

ADHD & PRODUCTIVITY

6 WEEK COURSE

From chaos to control



with Dr James Brown
Mon 30 Oct | 6pm | Online

WEEK 3. Engaging with Tasks.

November 13th 2023

Dr James Brown

Week	Topic	Information
1	Understanding ADHD and motivation.	Why does ADHD create a barrier to productivity
2	Tackling procrastination and perfectionism.	How to start to accept that perfection is a barrier to progress, and tackling the sources of procrastination
3	Engaging with and completing tasks.	Understanding why 'starting' and finishing' can be an issue, and discussing approaches to tackle this
4	Managing your distractions.	How to create a work environment that removes unnecessary distractions
5	Developing and improving time management skills.	Developing coping mechanisms, strategies and technological approaches to improving time management
6	Managing stress and burnout.	Stress and burnout impact productivity. How can we prevent this?

Time	Section	Content
5 minutes	Introductions	Last week's form response and discuss how the session will run
20 minutes	Discussion 1	How do we engage with tasks?
5 minutes	Break	Time for a cuppa
40 minutes	Discussion 2	Prioritisation and Time Management
5 minutes	Break	Time to stretch our legs
30 minutes	Discussion 3	Tactics prioritisation and time management with ADHD.
10 minutes	Summary and next steps	What will you do next?

Learning Objectives

- Upon completion of this session, learners will be able to:
 1. Identify the challenges that people with ADHD may face when prioritising.
 2. Explain the difficulties ADHDers have with prioritisation and time management.
 3. Identify and discuss strategies for prioritisation and time management with ADHD.

Icebreaker

On this sheep-scale,
how do you feel today?



Results from last week's poll - prioritisation

Urgency/Importance

Other People

Interesting/Easy

Badly

Panic/Stress

Lists

Results from last week's poll -
consequences

Overwhelm

Miss deadlines

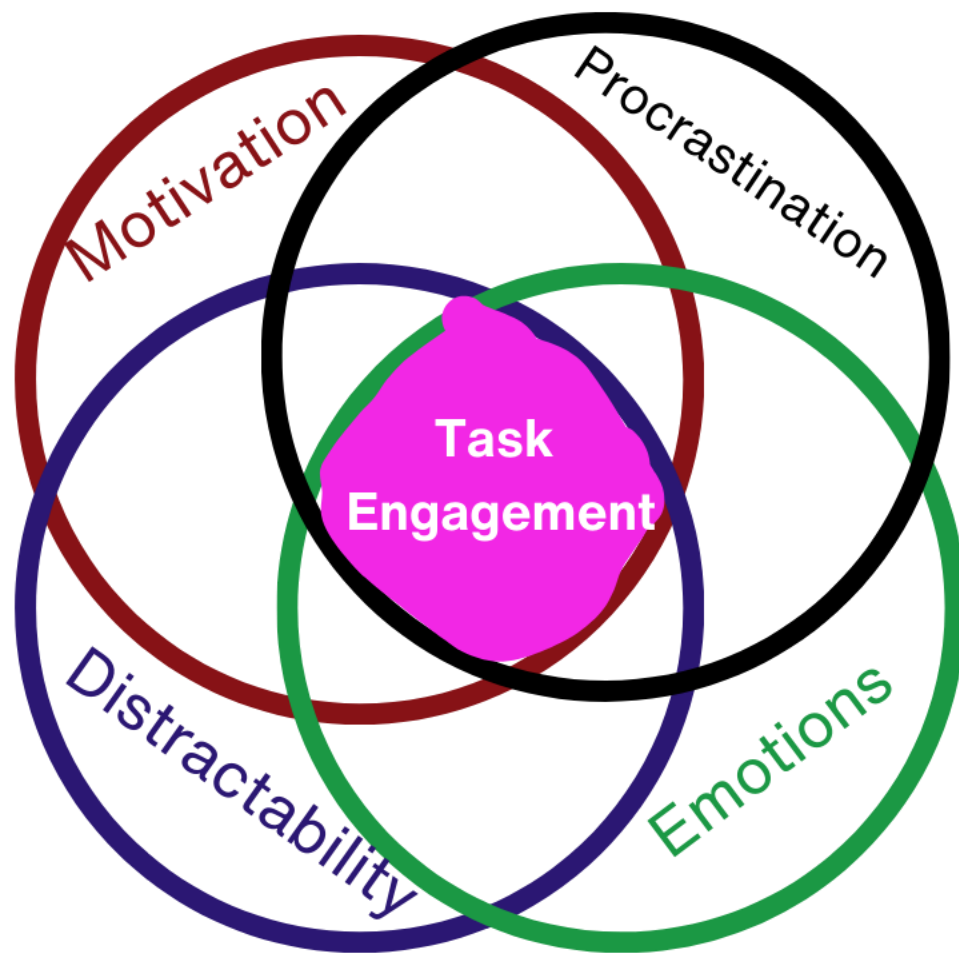
“A Mess”

Other people

Guilt

Discussion 1.

How do we engage with
tasks?

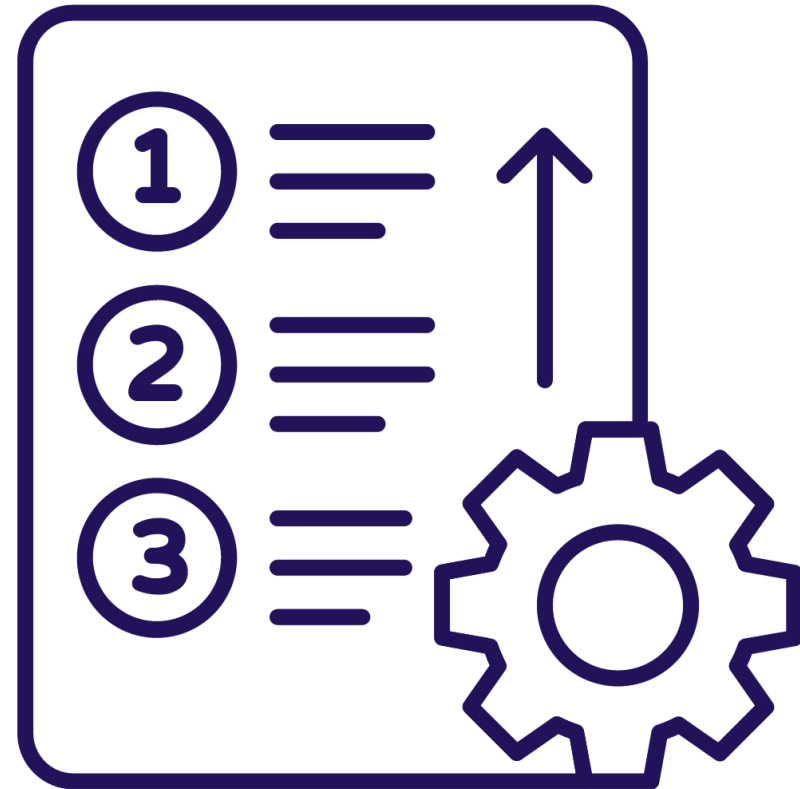


Discussion 1.

Getting our priorities right...

How do you prioritise?

Write your answer in the chat...



How do we begin?

- Many people with ADHD struggle to figure out the order of doing things and how to begin.



Guilt, overwhelm, inactivity

Prioritisation

- The fundamental principles of prioritising:
 1. Urgency – how immediate is it?
 2. Importance – Is it important? Who for?
 3. Effort – how difficult is it to complete?
- All involve ‘cognition’ and ‘emotion’.

Prioritisation - Urgency

- Urgency in ADHDers is often imposed by an external accountability.

• **URGENCY = OTHER PEOPLE**

Prioritisation - Urgency

- Q – what are some urgent tasks?

Prioritisation - Importance

- Important tasks represent the significance *we* attribute to something.
- Should be for US.

Prioritisation - Importance

- Q – what are examples of important tasks?

Prioritisation - Difficulty

- Difficult or complicated tasks can appear overwhelming and drop to the bottom of our 'doom list'.



Prioritisation - Difficulty

- Q – what are examples of ‘easier’ tasks for you?

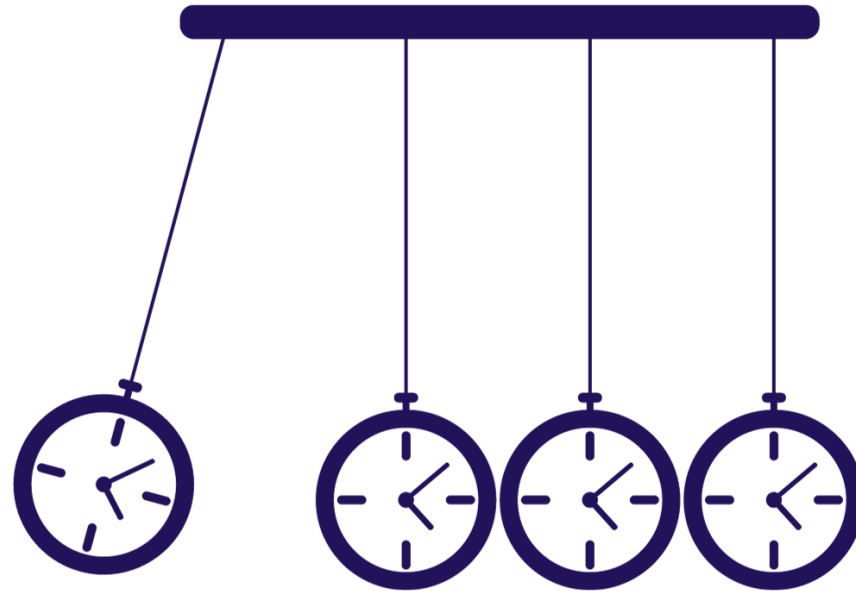
Time for a break...



Discussion 2.

How do you organise your time at work?

Write your answer in the chat...



Time and ADHD

- Time perception is impaired in adult ADHD.



1. Time Estimation

- Time estimation involves estimating the duration of a completed or an upcoming period of time in order to make decisions.
- Q – Why would time estimation be an issue with planning work activities?

2. Time Reproduction

- Time reproduction refers to the reproduction of a time interval.



Q – what tasks can you struggle to remember how long they take?

3. Time Management

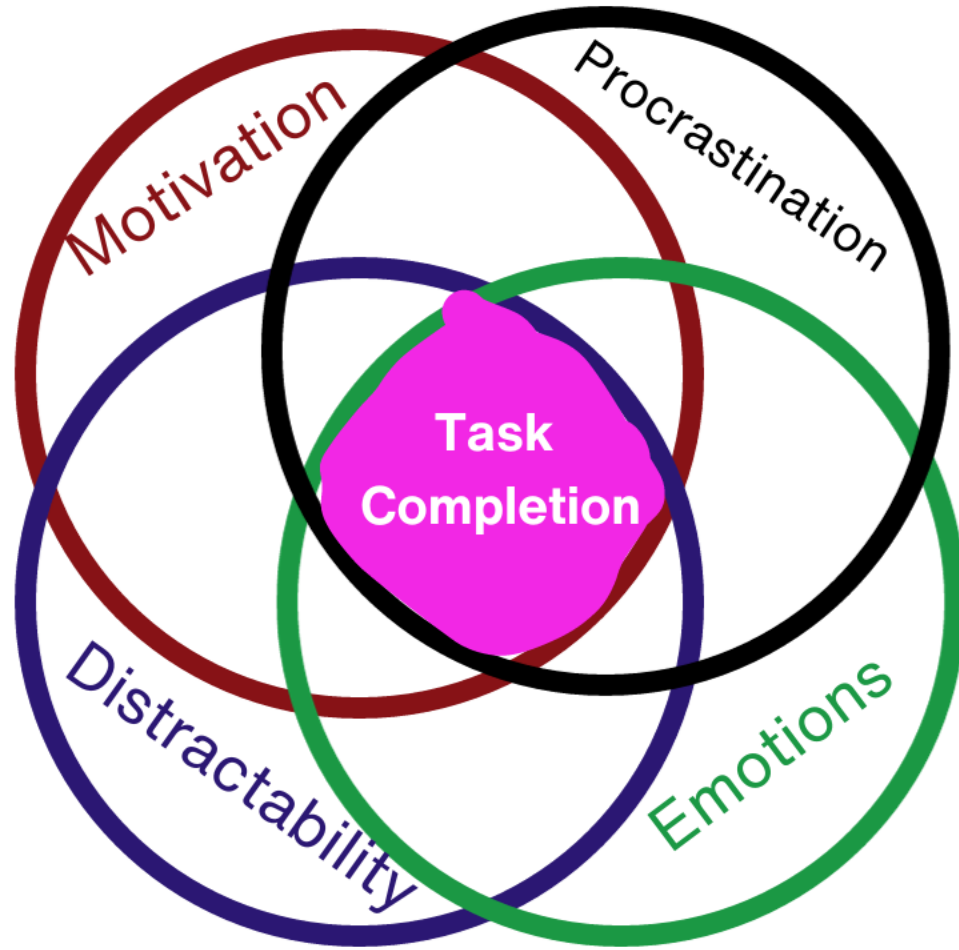
- Time management is defined as “behaviour that uses time *effectively* and economically in specific activities”.

Time Management

- Q – what do you use to help you manage your time?

Time for another break...





How to start prioritising...

Get EVERYTHING in one place...

- In order to prioritise you first need to know what tasks you are choosing to prioritise first.
- You can only know this if you know what ALL the tasks are!

Q – how can you have a ‘master task list’ somewhere where you’ll always have access to it?

MASTER list to DAILY list

- When everything is in one place you can move from your master list to your daily (or weekly list).
- But how do you choose which ones to move?

James's TO DO List

Tasks

Email (Coaching).
Email (Charity).
Email (Podcast).
Discord.
Social Media.
Book chapter.
Write script.
Write Online Productivity week 4 slides
Make GP appointment
Expenses.
Review NICE Guidelines.
Film videos for ADHD psychoeducation course.
Coaching coursework.
Website.

James's TO DO List

Tasks

Done?

Email (Coaching).	
Email (Charity).	
Social Media.	
Write Online Productivity week 4 slides.	
Make GP appointment.	
Review NICE Guidelines.	

Start the day the night before...

- Plan to start work in the morning, collect all the information you'll need, place it in a to-do list or document/app that you can leave on your chair the night before or open first thing in the morning.

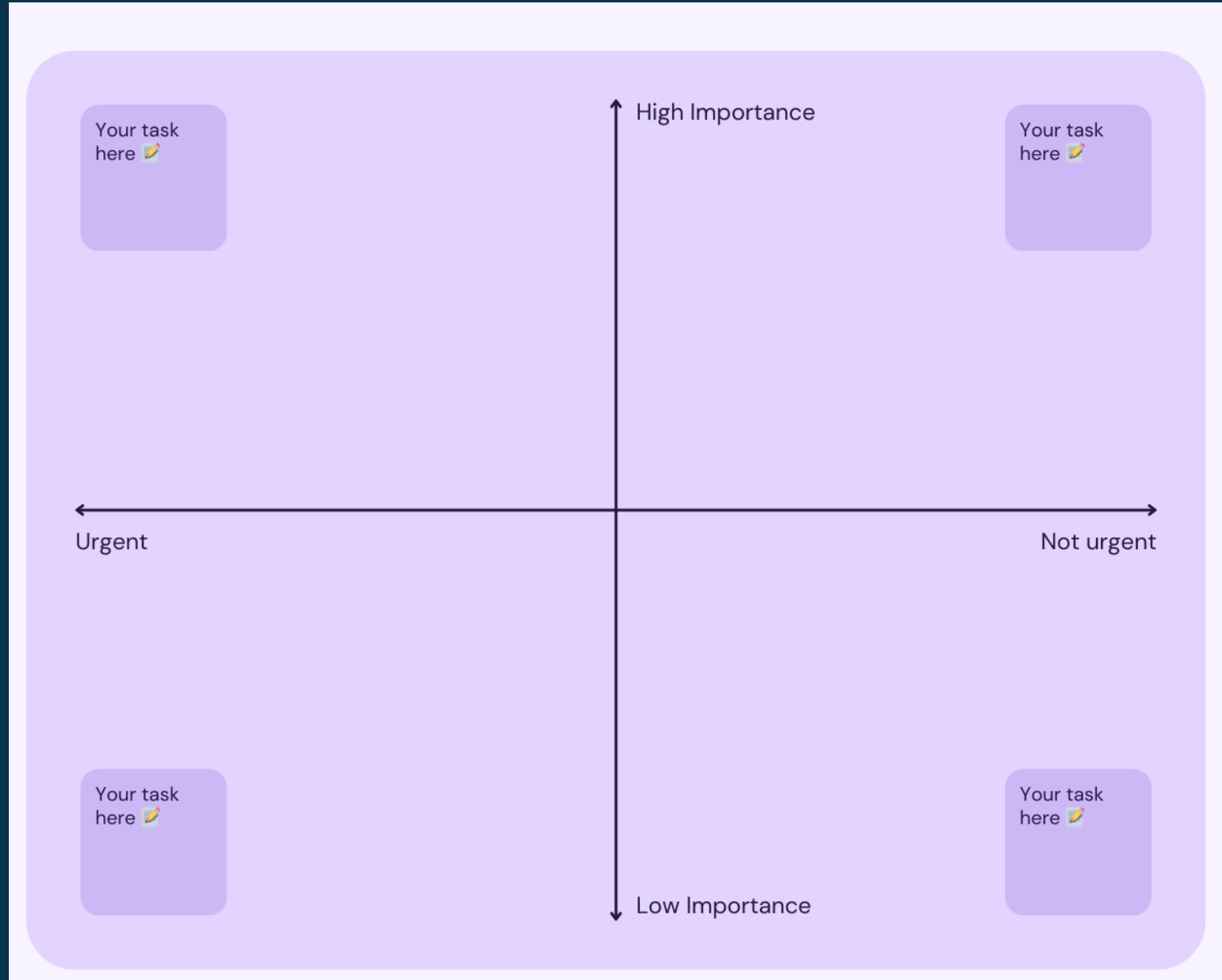
Prioritisation

- The first step to prioritising with ADHD is to understand your priorities.
- It is key to identify which tasks are most urgent, important and 'easy' as a starting point.
- This can help you focus on the tasks that you can or need to start.

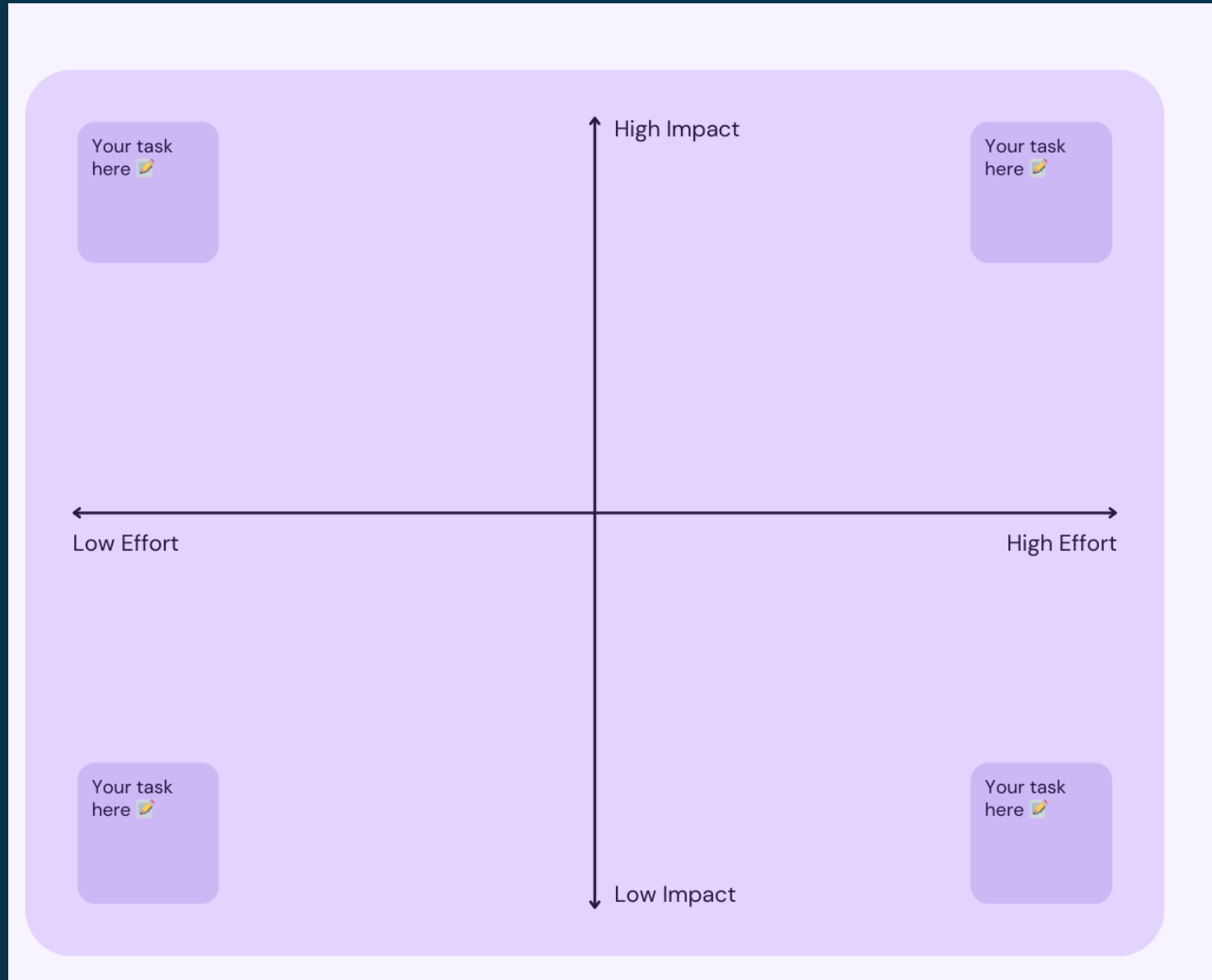
Remember...

1. Urgency.
2. Importance.
3. Effort.

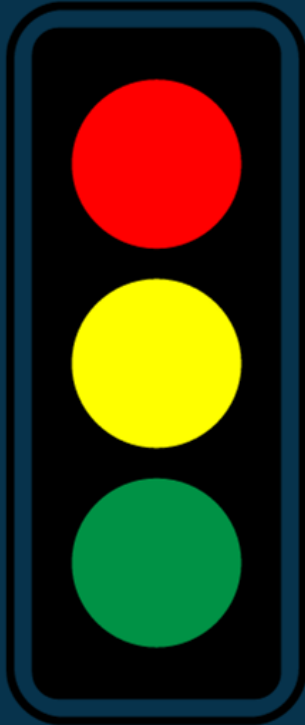
Prioritisation tools – Task Matrix 1 Urgency and Importance



Prioritisation tools – Task Matrix 2 Impact and Effort



Prioritisation tools – The ‘traffic light’



Do because it's urgent, important or easy

Consider because EITHER urgent, important or easy

Don't do today as NEITHER urgent, important nor easy

'JUST ONE THING'

- Sometimes even this is overwhelming.
- So just go one task at a time...

Approaches

Of the approaches we just discussed,

- a. Have any worked?
- b. would you be willing to try any you haven't?

Managing Time...

Time Management Approaches

People with ADHD can struggle with time management due to time blindness and distractibility:

- The 50% rule...
- Under promise and overachieve (again)
- Use technology where you can.
- Set really annoying timers.
- Get a massive clock.



Approaches

Of the approaches we just discussed,

- a. Have any worked?
- b. would you be willing to try any you haven't?

Completing Tasks...

Completing Tasks...

- Often unrewarding to close something off.
- Sandwiching and piggybacking
- External accountability helps.
- Body doubling
- Requesting a deadline
- Gamification

-

Eisenhower matrix

- **Quadrant 1:** Spending time in Q1 means living in crisis mode. Many kids and adults with ADHD live here or put things off until they wind up with emergencies. The intensity of urgency and importance helps motivate them to get things done, but they wind up with lots of stress.
- **Quadrant 2:** Spending time in Q2 feels like being in the flow. You make progress on things and feel calmer because you deal with most issues before they become crises and ask for support from others if needed. You're setting goals for yourself, making plans, and following through.
- **Quadrant 3:** Spending time in Q3 means having difficulty dealing with interruptions and struggling to set boundaries so you can focus on the task at hand. Q3 activities steer us away from our important tasks and break up our attention so it is progressively harder to accomplish things. Constant interruptions increase personal stress.
- **Quadrant 4:** Spending time in Q4 means engaging with distractions to avoid doing the tasks you need to address. Q4 activities are the things you do to waste time and postpone necessary work. Since Q4 is about avoidance procrastination, you may feel good in the short-run but eventually your stress level increases until you wind up in Q1.

Week 3 Summary

- **ADHD is associated with multiple emotional and executive function issues that make engaging with tasks difficult.**
- **To engage with tasks, you first need to prioritise which tasks to engage with .**
- **prioritisation needs to take into account urgency, importance and difficulty .**
- **Having a master list and moving tasks to a daily list can help you reduce overwhelm .**
- **Use technology to help you manage your time**
- **Use whatever approach works to help you complete tasks.**

Non-compulsory “Homework”

- 1. List the things that distract you.**
- 2. Self-test: test your knowledge from Week 3**

Link to Preparation for Week 4



Week 3 Self-Test



Next Session (Week 4) November 20th, 2023

Managing Distractions