



DYNAMIC LEARNING SERVICES
WELCOME CHANGE

ADHD and Its Impact on Your Practice

Workshop #5- Strengthen Your Mental Flexibility and Impulse Control

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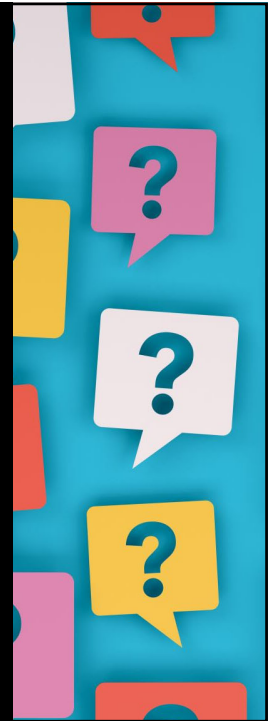
Agenda

- Follow-up and Reflections
- Mental flexibility, increasing attention, and addressing procrastination and impulse control
- Discussion/Questions/Takeaways

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Follow-Up and Reflections

- Questions lingering from last week?
- Comments/impressions/reflections from last week?
- What changes have you implemented in your week since our last discussion?



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- Apps to change written into digital
 - reMarkable 2
 - RocketBook



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Difference between self-compassion, self-care, and “making excuses.”

- Self-compassion is made up of three parts: self-kindness, common humanity, and mindfulness. It has to do with you being able to recognize your challenges and accepting the fact not every day will be *perfect*. It is about celebrating your successes and learning from setbacks. This has to do with one's mindset.
- Self-care is prioritizing your physical and mental health. You practice self-care when you eat healthy, finding an exercise you enjoy, getting good-quality sleep, and taking time to participate in activities you enjoy.
- When people say “that is an excuse” or “you don't have ADHD” suggests the person does not understand ADHD and the challenges it can bring. It can feel demoralizing or dismissive to hear these things. Using self-talk can challenge some of the thoughts and feelings you have when someone makes disparaging comments. Providing psychoeducation about how ADHD impacts your work can help the person have empathy toward brain differences.



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The “What If” question?

- WHAT IF = Anxious State
- Use the dysfunctional thought diary, ask self (what is the worst possible outcome, best possible outcome, what is the most likely outcome), problem-solving strategies (what would you do?), what advice you would give a friend, vertical descent and Socratic questioning, self-talk/cognitive reframing, and use your defense attorney.

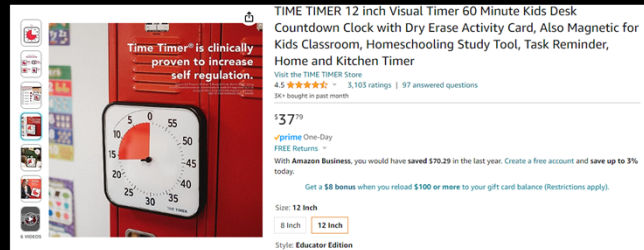


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Time Blindness

- Noting start and end time and reflecting how accurate prediction was about time needed to complete task.
- Using a timer that rings or vibrates to indicate time has passed.



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What is Procrastination?



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What are your escape behaviors?



- Recognize escape behaviors that may include checking emails, social networking sites, favorite websites, reading, napping, or a number of other activities that might not only be enjoyable but also less stressful.
- Use escape behaviors to increase positive reinforcement for on-task behavior.
 - "If I find myself checking emails then I will remind myself that this is an escape and I will check it after I complete the 30 minutes I scheduled for this task."

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Dealing with Procrastination

- Identify the specific task on which you are procrastinating.
- Recognize automatic thoughts
 - "I'll do this first and then I'll be 'in the mood' to get to work on X."
 - "I need to be in the mood to do X."
 - "I don't feel like doing X now."
- Label your feelings about the task, including sense of boredom or simply a gut feeling.
- Now, think about and highlight why this task is of value to you and how it will feel to get it done.
- Pinpoint the positive aspects about your ability to face the task that you may minimize.
- Think about the positive feeling you will have when you complete the task.
- Break down the task into a small, first step you can take to get started despite how you feel.
- Invest a few moments of discomfort and uncertainty as you take this step in #7.
- You are no longer procrastinating.



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Setting Up a Reward System

- What are some rewards you can give yourself for following through on your plans? What are immediate rewards you can earn for a task plan completed today? What are some longer-term, bigger incentives you can use for larger tasks?
- What are some enjoyable things that you can link with your task plans in order to increase your follow-through? Is it helpful to listen to music while you exercise or do chores? Do you enjoy having tea or coffee while doing paperwork?
- What are some of the positive experiences you notice when you follow through on your plans and get things done?
- Conversely, what are some escape activities that might “reward” procrastination? Is there a way to transform these activities into positive rewards for task completion?



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Positive Reinforcement

- Congratulate yourself.
- Take a short break (a few minutes).
- If someone is available, tell them what you've accomplished.
- Give yourself a reward or a taste of some privilege or activity you enjoy but make it small and brief.



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What Are You Avoiding?- Task Initiation

1. Draw a line down the middle of a blank page in your notebook so you have two columns.
2. In the left column, create a list of five to 10 projects and tasks you are currently procrastinating about or have procrastinated about in the last few months.
3. In the right column, write down the main reason you avoided or are avoiding that task.
4. Review the two columns. Are there reasons for your avoidance that are listed several times? Are there types of tasks that you tend to avoid?



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What is Impulse Control?



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Addressing Impulsivity

- Figure out where impulsivity is a big problem for you. At work? While dating? In conversation? When you shop with a credit card?
- Perform a simple action to buy some time.
 - Inhale slowly, exhale slowly, put on a thoughtful expression, and say to self "Well, let me think about that."
 - Just say, "Hmmm, let me see now" pensively after inhaling and exhaling.
 - Or put your hand on your chin in a thoughtful manner as a cue to keep your mouth shut and not say the first thing that comes to mind.
 - Some adults might visualize them mentally locking their mouth with an invisible key. In public, you can put your hand behind your back or in a pocket and perform a key-turning motion.
- To buy more time, paraphrase what the other person just said to you:
 - "You're asking me to..."
 - "What you need done is..."
- Practice, practice, practice. The more you practice the easier it becomes and it turns into something automatic.
- Pick a slow-talking model and play that role when you converse.
 - Practice speaking slowly in the mirror and see yourself as your slow-talking role model. Ex. Think of yourself as a southerner instead of a northerner.



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What is Working Memory?



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Improving Working Memory



- Repetition and repeated exposure helps improve working memory
 - Consider practicing in front of a mirror or record yourself while practicing arguments.
- There is a strong neuroconnection when you write things down, memory increases.
- Nonverbal Working Memory- being able to see it in the mind's eye
 - Use *tangible* visual representations/aids of tasks.
 - Visualize you completing the task based on a prior experience.
- Verbal Working Memory
 - Pair visual aids with *language*.
 - Become your own interviewer (What's going on here?, Have I been in a situation like this before?, What did I do last time? Are there better choices?)
 - Narrate what's happening out loud. Externally vocalized words, even when just whispered, are more powerful at controlling and guiding behavior than words we may say in our mind.

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Create a Narrative

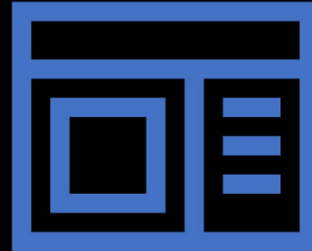


1. Identify the task you need to do. Make sure to choose something that isn't too complicated. Examples of tasks that will work well for this exercise are hanging up painting, cleaning out a closet, compiling documents for our client, and so on.
2. Tell yourself a story with the beginning, middle, and end that includes all the steps of the task. If it helps, get out your notebook and write it down.
3. Do the task!
4. Do steps 1 and 2 from above, but this time with a new task.
5. Ask a friend or family member to interrupt you with a question while you are doing your task (step three from above). When they interrupt you, tell them you are happy to answer them or help them once you finish doing your task. After you say that to them, repeat to yourself either the part of the task you are doing or the part of the task you are on your way to do.

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Test Your Memory

1. Get your notebook and pen, and place them on the table. Then go into a different room (any room is fine).
2. Spend 3 to 5 minutes noticing everything you can about the room and your experience. Just let your eyes land on different areas of the room period allow your mind to settle on any memories or feelings that come up.
3. Head back to your notebook and write down what sticks out the most to you. Was it items you saw in the room? Was it the lighting in the room? Was it sent or other sensations? Was it feelings or memories?



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What is Attentional Control?



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Manage Your Devices



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Managing Common Distractions



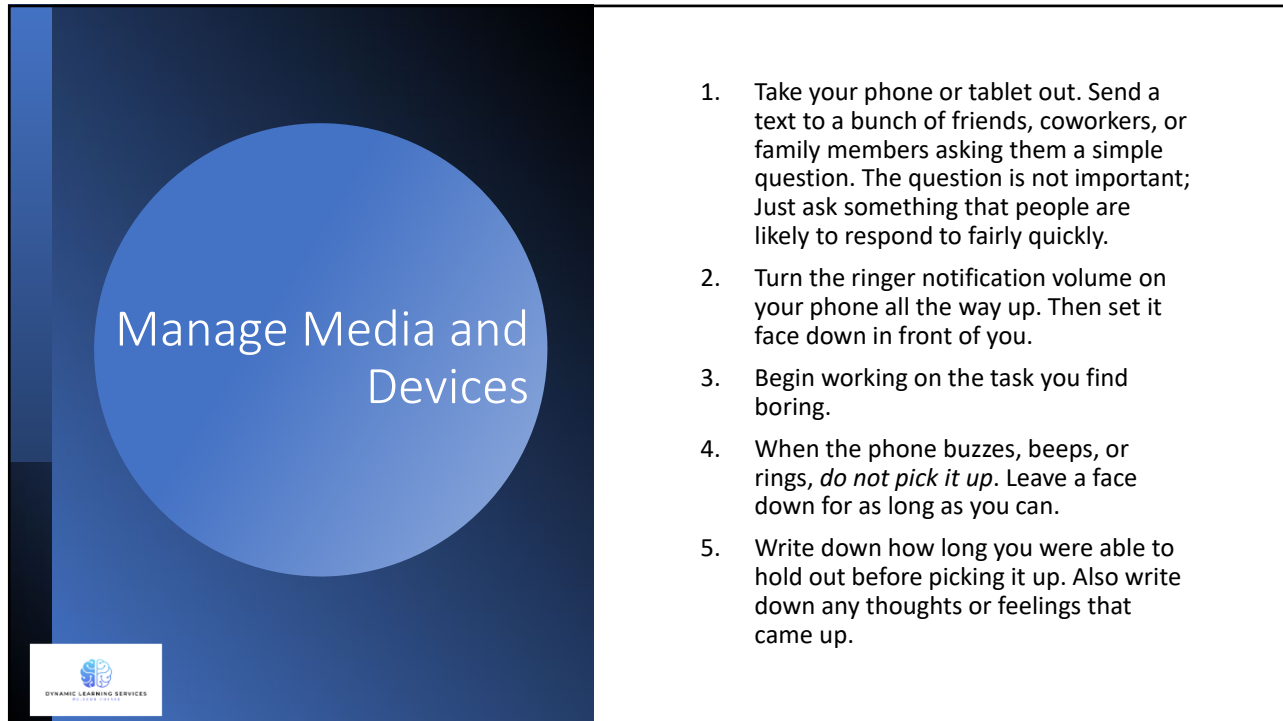
Blow distractions away.



Block distraction with another distraction.



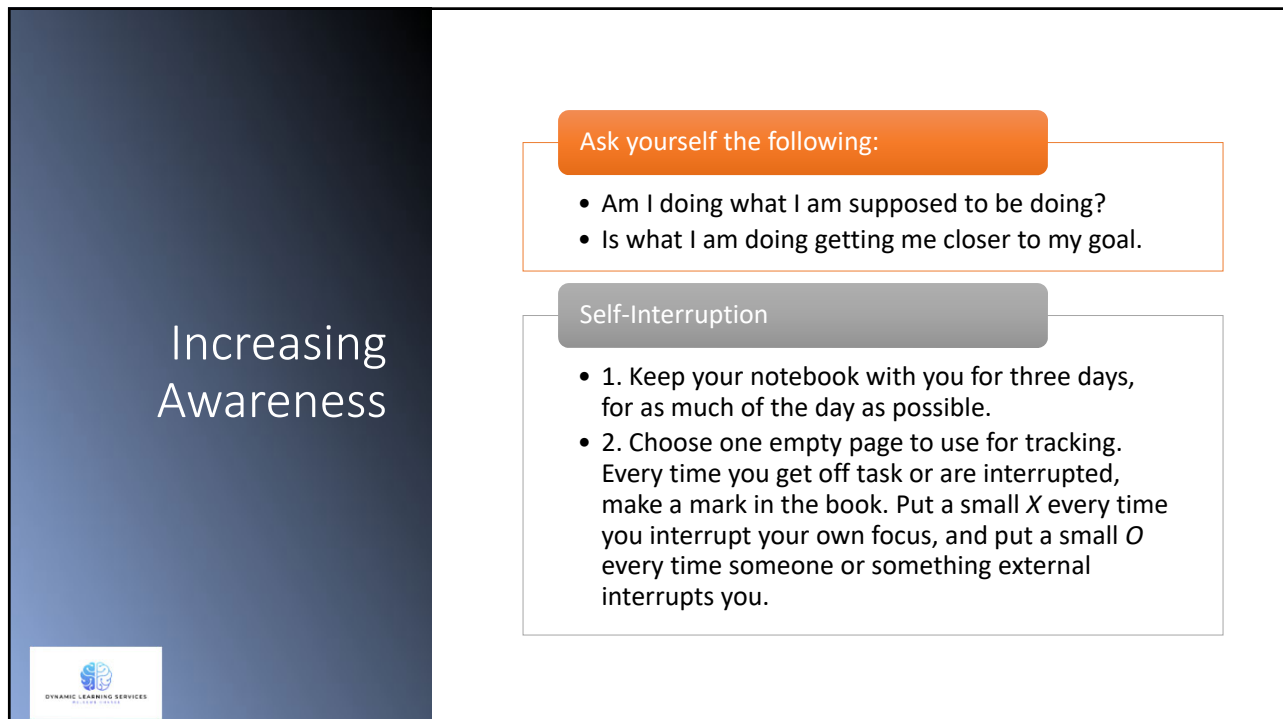
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Manage Media and Devices

1. Take your phone or tablet out. Send a text to a bunch of friends, coworkers, or family members asking them a simple question. The question is not important; Just ask something that people are likely to respond to fairly quickly.
2. Turn the ringer notification volume on your phone all the way up. Then set it face down in front of you.
3. Begin working on the task you find boring.
4. When the phone buzzes, beeps, or rings, *do not pick it up*. Leave a face down for as long as you can.
5. Write down how long you were able to hold out before picking it up. Also write down any thoughts or feelings that came up.

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Increasing Awareness

Ask yourself the following:

- Am I doing what I am supposed to be doing?
- Is what I am doing getting me closer to my goal.

Self-Interruption

- 1. Keep your notebook with you for three days, for as much of the day as possible.
- 2. Choose one empty page to use for tracking. Every time you get off task or are interrupted, make a mark in the book. Put a small X every time you interrupt your own focus, and put a small O every time someone or something external interrupts you.

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What Is Mental Flexibility?

red blue orange purple
orange blue green red
blue purple green red
orange blue red green
purple orange red blue
green red blue purple



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Harnessing Attentional Shift

1. Choose one negative thing that consistently pulls your attention.
2. Write that negative thing down on a sticky note and place it on your bathroom mirror.
3. On a separate sticky note, write down where you want your attention to be instead, when encountering what you wrote in step 2.
4. Every day for seven days, read out loud the name or description of the negative attention-grabbing thing in step 2. Then read out loud the name or description of the positive thing you wrote in step 3.
5. Repeat this process every seven days with a different negative attention-grabbing thing. Over time, you will develop better awareness of where your attention is landing and gain some control over it.



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Finding Your Plan B

1. Lynn is running outside to call a cab for an important interview. She takes the elevator down from the 14th floor, gets to the lobby, and realizes she forgot her phone upstairs, along with her ID badge. At first, she thinks there's no time to go back up especially without her badge, and no way to call a cab without her phone. Or is there? How could she secure cab another way? You have 20 seconds. Go!
2. Your seven-year old son has a friend over for dinner after a play date. You're making a spinach, apple, tomato, walnut, and cheese salad when your son says, "dad, my friend doesn't eat green vegetables." Can you adapt the dish you're making? You have 20 seconds. Go!

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Next week

- Last Session on Managing Your Environment
 - Requesting Accommodations
 - Interpersonal conflicts

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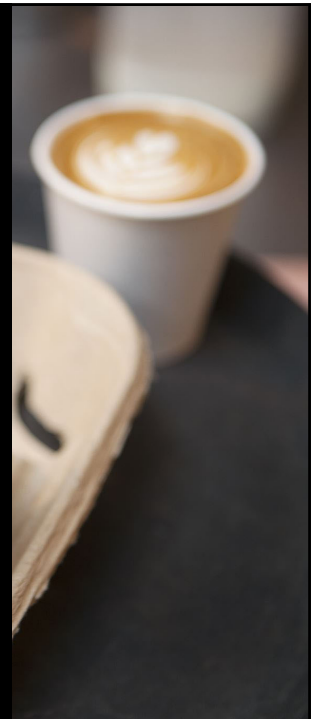


Discussion and Questions?



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Takeaways



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