

REFERENCE BANK

The Focus First-Aid Folder

Printable reset scripts, start-ritual cards, and journal prompts matched to each emotional trigger named in the kit - keep it beside your desk for the exact moment focus breaks.

Use

alongside the workbook

Why You Can't Focus: The Hidden Role of Emotion

- What happened in the 60 seconds before I quit?
- Name it in one word: dread, boredom, shame, resentment, anxiety, restlessness, overwhelm.
- Where is it in my body - chest, jaw, face, eyes, stomach, shoulders?
- What was my first escape move: phone, snack, inbox, tab, walk?
- Is this word a feeling or a verdict? If I can't find it in my body, it's a verdict.
- If this feeling could say one sentence in the first person, what would it say?

Identify Your Focus Kryptonite: A Self-Assessment

- The kryptonite sentence template: 'When ____, I feel ____, so I ____ instead.'
- The 60-second reconstruction: What was I about to do? What did I feel? What did I do instead?
- Trigger or exit? Ask: 'Is this the feeling, or the thing I did to escape the feeling?'
- The recency rule: last 7 days counts double; anything older than 14 days does not count at all.
- The live tag: name the family out loud within 30 seconds of noticing a drift.
- Rank the ticks, not the story you walked in with.

The 5-Minute Daily Focus Journal

- Today I avoided ____ (exact name, never a category).
- When I pictured starting it, I felt ____ (one plain word plus where in your body).
- What I did next was ____ (camera footage, minutes attached, no 'because').
- How many times did you say 'later' or 'after X' about this task today?
- Blurry-word audit: did you write fine, busy, or stressed? Replace it with the word you'd say out loud to a friend.
- Flip-back check for day 5 and day 30: which task name repeats most, and which feeling word keeps appearing next to it?

The 5-Minute Emotional Reset for Focus

- What is the sentence looping in my head right now, word-for-word?
- Is my counter-sentence true, boring, and does it end in a physical action?
- In for four, out for six - is my exhale longer than my inhale?
- Am I about to start the work, or am I about to do something that merely resembles starting?
- The thought came back - where is it written down?
- Did I do the physical action the counter-sentence named: yes or no?

The 3-Step Focus Trigger: How to Start When You Don't Want To

- What is my cue, stated as three physical facts: where is my body, where is my phone, what do my hands do first?
- Could I do my first action in under two minutes on my worst day? If not, what is half of it?
- What number is my timer set to, and have I said out loud that I am allowed to stop when it rings?
- How many minutes passed between my cue and my first action today, and is that gap shorter than last time?
- Did I run the sequence as written, or did I renegotiate it at the start line?
- Is my resistance 6 or higher right now - do I need the reset before the trigger?

When You're Overwhelmed: The 10-Minute Focus Rescue

- What is everything swirling right now? One line per item - tasks and feelings both count.
- Which single line could I start in under ten minutes?
- What is the smallest physical action on that item? Name the verb.
- The timer rang: done, or what is the exact next step? Write it before deciding anything else.
- Which lines on my dump sheet are feelings, not tasks? The feelings are what drive the spiral.
- Did I reach for the card before or after the spiral peaked? Note it on the sheet, no judgment.

Focus and the Fear of Failure: Rewriting Your Inner Script

- What did I actually say to myself after that flop, word for word?
- Which part of this sentence is a fact, and which part is a verdict?
- What was the one controllable piece I could change without becoming a different person?
- What is my next rep, and exactly when does it start?
- How many hours passed between my last flop and my next attempt?
- Template card: "This attempt missed because _____. The controllable piece was _____. My next rep is _____ at _____."

Focus and the Fear of Perfection: Letting Go of the Need to Be Perfect

- Template: 'A rough first pass of _____ that includes _____ and is allowed to be bad in _____ and _____, produced in one sitting.'
- Ask: 'What is the smallest version of this task that still counts as a first pass?'
- Mid-session check: 'Am I producing or polishing right now - and which pass did I agree this session was for?'
- Bracket-park script: '[fix in polish pass: _____]' - written inline the moment an objection appears.
- Existence test: 'Does this artifact exist as a file I can open, or is it still only in my head?'
- End-of-day line: 'What did the urge to fix feel like, and where did I put it?'

Focus on the Right Things: Prioritization for Real People

- Does this task need to exist, or does it just need to leave my head?
- Which of my three would I most like to push to next week - and is that flinch the sign it should go first?
- If I could finish only one of these three tomorrow, which one's absence would I feel at 6 pm?

- What will my hands be doing in the first five minutes of this block?
- Weekly re-dump question: what is still on this list only because I feel guilty deleting it?
- Nightly mark: circle one, set the start time, name the first physical move - decide tonight so tomorrow needs no new decision.

Focus Like a Pro: How to Build a Distraction-Proof Environment

- Name the journal line this change answers, or put the object back.
- Is this rule time-boxed to my spike hours or full-time - and which one does my log actually show?
- Where did my last logged focused session happen - and am I sitting there right now?
- What are the five things my hands reach for when I'm avoiding, and where does each one live at this moment?
- Is tomorrow staged - document open at the exact next action, first move written on the card?
- New reach-for today? It goes in the journal tonight and gets a rule within 24 hours.

Focus in the Digital Age: How to Cut the Noise

- How many apps can interrupt me right now, and what is the number after the audit?
- Which two apps do I open the moment a task gets uncomfortable?
- What was I feeling, in one word, one second before I reached for the phone?
- Is this app allowed to interrupt me, or do I choose when to open it?
- Where is the phone's parking spot, and is the phone in it right now?
- Tally count this session versus last session: rising, falling, or stuck - and which feeling dominates the list?

Focus and Flow: How to Get Into the Zone

- What minute did I settle today?
- Did I run all four parts of the stack, or skip one? Which one?

- What was my written target, word for word?
- How many urges did I tally before settling, and what was the first one?
- One word for what the restless phase felt like today?
- Is tomorrow's block already on the calendar at the same time?

Focus Fatigue: How to Recharge Your Brain Without Burnout

- The break test: does this give my attention quiet, or just different noise?
- What is the first physical move of this break?
- Which break today am I most likely to skip - and what alarm protects it?
- The genuine recharge list: walk without phone; lie down, eyes closed, 10 minutes; stretch; drink by a window; meal away from desk; stare outside; non-work conversation; doodle.
- Evening check: rate energy 1-5 before each block - where did it dip, and what came right before that block?
- Last block didn't start on time? Two suspects: the break was input-heavy, or the block before it was too long. Adjust structure, not effort.

Focus for the Long Run: Building a Sustainable Focus Habit

- Which component did I actually reach for this week - and which one did I only plan to reach for?
- What pulled me off task today, and which slot on my page is supposed to catch that exact pull?
- Recovery count: how many minutes passed between getting distracted and starting my rescue? Is that number shrinking?
- One-swap rule: at the weekly review I change exactly one component. Which is weakest - wrong for me, or just badly timed?
- Worst-day test: could I run at least one line of this page on a terrible day? If not, which line needs to shrink?

- If I lost this page tomorrow, which three lines could I rewrite from memory? Those three are my real system; the rest are still on trial.