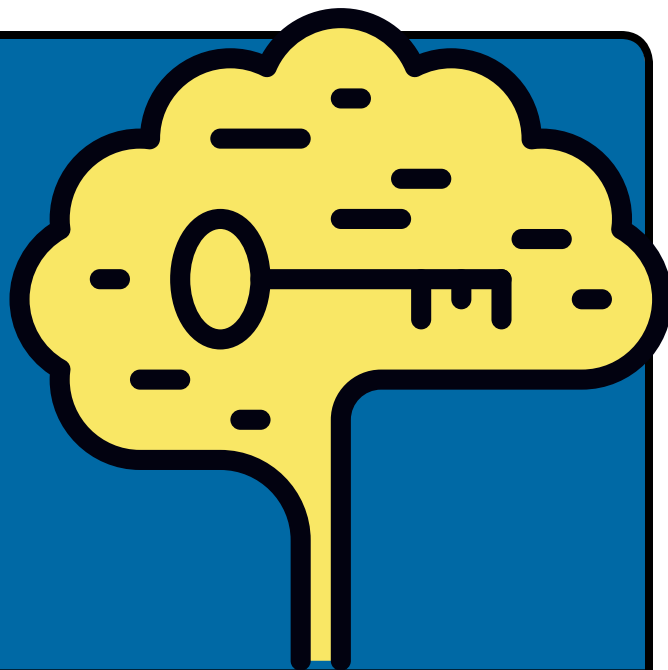


5 Powerful Brain Hacks for Focus & Productivity

By Alan P. Brown



IMAGINE YOU ARE A COMPUTER HACKER infiltrating a complex system and changing the code for advantage or gain. But the “system” is your ADHD brain, and the switches you throw will optimize your productivity, hone your focus, and fend off exhaustion. Sound complicated? It’s not — with these five straightforward strategies:

1 Adhere to “DWYDN”

Next time you begin work on an intensive task, start by declaring, “This is what I’m doing now!” In doing so, you build a “fence” around the task to keep out potential distractions. This will prevent you from jumping out of a task to pick up another task that seems easier or more interesting... and never returning to the original to-do item.

2 Achieve Meaningful Calm with PP478:

“Pause and Plan with the 4-7-8” is a yoga breathing technique that helps you recover from feelings of stressful overwhelm. Breathe in deeply through your nose for four counts, hold your breath for seven counts, then slowly release your breath through your pursed lips for eight counts. Repeat this ritual three times to achieve what’s called heart rate variability.

3 Re-Ignite Your Brain with Venue Change

When distracting boredom sets in, re-energize your brain and interrupt the pattern of your day by changing venues. If possible, physically get up and move to a different location when switching tasks. If you work in a tightly controlled physical environment, vary your work-place by changing the way you’re positioned at your desk or working in a conference room for a couple of single-tasking sessions.

4 Fuel Your Brain with Protein

Too many adults with ADHD try to kick-start their productivity with sugary snacks and drinks that are almost pure glucose, which is not an efficient brain fuel. To avoid nasty sugar crashes, get your glucose from dried fruit — the delivery curve of that fuel is extended because the glucose is still attached to its fiber. Add protein to your snack to stretch the energy further.

5 Practice a Recovery Ritual

Your brain is not designed to operate at the same level all day long; it needs occasional recovery rituals. Simple things you can do at your desk include practicing a mini-meditation (two minutes), stretching for 60 seconds (it brings fresh oxygen to the brain), tidying up (when you reset your environment, you reset your mind and body); or taking a short walk.