

Maximizing Time: Overcoming Overwhelm

A Time Management Workbook for Adults with ADHD



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Maximize Time: Overcoming Overwhelm

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Hello!

Welcome to Maximizing Time: Overcoming Overwhelm. This guide is a tool to help you maximize your time and overcome the overwhelm that often affects individuals with ADHD. It has been designed for you to print, put into a binder and actively use it. I encourage you to do this to get the most value from the workbook.

If you have any questions or feedback, feel free to email directly at Laura@MyAttentionCoach.com

Sincerely,

Laura Rolands
[My Attention Coach](#)

P.S. If you are looking for *ongoing support*, check out my [ADD Time Management Coaching Group](#). We meet by phone 3 times per month and you have ongoing support from me in our online forum.

About Your Time Management Workbook

This Time Management workbook is written for people who want to improve their time management skills.

Simply print the workbook, complete each section and answer the questions provided. I also provide you with methods and techniques to help you manage your time better. Think of the workbook as your partner to help you master your time management challenges. The more you use it, the more benefits you can gain.

The following outlines the sections provided in this Time Management Workbook

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Pre-Work Questions

How will you utilize this Time Management Workbook?

What commitments do you make to yourself regarding this Time Management online coaching program?

Identify Your Strengths and Challenges

The vision we have of ourselves often moves to our challenges, what we need to improve. In this section, we will first focus on your strengths. The approach may feel strange to you, but the fact is, we improve our performance more by focusing on our strengths than by focusing on our weaknesses. Because of this, I want you to spend twice as much time on your strengths than you do on your challenges.

Don't worry if your answer to any of the questions is 'I don't know'. The questions are designed to get you thinking, mull them over, and come back to this section again and again to develop your thoughts.

After you answer the questions completely, identify ways to use your strengths to improve your overall situation both personally and professionally.

Questions

Brainstorm a list of your strengths here. List as many as possible, don't stop to evaluate them. If you have trouble identifying them, check in with friends, family and even co-workers to see what suggestions they can offer.

Review this website and take the Brief Strengths Inventory: <http://www.authentic happiness.sas.upenn.edu>. You will need to register on the site, but everything is free.

After you complete the inventory at the Authentic Happiness site, enter your strengths below.

Review your list of strengths above. Which ones can you use in managing your time? How can you use them?

What challenges first come to mind when you think about time management?

What is frustrating to you about time management?

Set Your Goals

Focus on establishing clear Time Management goals so that you will know when you have reached them. Without clear goals, you may spend time implementing strategies that do not impact your priorities.

I subscribe to the school of thought that supports SMART goal setting. If you do some research, you will find some variability in what the acronym means. Below, I describe how we will define SMART goals for this time management workbook.

Specific

As you probably already know, the S in SMART goals stands for *Specific*. Even though we know that it means, it can still be difficult to make sure a goal is specific.

For illustration, consider the following example of non-specific goal:

- Manage my time better

Ask yourself the following questions to make this goal more specific:

- How will you know when you have achieved this goal?
- In what area(s) of your life do you need to manage time better?
- Do you need to get to meetings on time?
- Do you want more sleep?
- What is the end result you want?

Think about the end result that you want. A goal such as, "Arrive to all meetings prepared and on-time," is much more specific than the earlier example of "Manage my time better."

Measurable

A goal absolutely must be *Measurable* so that you objectively know when you achieve your goals. Without something to measure, you will never know when you reach your goal, or when you do not reach it.

Consider the goal of managing time better. If you give yourself a goal of managing time better, how will you know when you have succeeded? You risk being too easy or too hard on yourself. You do not need to take that risk. Instead, set a goal that you can measure. For example, if you set the goal above (Arrive to all meetings prepared and on-time.) you can measure it over the course of a day, week, month or even a year. Even if you don't feel like your goal can be measured, come up with something. Perhaps a percentage or time frame will help.

Achievable

Goals need to be *Achievable*. Many times, my new clients are frustrated because they have been unable to meet their goals. As we talk, I learn that their goals are often set in a manner that makes them unachievable. As you may know, this can be frustrating. When looking at your goals, look at them to make sure they are achievable.

If your goals do not seem achievable, break them into smaller steps.

- For example, it may not be achievable to get to all meetings on time, meet all of your deadlines and get 8 hours of sleep in the next week.
- You can probably get to one meeting on-time next week if this is an area of concern for you.
- Smaller steps often are more achievable in a realistic period of time.

Realistic

It is so important to be *Realistic* when you are setting your goals. Unrealistic goals can become overwhelming. When developing your goals, always start with a draft and use the SMART methodology to refine them. For R, consider your goals and think about whether they are realistic. The following questions can help you evaluate them:

- How likely am I to achieve the goal?
- What would make the goal more realistic?
- How can I split the goal in to smaller, more realistic steps?

Timelined

Set a *Timeline* for your goal to help improve your chances for success. On the one hand, look at your goal to make sure you have enough time to achieve your goal. On the other hand, make sure the timeline pushes you enough to make the goal current and relevant to you.

Other Tips

- Target *positive outcomes* instead of avoiding possible negative outcomes. For example, replace: “I want to stop being late” with “I will arrive on time”.
- Consider your *personal motivation* around your goal and be sure to focus on goals that are personally motivating to YOU. Motivation is the anticipation of success and is a key to achieving it.
- *Visualize your goals* by drawing a picture, finding an image on-line or making a sign with your goals. Keep your visualization somewhere so that you will see it on a regular basis. By visualizing them you are more frequently reminded of them and more likely to take action.
- Answer the questions below to help you set SMART goals. Save your responses so you can come back later and review them! Regular review will be key to your success!

Questions

What is/are your draft goal(s) regarding time management?

Specific

How will you know when you achieve the goal?

What is the end result you want?

What will it look like when you achieve the goal?

How will you be sure you have met your goal?

Can you be more specific?

Measurable

Is this goal measurable?

How will you measure the goal?

How can you make it more measurable?

Achievable

Is this goal achievable? Why or why not?

How can you make it more achievable?

Can it be broken down into smaller steps?

Realistic

How likely are you to achieve the goal?

What would make the goal more realistic? How can you split the goal into smaller, more realistic steps?

Timelined

Do you have a timeline for achieving your goal? Is it realistic?

Is your goal framed positively? How can you reframe it from the positive perspective?

Are you motivated to achieve your goal? If not, rephrase it here to make it motivating.

How will you visualize your goal?

What is/are your final goal(s) regarding time management?

Time Management Methods

Once you have set your time management goal(s), you need to develop an *action plan*. Your action plan will be your roadmap to achieving your time management goals.

The tips and methods listed below can be helpful in managing your time better. Do not feel like you need to implement everything all at once. Remember, change takes time. **I recommend starting with just a couple of these action steps to get you started.** You will, of course, need to evaluate the suggestions to see if they work for you, your personal life and in your professional setting.

- It can take 20 to 25 minutes to refocus after an interruptions. Reducing interruptions can literally provide you with additional time in your day! Read below for ways to reduce your interruptions.
 - Check email twice per day. If you are checking email whenever it arrives, think about how many interruptions you encounter.
 - If you work in a cubicle setting, post a sign when you should not be interrupted. I have seen a sales manager use this effectively. The sign simply said, "STOP! Selling in progress." The rest of the team knew she had valuable work to finish!
 - Turn off your phone's ringer when working on high priorities
- Plan ahead by using a planner that works well for you. Search “Choosing Planner” at www.MyAttentionCoach.com for a free checklist.
- Plan every day. If this is a new concept for you, just take 5 minutes out of your day to plan major appointments and responsibilities for the following day.
- Remove or delegate things from your To Do list. If a task isn't a priority, don't let it clutter your list
- Use a family calendar to keep track of multiple schedules. If you have kids and they are old enough, have them put their activities on the calendar.

- Use automation to manage your email.
 - Color code email coming from certain people. These could be important people in your work and/or family life.
 - Use automatic mailbox sorting to organize emails by topic.
 - Close your email if it is not your scheduled time to review it.
- Build in support and accountability from a family member, friend or coach. (Check out my [ADD Time Management Coaching Group](#) for affordable coaching support.)

Questions

What additional methods can you use to manage your time and work towards your goals?

What are the top three methods that you will implement in your action plan?

When will you implement them?

Time Management Coaching - Next Steps

Congratulations! You have taken some important steps in improving your time management. Now it is time to think about your next steps. I am sure you have developed some excellent momentum over the past few weeks and don't want to lose that momentum now.

Take some time to identify how this workbook has helped you and how you can use the knowledge you gained. If you are looking for a more hands-on approach to your time management challenges, please contact me at Laura@MyAttentionCoach.com to schedule a consultation so you can decide whether coaching is for you.

Thank you for taking the time to go through this Time Management guide. I trust that you found it useful and productive! Please contact me with any suggestions or questions.

Sincerely,

Laura Rolands
[My Attention Coach](#)

Laura Rolands is an ADHD Coach who helps clients manage time, reduce interruptions, focus on priorities, increase productivity and achieve their goals.