

Time and Focus Workbook

A tool for increasing time awareness
and productivity

Second Edition



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Time and Focus Workbook

**A tool for increasing time awareness and productivity
by using frequent pauses with guided inquiry**

*As you use your **Time and Focus Workbook**, you will develop
stronger*

- *time awareness*
- *tracking of your use of time*
- *ability to prioritize*
- *ability to choose and stay on task*
- *self-awareness, curiosity, and learning*
- *self discipline and order*
- *self-compassion around your time and focus challenges*

Your Quick-Start Instructions Begin on the Next Page

First, please watch Video #1 using this link:
<https://freetobecoaching.com/time-and-focus-workbook-videos/>

More videos area being posted, so check back later.

Quick-Start Instructions for Time and Focus Workbook

1. Commit yourself to a period of time in which to experiment with practicing a focused approach to some task or activity you would like to accomplish. Try to create time and space conditions that minimize the chance that you will be interrupted by others during the time you have set aside.
2. Employ measures to reduce the likelihood of being interrupted by yourself. For example, be prepared to dismiss intruding thoughts and distracting tasks by quickly capturing them on a notepad (or recording device) and thus letting go of them to be addressed at a later time.
3. From your to-do list, pick out a specific task you would like to focus on.
4. Enter today's date and your "Intended Task or Activity" on the "RECORD" page in the workbook.
5. Enter the current time in the "Starting Time" column.
6. Enter the number of minutes you would like to spend on your selected task in the "Planned Segment Duration" column.

Larger tasks will need to be "chunked" down into smaller tasks or divided into multiple time segments, in order to cultivating a habit of more frequent moments of mindfulness, the length of each "Planned Segment Duration" is best kept to not more than 30 minutes.

For smaller tasks, the “Planned Segment Duration” can be a smaller number of minutes appropriate for the specific task. Several very small tasks could be combined and entered as a single task group, but still not more than 30 minutes.

7. In the “Planned Quitting Time” column, enter the time you expect the clock to show when you finish your selected task or estimated time segment.

8. Set a timer or other alarm to go off at the “Planned Quitting Time.” Especially helpful is a timer like Time Timer which includes a colorful pie-chart-like disc that changes shape to very graphically show the reducing time remaining.

9. Start the timer and begin your intended task or activity.

10. When you actually quit for a pause, enter the “Actual Quitting Time” and the “Actual Segment Duration.”

Your quitting might be for any of the following reasons:

- You are honoring your “Planned Quitting Time,” OR
- You finished your task by or before the “Planned Quitting Time,” OR
- You are quitting after your “Planned Quitting Time” because:
 - you chose to continue rather than pause at the planned time.
 - you did not notice it was time to pause.
 - you forgot completely about your plan to pause.

11. Pause to take a quick break for a drink of water or snack. At a minimum, stand up, stretch, and move around a bit. If possible, step outside for a quick breath of fresh air. Taking this break before addressing the workbook questions, will likely allow you to approach the questions with more perspective.

12. After your break, proceed to address the questions in the workbook.
 - a) Carefully read each question. (Do not rely on remembering them correctly.)
 - b) Answer the questions with curiosity and compassion rather than judgment.
 - c) Record notes as appropriate.
 - d) Consider any adjustments you wish to make in your approach or intention as you go forward.

13. Move on to choosing your next task or activity,
 - a) In choosing your next task, allow your choice to be informed by insights you've gained from using the **Time and Focus Workbook** on your previous task.
 - b) Decide whether you wish to use the **Time and Focus Workbook** on your next task or whether you need a break from this discipline.

* * * * *

Using this workbook discipline can be very difficult for many of us with organizational and discipline challenges, so be patient and compassionate with yourself. The more you use this workbook, the sooner you are likely to develop a habit of more frequent pausing to approach your tasks from the perspectives nurtured by the workbook questions.

As you use your **Time and Focus Workbook**, you will develop stronger

- *time awareness*
- *tracking of your use of time*
- *ability to prioritize*
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- *self-awareness, curiosity, and learning*
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Enjoy!

TIME AND FOCUS RECORD

Plan for time segments of no more than 30 minutes per task.

	Date	Intended Task or Activity	Starting Time	Planned Quitting Time	Actual Quitting Time	Planned Segment Duration	Actual Segment Duration
Segment 1							
Segment 2							
Segment 3							
Segment 4							
Segment 5							
Segment 6							
Segment 7							
Segment 8							
Segment 9							
Segment 10							
Segment 11							
Segment 12							

After each time segment, pause and answer the following questions (by circling or filling in):

	<u>Segments</u>											
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
A. Have I <u>finished</u> the activity I chose for this particular time segment?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

B. If not, did I at least to stay focused on my intended task?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

If I shifted to a different task, questions C, D, and E below apply. (If not, question F comes next.)

C. What factors or distractions contributed to my shift of focus?

1. _____	7. _____
2. _____	8. _____
3. _____	9. _____
4. _____	10. _____
5. _____	11. _____
6. _____	12. _____

D. How did that shift of focus serve me?

1. _____	7. _____
2. _____	8. _____
3. _____	9. _____
4. _____	10. _____
5. _____	11. _____
6. _____	12. _____

E. Was the task to which I shifted among my listed priorities for today?

<u>Segments</u>											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

Segments

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
F. Was I quickly postponing intruding thoughts by making a note and dropping them?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

G. Did I achieve "good enough" efficiency -- applying an appropriate, non-perfectionistic standard?	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

H. What accomplishment (large or small) in the task I chose can I celebrate?

1. _____	7. _____
2. _____	8. _____
3. _____	9. _____
4. _____	10. _____
5. _____	11. _____
6. _____	12. _____

I. What learnings (large or small) from this pause can I celebrate?

1. _____	7. _____
2. _____	8. _____
3. _____	9. _____
4. _____	10. _____
5. _____	11. _____
6. _____	12. _____

J. Was I able to stop for a proper pause at the planned quit time?
 (If I did not, answer questions K and L; otherwise, I can skip to question M.)

<u>Segments</u>											
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

K. What contributed to my not pausing at the planned quit time?

1. _____	7. _____
2. _____	8. _____
3. _____	9. _____
4. _____	10. _____
5. _____	11. _____
6. _____	12. _____

L. How did not pausing serve me?

1. _____	7. _____
2. _____	8. _____
3. _____	9. _____
4. _____	10. _____
5. _____	11. _____
6. _____	12. _____

Segments

M. Am I happy with the way I used this time segment?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

N. Am I happy with the way I used this pause?

Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

O. Am I responding to these observations with sufficient self-compassion to facilitate learning?

Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y	Y
N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N	N

P. What is the most appropriate next activity or break?

1. _____	7. _____
2. _____	8. _____
3. _____	9. _____
4. _____	10. _____
5. _____	11. _____
6. _____	12. _____

Remember

*that self-compassionate, nonjudgmental
observations, and celebrations of small successes
can facilitate learning new habits of thought and action
much more effectively than self-criticism and focusing on failures.*