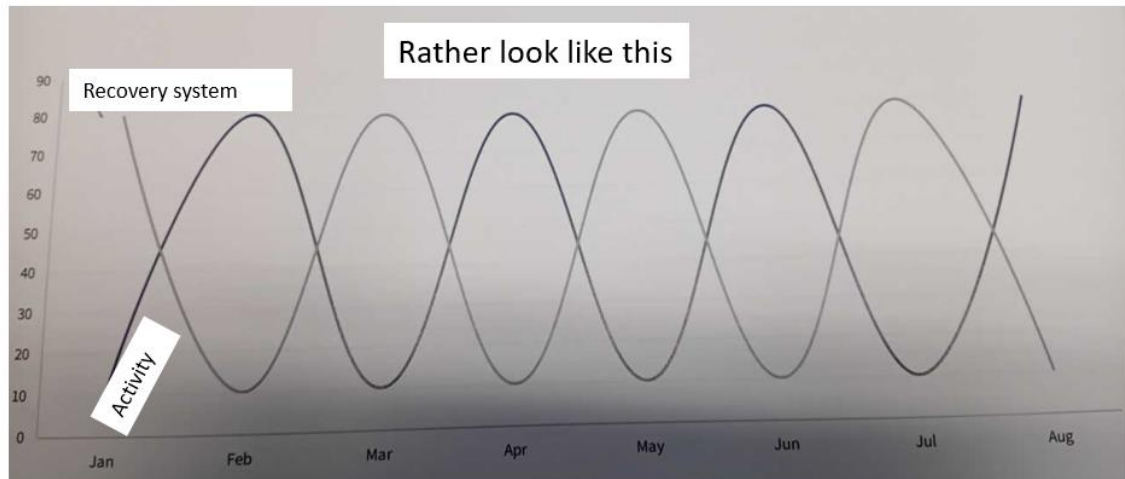
<u>RESEARCH</u>	<u>WRITING</u>	<u>FEEDBACK</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Take notes by synthesizing rather than summarizing.</li><li>• Shift from "This is interesting" to "How will I use this?"</li><li>• Ask experts about the relevant material.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Focus on 20% of the text that gives 80% of the result.</li><li>• Use your "best" hours for the most complex tasks: What 20% of the day is your most productive time?</li><li>• Get feedback on early drafts rather than polished products.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Work with 20% of the readers that give you 80% of the relevant feedback.</li><li>• Avoid 20% of the readers that cause 80% of the problems.</li><li>• Attend 20% of the conferences that give you 80% of the relevant feedback.</li></ul>

- **Remember, your work has only to be good enough! (80% perfect)**

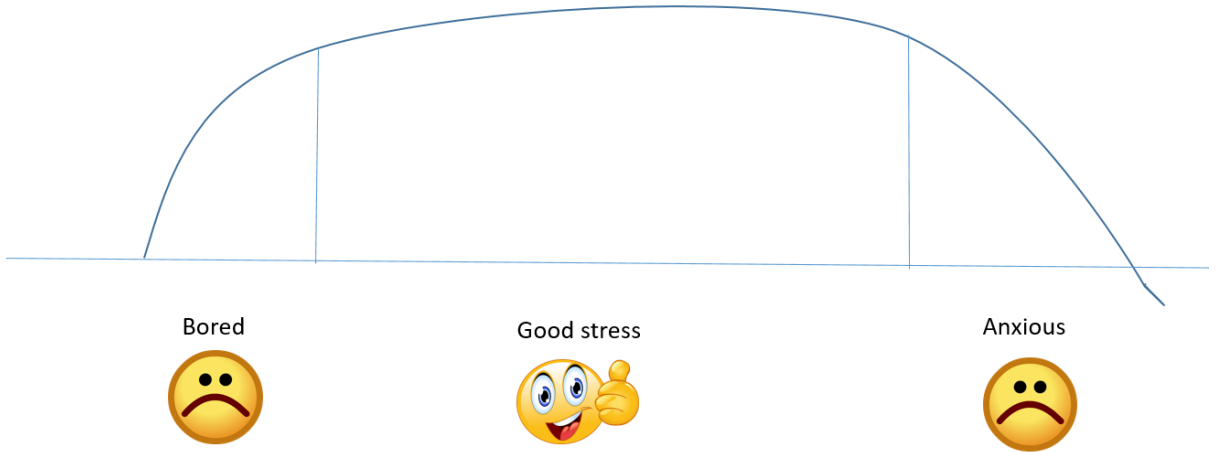
## Finish on time: Sustainable work practices

**Demands and expectations should align with available resources.** If there's an imbalance, consider increasing resources to meet the demands effectively.

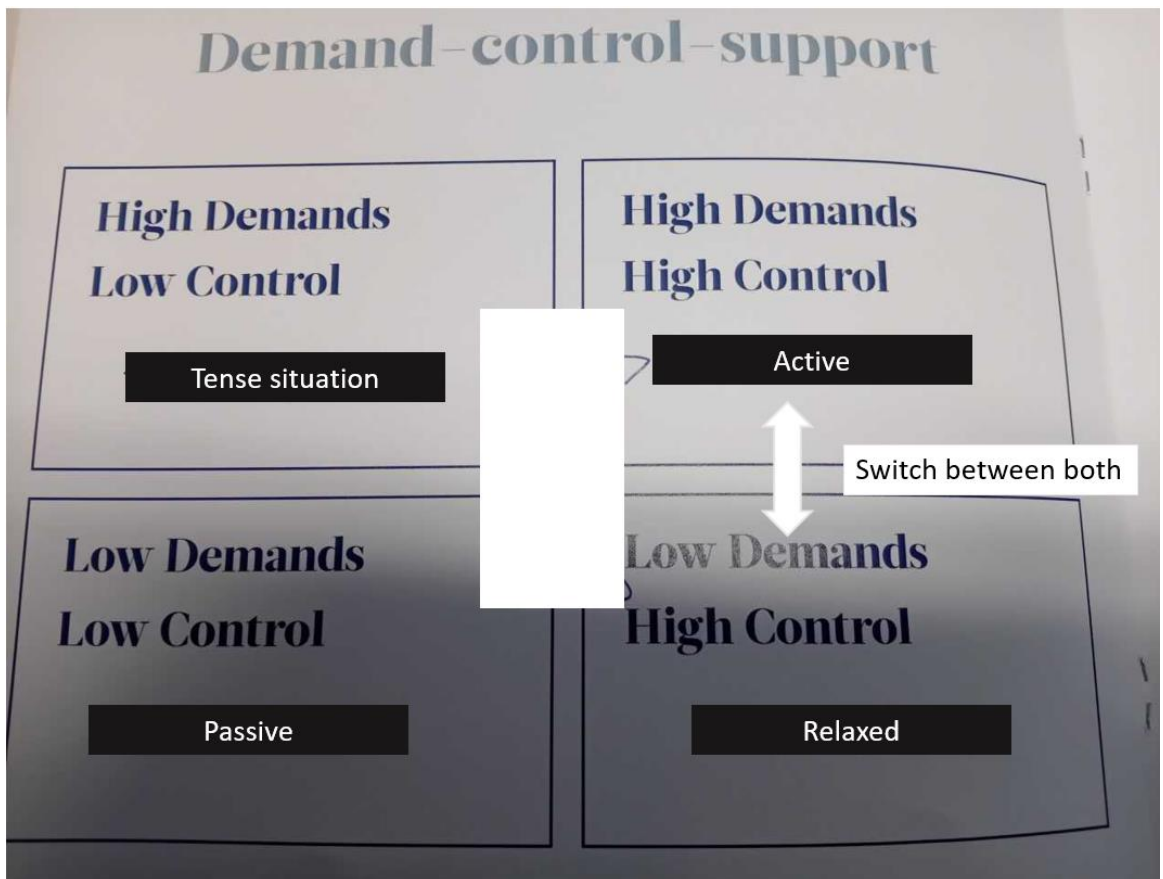
- **Balance between active (exercise, social events) and passive (sleep, hobby) recovery.** Sleep hygiene and exercise are the two most important recovery technics
- **Stress in itself is not dangerous but lack of recovery can be**



- **Be aware of your stress response:** Then you can find what to do when you experience stress
- If you cannot solve problems, **ask for social support and accept your emotions**
- **Focus on the consequences.** Example: Antecedent = I chose a place to write / Behavior = I write / Consequence = I have a manuscript
- Plan **buffer** because you will always expect to do more than possible (usually at least half of what you had plan)
- **Try to always work in the good stress area.** (Leave work at the right moment, ensure to have enough work planned every day)



- Alternate between Active and relaxed situation at work



# The seven writing myths

These are common academic writing myths stemming from identifying deeply with the work and measuring oneself and being measured against various standards



## The Magnum Opus Myth

My work must be magnificent.



## The Hostile Reader Fear

My work must be able to withstand any criticism.



## The Perfect First Sentence

Once I am sure where to start, the rest will follow.



## The Impostor Syndrome

My work might reveal me to be a fraud.



## The Cleared-Deck Fantasy

Writing will be easy when my current distractions disappear.



## One More Source

I need to make sure that I have read all the relevant research.



## Compared to X...

I am not measuring up.

Reference: Joli Jensen, *Write no matter what*

Contact [anne-lie.blomstrom@slu.se](mailto:anne-lie.blomstrom@slu.se) if you want to borrow *The Doctoral Student Handbook: Master Effectiveness, Reduce Stress and Finish on time*.