

# Clear Mind Exercises

## #1: One Thing

### *Did you know?*

Many people multitask because they believe it is a way to get more done. Research has found that multitasking in adults can cause “pseudo-ADD”. Those affected by pseudo-ADD constantly seek new information but have difficulty concentrating on its content.

Attention Deficit Disorder is an increasingly diagnosed childhood disorder and refers to a group of symptoms including inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity. The cases of adult ADD are also on the rise.

### *Try this...*

Make a commitment to do only one thing at a time. Don't even try to do 2 or more things at once. Strangely enough, you may be surprised at how productive you become.

Focus your mind fully on the task you are doing. When you are on the phone, be fully present with the person you are talking to instead of tapping at your computer, mobile device or watching TV. When you are in a meeting stay focused on the dialogue instead of planning what you are going to do afterwards. If you need to change tasks, switch your attention and focus on the other task, then switch back. Do not do both at the same time.

By focusing on one thing at a time you are training your mind to develop habits that are the opposite of the ADD symptoms. See what a difference that makes.

## #2: Just Listen

### *Did you know?*

Meditation or mindfulness practices have been associated with improvements in attention. The ability to control your attention and direct it where you want it to go is one of the most essential skills for developing a clear mind.

Studies have also shown that mindfulness assists in reducing anxiety, regulating emotions, enhancing health and immunity, and improving memory, learning and problem solving.

When you are mindful, you are cultivating a clear and focused mind.

### *Try this...*

You don't have to be a meditator to practice mindfulness. All you need to do is pick an activity that you do frequently throughout the day and do it **mindfully**.

Over the coming week practice mindfulness while listening.

Every time you are involved in a conversation, meeting, presentation, or any time you need to have your ears engaged, simply keep your mind on the job. Notice when your mind wanders off from what is being said – you might start daydreaming, thinking about what you are going to say next, or thinking about something that was said earlier. When this happens, gently direct your attention back to the sounds and refocus. You will need to do this continuously to build a habit of mindfulness. Don't get frustrated with yourself, just see it as the beginning of developing a good habit.

Tip: Pick one exercise and apply it consistently throughout the week. Make a few notes (on paper or digital) that can be shared at the training session.

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## #3: Work Smarter

### *Did you know?*

People with clear minds are often more creative. They tend not to be “struck in a rut” and are usually more open to trying something different. This happens for two reasons:

- They give themselves more opportunity to consider an activity before jumping straight in, so they notice if there is a new and better way to do it.
- They pay more attention during the activity, and can therefore notice if there is a new and better way even while they are in the middle of the activity.

Most of all they have overcome the mindset that working harder and faster is the only way to get on top of a constantly growing workload.

### *Try this...*

Pick 1 thing each day that you know you rush through mindlessly, driven by the belief that you just have to get it done quickly to stay on top of your day.

Before you start the task ask yourself: “Is there a better/smarter/easier way to do this?” You may find a smarter way, but you may also realise it can be done at a different time, or not at all. Be open to all creative ideas that your mind throws up.

Experiment with doing things a different way each day. This will train your brain to be more creative and is a good habit to build clarity.

Tip: Pick one exercise and apply it consistently throughout the week. Make a few notes (on paper or digital) that can be shared at the training session.

Courtesy of Marketing Nous adapted from mindgardener.com

## #4: Busy Body

### *Did you know?*

These days one of the most common responses to the question “How are you?” is “Busy!” The science of neuroplasticity explains that what you train your mind for you to get better at, and what you focus on, grows. So if you tend to focus on your busyness and talk about it with others, you might be reinforcing the neural connections in your brain that strengthen a busy mind, making it harder to kick the busyness habit and achieve a clear mind.

### *Try this...*

Stop focusing on how busy you are. This means:

- Remove the word ‘busy’ from your vocabulary.
- When you find yourself thinking of all the things you need to do, stop and just start doing one of them.
- Focus on the things you have achieved, not just all the things you are yet to do.
- Avoid conversations about how busy you or others are.

Identify someone you know who is focused, has a clear mind and appears to have conquered the busy mind syndrome. Whenever you feel overwhelmed by busyness, ask yourself “What would this person do?”