DEAR LABBY: I am not sure this is appropriate to ask here, but I don’t know where else to ask. I have been an assistant professor at my college for two years. I am feeling stressed by working more and more hours each week but seemingly getting less done in my research despite more time put in. I devote a lot of time to my teaching and I am on several committees about mentoring and outreach. I still put a lot of time into my research but seem to be moving much more slowly than I think is necessary to be on track for tenure. How do I best prioritize all the things I am expected to do and want to do professionally, let alone personally?

—Assistant Professor Frazzled

DEAR ASSISTANT PROFESSOR FRAZZLED: First and most important, recognize that you are NOT alone in feeling these stressors. And there is no shame in feeling this way. Not only new faculty but fully tenured faculty feel this time pressure. Let’s talk about relieving the stressors so you can get done what is needed as well as live a rich personal life. Sounds impossible? It may be difficult to juggle all the demands on your time, but it is not impossible.

Second, take stock of exactly how you spend your time for a few days in a row. This exercise helps you determine what interruptions are occurring as well as just how you truly are partitioning your time. Include your personal and professional life. The hardest part is setting up the “boundaries” on your time. This may feel artificial at first, but then it becomes natural and still allows respect for all the students and others who ask for your time. Your busyness is as important as anyone else’s busyness.

Next, inventory the committees on which you have been asked to serve, and step down from those that were add-ons. These are the committees that are time sinks but don’t make good use of your skills and interests. Try not to volunteer for extra work, even when it might interest you. There is time for that later, after promotion to tenure.

Enlist a more senior faculty as a guide, advisor, and mentor who will have your interests at heart. This person will provide more than a sounding board. She (or he) will also contribute a good reality check to identify when you are spinning your wheels.