

## WEEK 5: Focused on Time

my  
**TAKING  
CARE**  
worksheet

Think about your  
upcoming week.  
**PLANNING**  
is an antidote to  
**OVERWHELM.**

aka: "Do, or do not. There is no try."  
~ Yoda



Weekly Goal



Possibilities + Problems



Fun Stuff



### Key Messages

### Focused on Time.

- ✓ Make **ONE** daily To Do List.
  - ✓ Prioritize according to **THE EISENHOWER METHOD**.
  - ✓ Break tasks into short time segments of less than 30 minutes each.
  - ✓ Schedule tasks into your Planner. Mark when complete.
  - ✓ Review your priorities **AND** your To Do List regularly.
  - ✓ Be guided by what is most important to you (Quadrant 2).
- ✓ **Ask:**
    - What **must** be done this week?
    - What can wait?
    - When must these waitlist tasks be completed?
    - What good things happen if they are completed?
    - What happens if they don't get done?



## Managing Your TIME

### BEFORE YOU START

- 1 **Schedule your breaks in advance.** Plan to complete 25–30 minutes of work, then take a five-minute break. Repeat.
- 2 **Deal with predictable distractions.** Turn off your phone and internet!
- 3 **Schedule to your strengths.** Plan to do challenging tasks at the time of day when you do your best work. If you take medications for ADHD, consider that your optimal time is often when your medications are working best.



### KEEP ON TASK:

Discover which of these options work best for you

- ✓ **During your break.** SNACK, HYDRATE, MOVE.
- ✓ **Break tasks into small components.** Break tasks down, put half of these tasks on your list, then cut the list in half again.
- ✓ **See time pass.** Use a watch that beeps on the hour, or use '*Time Timer*'®.
- ✓ **Adjust.** Expect to under/overestimate time needed for tasks. Adjust your time without self-criticism. Be curious, and apply what you have learned next time.
- ✓ **Timely check-in.** Write out one or two prioritized tasks for each hour, and cross off when done.
- ✓ **Flexibility.** If you are tired, do something less demanding.
- ✓ **Chunking.** Setting aside larger blocks of time allows you to be flexible with tasks. Put these chunked times directly into your planner. For example, you may chunk two hours every Friday afternoon to work on a project. At the designated time, divide it up in to smaller time segments to stay accountable.



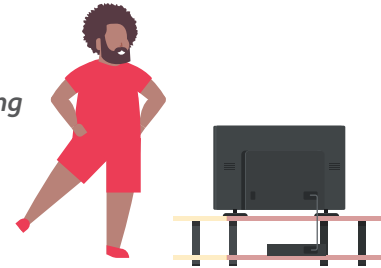


## Managing Your TIME cont.



### OTHER TIPS

- ✓ **Set routines.** Set a regular day each week for laundry, groceries, and bill payment.
- ✓ **Limit errands to down time.** Do household, social, and personal errands when you are less alert and less focused.
- ✓ **Be accountable for your time.** Tell members of the group or your friends what you plan to do. Monitor your progress.
- ✓ **Hard things first.** Do easier, more enjoyable tasks as rewards after other tasks are complete.
- ✓ **Pair activities.** Pleasant + Unpleasant  
*For example, TV + Exercise. Phone calls + Cleaning*



## THE POMODORO TECHNIQUE

**Tools Required:** manual kitchen timer, TimeTimer®, or app such as Pomodoro Focus Timer

- 1 Decide on a task.
- 2 Set your timer to 25 minutes.
- 3 Work on the task until the timer rings.
- 4 While working on the task, write down distractions that pop up, but return to the task immediately.
- 5 When the timer rings, put a check mark on a piece of paper and take a short, *digital-free* break of up to five minutes.
- 6 Return to the task for another 25-minute segment.
- 7 Repeat this process until you have four check marks on your paper (4 x 25-minute segments). ✓✓✓✓
- 8 Next, take a longer break of 30 minutes.
- 9 Review the distractions you have written down. If they fit with your priorities, move them to your To Do list.
- 10 Restart 4 x 25-minute segments.

Cirillo, F. (2018). *The Pomodoro technique: The life-changing time-management system*. Random House.

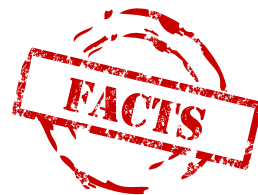


**DEEPER DIVE!**  
**Managing Your TIME**

**DESC SCRIPT**

Consider that some of your time challenges are best managed by addressing the demands that others place on you. See *Quadrant 3* in the *Priorities* session, Week 3 Pages 2 + 3. Become familiar with the **DESC SCRIPT** for managing difficult conversations:

- 1 **D = DESCRIBE** the problem or behaviour that has upset you. Be specific about what you observed with your eyes and ears. "When you..."



- E = EXPLAIN** how you feel or how the behaviour impacts you. Use an "I" statement: "It causes problems for me because..."



- 3 **S = SPECIFY** what needs to happen or what you'd like changed. Make a reasonable and fair request: "I would like..."



- 4 **C = CONSEQUENCE.** Tell the person how things will improve for both of you if there is a resolution: "That will help because...:"



**AVOID:**

- ✗ Making assumptions about the person's motivation or intention
- ✗ Attacking the person's character
- ✗ Unleashing an emotional outburst
- ✗ Making threats or give an ultimatum

**WEEK 5: Focused on Time**  
**DEEPER DIVE**



**DEEPER DIVE!**  
**TIME Tracker**



**HOMEWORK**

*What do you observe?  
 Keep in mind you will  
 identify both helpful  
 and unhelpful patterns.  
 Remain curious and  
 avoid self-criticism.*

**TIME AWARENESS EXERCISE**

Complete this task in 30-minute increments for at least two days this week. Be specific. Review for common themes and time traps.

TIME	ACTIVITY	OBSERVATIONS
5:00–5:30 am		
5:30–6:00 am		
6:00–6:30 am		
6:30–7:00 am		
7:00–7:30 am		
7:30–8:00 am		
8:00–8:30 am		
8:30–9:00 am		
9:00–9:30 am		
9:30–10:00 am		
10:00–10:30 am		
10:30–11:00 am		
11:00–11:30 am		
11:30 am –12:00 pm		
12:00–12:30 pm		
12:30–1:00 pm		
1:00–1:30 pm		
1:30–2:00 pm		
2:00–2:30 pm		
2:30–3:00 pm		
3:00–3:30 pm		
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4:00–4:30 pm		
4:30–5:00 pm		
5:00–5:30 pm		
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9:00–9:30 pm		
9:30–10:00 pm		
10:00–10:30 pm		
10:30–11:00 pm		
11:00–11:30 pm		
11:30 pm –12:00 am		
12:00–12:30 am		
12:30–1:00 am		
1:00–1:30 am		
1:30–2:00 am		



DEEPER DIVE!  
**Estimating Your TIME**

**TIME ESTIMATION EXERCISE**

Awareness of estimated and actual time spent on common activities will help you to prioritize. Many tasks are easier if you can be flexible about how they are done and about the end result. **ASK:** Can a task be broken down? e.g., Can you prepare your morning beverage the night before?

TASK	BREAK IT DOWN INTO STEPS (visualize the end result)	TIME ESTIMATION (include preparation and completion time)	ACTUAL TIME	TIME TRAPS	TIME SAVERS can I do it well, but less perfectly? are there easier ways?
<b>SAMPLE</b> Make coffee	filter coffee beans grinder coffee maker water travel mug + lid condiments spoon	grind beans + put water in coffee maker the night before + make coffee = 10 minutes	12 minutes	forgetting to organize it before bed  scrolling on my phone	turning my phone off  putting my phone out of sight
Shower					
Pay phone bill					
Get out of house in the morning					



Monitor your time estimates to check if they are becoming more accurate. Review your chart daily and weekly.



**DEEPER DIVE!**  
**Managing Your TIME**

**TO DO LIST**

Use the following chart to learn to manage your **TO DO LIST**.

- ✓ Sometime before your week begins, brainstorm everything you have to do this week. Write down family, work, meals, exercise, appointments, etc.
- ✓ If there is a deadline, note it in Column 2. If there is no deadline, consider adding one, or deleting the task because it is not well enough defined.
- ✓ In Column 3, estimate how long each task will take.
- ✓ List the quadrant that each task falls into. Remember, there are no right or wrong ways to assign quadrants to your tasks. The same task may fall into Quadrant 2 for one person and into Quadrant 4 for another.
- ✓ To Do Lists reflect what we want for ourselves in life as well as our responsibilities. If the list is all Quadrant 3 (other people's requests), perhaps it's time to reassess.
- ✓ Priorities are assigned by **Quadrants 1–4**:  
**Quadrant 1 = MOST Important/Urgent**  
**Quadrant 4 = LEAST Important/Urgent**

<b>TASK/Activity</b>	<b>Deadline (if none, set one)</b>	<b>Estimated Time Required</b>	<b>Quadrant #1–4</b>

- ✓ Review your **TO DO LIST** above.
- ✓ Consider completing only Quadrant 1 + 2 tasks.
- ✓ Choose three key tasks to do this week.
- ✓ Mark completed tasks, review time estimates and revise your To Do List.
- ✓ Does the order of your list make sense to you? Can you explain why? Does it reflect a balance between what you must do and what you value most?



## Know Your Attention Challenge WHAT IS YOUR MAIN PROBLEM AREA?

**FOCUS** is the ability to pay attention to specific sounds, sights, or touch **in the moment**.

Individuals with ADHD have different types of focus challenges. The following attention challenges are listed in order from easiest to most difficult.

### 1 SUSTAINED

The ability to maintain attention during a continuous or repetitive activity when no clear distractions are present, such as listening to audiobooks, reading, playing musical instruments, or writing emails. Also known as *concentration*.



### 2 SELECTIVE

The ability to maintain attention in the face of distraction, such as reading or listening with distractions going on around you.



### 3 ALTERNATING

The ability to shift attention between several tasks, such as cooking while following a recipe, or reading/listening to a book on the bus while checking for your stop.



### 4 DIVIDED

The ability to pay attention to multiple tasks or demands at the same time, such as multi-tasking or taking notes while listening.



Based on the work of Sohlberg and Mateer: Sohlberg MM, Mateer CA (1989). *Introduction to cognitive rehabilitation: theory and practice*. New York: Guilford Press. ISBN 978-0-89862-738-1.



For these tips to work, you must make the commitment to deal with your distractions.

## MANAGING INTERNAL DISTRACTIONS

### PHYSIOLOGICAL

- ? Are you hungry?
- ? Are you tired?
- ? Is your medication wearing off?
- ? Have you exercised today?

### GOAL SETTING

- ? Are they SMART Goals?

### PREPARATION

- ? Do you have everything you need to do this work?

### ASSISTIVE TECHNOLOGY

- ✓ Use assistive technology tools such as those found at sites like [ADDitude Magazine](#).

### DELAY DISTRACTIONS

- ✓ **Brain Dump:** Write down your distracted thoughts to clear your brain. Review them later. Plan time to follow up on the important ones.

### PRE-PLAN REWARDS

- ✓ Make rewards a priority, such as a scheduled tea break.

### OTHER STRATEGIES

- ✓ Add novelty to mundane tasks to avoid boredom, such as dancing while you do the dishes.
- ✓ Create time pressure challenges with friends. Make artificial deadlines.
- ✓ **Re-focus:** Use visual reminders to stay on track. On the wall by your workstation, place an image of the positive outcome that will occur when the task is completed.

## MANAGING EXTERNAL DISTRACTIONS

### AUDITORY



- ✓ Wear headphones/earplugs.
- ✓ Play lyric-free music to mask sounds, or use a white noise app.
- ✓ Select a quiet environment, or move elsewhere if it becomes noisy.

### VISUAL



- ✓ Clear your work space.
- ✓ Block out distractions. Use a cubicle, or close your eyes to listen or think.
- ✓ Use visual reminders such as a clock and post-it notes.

### INTERNET



- ✓ Use assistive technology tools such as those found at sites like [ADDitude Magazine](#).

### Three ways to deal with online distractions:

- 1 Monitor.
- 2 Block.
- 3 Manage.



DEEPER DIVE!  
**Managing INTERNAL Distractions**

**1** My typical attention challenges are:

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**2** The following internal management strategies work for me:

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**3** The following external management strategies work for me:

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**4** Use your **HABIT TRACKER** to add mindful moments to your day. You can put timed reminders on your phone. You may consider trying Mindshift, Headspace, or another app to help.

