

## TIME MANAGEMENT

Persons with ADHD often have extreme difficulty managing time. They often lack awareness of how long a task will take and how long they have shifted their attention away from the intended focus. To help promote time awareness, the following may be helpful:



### 1. **Avoid using your phone to check the time.**

Checking the time by glancing at the phone can lead to loss of focus as your attention shifts to notifications and messages enticing your interest. Before you know it, you've spent half an hour thumbing through *Twitter*. Wearing an analogue watch can help to keep you aware of the passage of time without the potential for distraction.

### 2. **Work in an environment where you are less likely to be interrupted.**

Once interrupted, the person with ADHD has a far more difficult time re-focusing on the task at hand than others. If you must work in a setting where there are a lot of people, make sure you have a separate space away from others or a way to alert others not to interrupt you.

### 3. **Learn to say “No”.**

Persons with ADHD often agree to become involved in tasks when asked to engage in them by others, only to find themselves overwhelmed with too much to do. Give yourself permission to decline requests that require your involvement, especially if you are struggling to manage those tasks already on your plate.

### 4. **Attack “cannibal tasks”.**

Don't allow vague tasks or tasks without hard deadlines to drag out endlessly and eat you alive! If given a task that doesn't have clear steps, break it down yourself. If your boss gives you a task without a clear deadline, create a deadline. More time does not equal better work. Break it down, set deadlines, and get it done!

### 5. **Create a daily “to do” list.**

Create a daily list of tasks that need to be completed each day. Writing down EVERYTHING that must be done increases the likelihood that you won't overlook anything. Refer to the list frequently and check off each task as it is completed to increase increases the likelihood that you'll remember and complete tasks.



## Tips for creating your daily “to do” list:

1. **Use a small notebook.**  
The size of a wallet or passport tends to work best.
2. **Keep the list tidy.**  
Skip a line between each task to make items easy to see and make room to add items.
3. **Scratch through each task as it’s completed.**  
Doing so gives you the satisfaction of knowing you’ve completed a task. Avoid scribbling over completed tasks as this makes the list messy and invites overwhelm.
4. **Add EVERY new task to the list.**  
Place new requests and recalled tasks at the end of the list.
5. **Rewrite your list and prioritize it daily.**  
(It’s helpful to create your daily list the night before and then prioritize tasks the next morning.)  
Remember to complete the “must do” tasks first.



*Note: Written lists increase the likelihood that we'll remember the task and avoid the potential for media devices to lead to distraction and loss of focus.*

If you'd like more help managing your ADHD brain, please contact us at (512) 496-5947 or [sgordon@CALMpsychologist.com](mailto:sgordon@CALMpsychologist.com).

