

1. Tame the Whirlwind.

Devoting time to mental and emotional recovery, whether by exercising, engaging in a mindfulness practice or simply taking needed time off, gives your prefrontal cortex a break from chaotic thoughts and emotions.

2. Sustain Your Focus.

Once you're calm and settled, choose a goal to pursue and stick with it. Try to meaningfully concentrate on only one thing at a time, keeping distractions at bay.

3. Pump the Brakes.

You need to be able to drill down into a single task – but also able to leave it behind. Check in from time to time to see if your energy would be better spent on something else.

4. Think Ahead – And Back.

Be intentional in your self-talk, relying on your working memory to keep yourself on track: “I asked my client to do X, then noticed Y, and remembered Z from a prior session, so I decided to switch to a new approach.”

5. Stay Mentally Flexible.

Now that you've gotten yourself focused and on track, make sure you don't get stuck on that track. Practice nimbly shifting your full attention from one task to another rather than obsessing on only one thing or trying to juggle many.



Five Practices for Staying Calm, Focused and Productive during the Holidays

Put It All Together.

Life is busy, stressful and unpredictable – particularly during the holiday season. Practice all five of the suggestions above and you'll find you have more focused and intentional time than you thought to tackle work tasks, home life, and more.