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Executive Dysfunction Clinical Practice Workbook

A clinically branded, function-preserving edition retaining the original exercises, psychoeducation, checklists, logs, planning tools, and response space.

DSM-5-TR · ICD-11 CLINICAL ALIGNMENT

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How to use this workbook

- Use this workbook selectively and collaboratively; it is educational and does not replace individualized assessment, diagnosis, treatment, medical care, or crisis services.
- Skip, pause, or modify any activity that increases distress, danger, shame, or loss of functioning. Adapt language for culture, disability, neurodivergence, health, resources, and lived context.
- Ratings in this workbook are reflection tools unless a named, validated measure and interpretation are explicitly provided.

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Self-Assessment

The following are common signs you might be struggling with Executive Dysfunction. Rate each statement on a scale from 1-5 (1 being “strongly disagree” and 5 being “strongly agree”):

Statement	Rate (1-5)
1. “I often struggle to start tasks, even when they are important.”	1-2-3-4-5
2. “I have difficulty prioritizing tasks and often feel overwhelmed.”	1-2-3-4-5
3. “I find it challenging to keep track of time and frequently run late.”	1-2-3-4-5
4. “I frequently forget to complete tasks or appointments.”	1-2-3-4-5
5. “I struggle to organize my workspace and belongings.”	1-2-3-4-5
6. “I often get distracted and find it hard to stay focused on tasks.”	1-2-3-4-5
7. “I have trouble regulating my emotions and may overreact to situations.”	1-2-3-4-5
8. “I struggle to adapt to changes in plans or routines.”	1-2-3-4-5
9. “I have difficulty remembering important information or details.”	1-2-3-4-5
10. “I find it challenging to make decisions, even about small matters.”	1-2-3-4-5
11. “I struggle to manage my time effectively and often underestimate how long tasks will take.”	1-2-3-4-5
12. “I frequently lose or misplace items.”	1-2-3-4-5

Score: ____/50

The score reflects the severity and impact of your Executive Dysfunction.

Symptoms of Executive Dysfunction

1. Review the list of symptoms below. Check off any symptoms you have experienced. Rate the severity on a scale from 1-10.

Planning and Organization

- ☐ Difficulty creating and following through with plans_____
- ☐ Trouble organizing tasks and materials_____
- ☐ Inability to prioritize tasks effectively_____
- ☐ Frequently misplacing important items_____
- ☐ Struggles to keep a clean and organized workspace_____

Time Management

- ☐ Poor estimation of how long tasks will take_____
- ☐ Frequently running late or missing deadlines_____
- ☐ Procrastination and difficulty starting tasks on time_____
- ☐ Difficulty maintaining a consistent schedule_____

Working Memory

- ☐ Difficulty holding information in mind to complete tasks_____
- ☐ Frequently forgetting or details_____
- ☐ Trouble following multi-step directions_____
- ☐ Needing constant reminders to complete tasks_____

Emotional Regulation

- ☐ Difficulty managing emotions, leading to frequent outbursts or mood swings_____
- ☐ Overreacting to minor setbacks or challenges_____
- ☐ Difficulty calming down after becoming upset_____

- ☐ Impulsive emotional responses_____
- ☐ Struggles to maintain a positive outlook_____

Focus and Attention

- ☐ Easily distracted by external stimuli or unrelated thoughts_____
- ☐ Difficulty returning to a task after an interruption_____

Impulse Control

- ☐ Acting without thinking about the consequences_____
- ☐ Difficulty delaying gratification_____
- ☐ Interrupting others during conversations_____
- ☐ Making hasty decisions without considering all options_____

Flexibility

- ☐ Difficulty adapting to changes in plans or routines_____
- ☐ Rigid thinking and resistance to new ideas_____
- ☐ Trouble shifting between tasks or activities_____
- ☐ Inability to consider alternative solutions to problems_____
- ☐ Becoming upset when routines are disrupted_____

9. Self-Monitoring

- ☐ Difficulty assessing personal performance and behavior_____
- ☐ Trouble recognizing mistakes and learning from them_____
- ☐ Overestimating or underestimating abilities and task completion_____
- ☐ Lack of awareness of how actions affect others_____
- ☐ Difficulty adjusting behavior based on feedback_____

2. Are there particular areas where you struggle more than others?

3. How do these signs and symptoms impact your daily life?

4. Are there specific situations where executive dysfunction affects you the most?

Causes and Risk Factors

1. Do you have a family history of executive dysfunction or related conditions (e.g., ADHD, learning disabilities)?

2. Have you experienced any brain injuries or neurological conditions that might affect executive function?

3. Have you been diagnosed with any developmental disorders that impact executive function (e.g., Autism Spectrum Disorder)?

4. Do you experience chronic stress or anxiety that might impact your executive functioning?

5. Do you often get insufficient sleep, and how does it affect your daily functioning?

6. Do you use substances (e.g., alcohol, drugs) that might impact your cognitive abilities?

7. Do you have any mental health conditions (e.g., depression, anxiety) that could affect executive function?

8. Have you experienced emotional trauma or significant life changes that might impact your executive functioning?

9. Did you face significant academic challenges or learning disabilities in school?

10. Do you experience social isolation or lack of social skills?

11. How do these causes and risk factors impact your daily life?

Identifying Strengths and Weaknesses

1. What are your strengths in recognizing your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors?

Example: "I am good at noticing when I am starting to feel overwhelmed and can take steps to calm down."

2. What are your weaknesses in recognizing your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors?

Example: "I often don't realize I'm procrastinating until it's too late to finish my tasks on time."

3. What are your strengths in planning and organizing tasks or projects?

Example: "I am excellent at creating detailed to-do lists and breaking down projects into manageable steps."

4. What are your weaknesses in planning and organizing tasks or projects?

Example: "I struggle to keep my workspace organized and often lose important documents."

5. What are your strengths in managing time and meeting deadlines?

Example: "I am very punctual and always arrive on time for meetings and appointments."

6. What are your weaknesses in managing time and meeting deadlines?

Example: "I frequently underestimate how long tasks will take and end up rushing to meet deadlines."

7. What are your strengths in maintaining attention and focus on tasks?

Example: "I can focus intensely on tasks that interest me and get them done quickly."

8. What are your weaknesses in maintaining attention and focus on tasks?

Example: "I get easily distracted by my phone and find it hard to concentrate on boring tasks."

9. What are your strengths in solving problems and adapting to changes?

Example: "I am very creative and can come up with multiple solutions to a problem."

10. What are your weaknesses in solving problems and adapting to changes?

Example: "I struggle to adapt when plans change unexpectedly and can feel very stressed."

11. What are your strengths in remembering information and recalling it when needed?

Example: "I have a strong memory for visual details and can easily recall faces and places."

12. What are your weaknesses in remembering information and recalling it when needed?

Example: "I often forget appointments and need reminders to stay on track."

13. How can you use your strengths to improve your executive functioning? Are there specific strategies you can implement to leverage your strengths?

14. What steps can you take to address your weaknesses in executive functioning? Would seeking professional help, such as therapy or coaching, be beneficial for you?

Setting SMART Goals

1. What do you want to achieve?

Example: "I want to improve my time management skills."

2. Why is this goal important to you?

Example: "Improving my time management will help me be more productive at work and reduce stress."

3. Making Your Goal SMART

Specific: What exactly do you want to accomplish?

Example: "I want to create a daily schedule that allocates specific times for work, breaks, and personal activities."

Measurable: How will you measure your progress?

Example: "I will track the completion of daily tasks in a planner and review my progress at the end of each week."

Achievable: Is this goal realistic and attainable?

Example: "I can realistically create and follow a daily schedule by setting aside 10 minutes each evening to plan the next day."

Relevant: How does this goal align with your broader objectives?

Example: "This goal aligns with my broader objective of becoming more organized and reducing work-related stress."

Time-bound: What is the deadline for achieving this goal?

Example: "I will implement and follow my daily schedule for the next three months."

4. What are the steps to achieve this goal?

Example:

- *"Research effective time management techniques."*
- *"Choose a planner or digital tool for scheduling."*
- *"Set aside 10 minutes each evening to plan the next day."*

5. What resources or support do you need?

Example: "I need a good planner, access to time management resources, and possibly advice from a mentor or coach."

6. What challenges might you face, and how will you overcome them?

Example: "I might forget to plan my day. To overcome this, I will set a reminder on my phone each evening."

Daily Planning Worksheet

1. What are your main goals for today?

2. Identify the top 3 tasks that must be completed today.

3. List all the tasks you need to accomplish today. Assign a priority level to each task (High, Medium, Low).

Tasks	Priority

4. Allocate specific times for each task. Include breaks and buffer times.

Time	Task

5. Reflect on what you accomplished and any challenges you faced.

6. Identify what adjustments you need to make for tomorrow.

Prioritization Technique - Eisenhower Matrix

The Eisenhower Matrix, also known as the Urgent-Important Matrix, is a time management tool that helps you prioritize tasks based on their urgency and importance.

- **Urgent and Important:** Tasks that need immediate attention.
- **Important but Not Urgent:** Tasks that can be scheduled for later.
- **Urgent but Not Important:** Tasks that can be delegated.
- **Not Urgent and Not Important:** Tasks that can be eliminated or done during free time.

1. List all the tasks you need to complete.

2. Categorize those tasks.

Urgent and Important (Do)	Not Urgent but Important (Plan)
Urgent but Not Important (Delegate)	Not Urgent and Not Important (Eliminate)

Prioritization Technique - ABC Method

The ABC Method assigns tasks a priority level:

- **A (High Priority):** Tasks that must be done today.
- **B (Medium Priority):** Tasks that should be done soon but are not critical.
- **C (Low Priority):** Tasks that can be postponed or done during free time.

1. Write down all the tasks you need to complete. This can include work-related tasks, personal tasks, and anything else you need to do. Assign each task a letter based on its priority: A, B, or C. If you have multiple tasks within a category, prioritize them further by numbering them (A1, A2, A3, etc.).

2. Start by working on your A tasks. These are the most critical and need your immediate attention. Ensure these tasks are completed before moving on to B tasks and C tasks.

Prioritization Technique - Pareto Principle (80/20 Rule)

The Pareto Principle, also known as the 80/20 Rule, is a time management concept that suggests that 80% of results come from 20% of efforts. This principle helps identify and focus on the tasks that will produce the most significant outcomes, allowing for more efficient use of time and resources.

1. Write down all the tasks, projects, and activities you need to complete. This can include work-related tasks, personal responsibilities, and any other activities.

2. Review your list and identify the tasks that are most likely to produce the majority of your desired outcomes. These are the tasks that contribute significantly to your goals and success.

3. Identify tasks that are less impactful or can be delegated to others. Minimize the time and effort spent on these tasks to free up resources for more important activities.

Prioritization Technique - Two-Minute Rule

The Two-Minute Rule suggests if a task can be completed in two minutes or less, it should be done immediately. This rule helps prevent small tasks from piling up and becoming overwhelming.

1. As you go through your day, identify tasks that can be completed in two minutes or less. These tasks are usually simple and straightforward, such as sending a quick email, making a short phone call, or filing a document.

2. When you come across a task that fits the Two-Minute Rule, complete it right away instead of postponing it. This helps clear your to-do list of small tasks quickly and prevents them from accumulating.

3. Maintain a list of tasks that typically take two minutes or less to complete. Refer to this list during downtime or when you need a quick productivity boost.

Prioritization Technique - Task Batching

Task Batching involves grouping similar tasks together and completing them in one dedicated block of time. This method minimizes the mental switching costs associated with multitasking, improving efficiency and focus. By handling similar tasks in batches, you can streamline your workflow and enhance productivity.

1. List all the tasks you need to complete and identify those that are similar in nature. These tasks can be grouped based on their type, tools required, or context in which they are performed.

2. Allocate specific time blocks in your schedule to work on each task batch. Ensure that these time blocks are long enough to complete multiple tasks within the batch without interruptions.

Example: 9:00 AM - 10:00 AM: Answering emails.

3. During each time block, focus solely on the tasks within the batch. Minimize distractions by turning off notifications, closing unrelated applications, and setting a “do not disturb” status.

Prioritization Technique - MITs (Most Important Tasks)

MITs, or Most Important Tasks involves identifying and prioritizing the top 2-3 tasks that must be completed each day. These tasks are the ones that will have the most significant impact on achieving your goals. By focusing on these critical tasks first, you can ensure that essential work gets done, boosting productivity and reducing stress.

1. At the beginning of each day, list the 2-3 tasks that are most crucial to complete. These tasks should be aligned with your long-term goals and have the highest priority.

2. Make sure to prioritize these MITs above all other tasks. Commit to completing them before moving on to less critical activities.

3. If any of your MITs are complex or large, break them down into smaller, actionable steps to make them more manageable.

Time Management Technique - Time Blocking

Time blocking is scheduling specific blocks of time for different tasks.

Example:

- 8:00 AM 9:00 AM: Focused work (Project A)
- 9:00 AM 9:15 AM: Break
- ...

Time Blocks	Tasks

Time Management Technique - Pomodoro Technique

The Pomodoro Technique is a time management method that uses a timer to break work into intervals, traditionally 25 minutes in length, separated by short breaks. This technique helps improve focus and productivity by encouraging short bursts of concentrated work followed by brief rest periods.

1. Select a specific task you want to work on. This could be a work project, studying, household chores, or any other activity that requires focused effort.

2. Set a timer for 25 minutes. This will be your work interval, known as a Pomodoro. Focus entirely on the task for the full 25 minutes. Avoid any distractions and concentrate solely on the work at hand.

3. When the timer rings, take a 5-minute break. Use this time to relax, stretch, or do something different from your task.

5 After the break, set the timer for another 25 minutes and continue working on the task. Repeat this cycle of 25 minutes of work followed by a 5-minute break.

6. After completing four Pomodoros (four 25-minute work intervals and three 5-minute breaks), take a longer break of 15-30 minutes. This helps you rest and recharge before starting the next set of Pomodoros.

7. If 25 minutes feels too long or too short, adjust the length of your Pomodoros and breaks to suit your needs.

Overcoming Procrastination

1. Describe the effects of procrastination on your routine, productivity, and stress levels.

Example: "Procrastination causes me to miss deadlines, feel overwhelmed, and experience high levels of stress."

2. What are your common procrastination triggers? The following are some examples. Check off the ones that apply or add more to the list:

- ☐ The fear that you won't succeed.
- ☐ The need to do everything perfectly.
- ☐ Feeling overwhelmed by the size or complexity of a task.
- ☐ Tasks that are boring or uninteresting.
- ☐ Environmental or digital distractions.
- ☐ Inability to effectively manage time.
- ☐ Not knowing what to do or how to do it.
- ☐ Disliking a task.
- ☐ Feeling unmotivated to start or complete tasks.
- ☐ Fatigue or low energy.
- ☐ Difficulty making decisions.
- ☐ Feeling unprepared or lacking the skills needed.
- ☐ Self-doubt and negative thoughts.
- ☐ Resentment towards authority figures assigning tasks.
- ☐ An uncomfortable or unsuitable work environment.

- ☐

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3. List a current task you are procrastinating on and break it into smaller steps.

Example: Task: Writing a report

Smaller Steps:

1. Create an outline for the report
2. Gather research materials
3. Write the introduction
4. Write the main body
5. Write the conclusion
6. Proofread and edit the report

[illegible]

4. List a task and set a specific time limit for completing it.

Example:

- *Task: Responding to emails*
- *Time Limit: 30 minutes*

5. What are your common distractions?

Example: "Social media, phone notifications, and noisy environments."

6. How can you minimize these distractions?

Example: "Turn off phone notifications, use noise-canceling headphones, and create a dedicated workspace."

Organizing Physical Spaces

1. What specific physical spaces do you need to organize?

2. What are your biggest challenges in organizing these spaces?

Example: "I have too much clutter and find it hard to decide what to keep and what to discard."

3. How does disorganization in these spaces impact your daily life?

Example: "Disorganization makes it hard to find important documents, leading to missed deadlines and increased stress."

4. What are your organizational goals for each space?

Example: Home Office: "Create a clutter-free workspace with easy access to all necessary documents and supplies."

5. List specific steps to begin decluttering.

Example: "Start with one area, sort items into keep, discard, and donate piles, and remove discarded items immediately."

6. How can you create zones in your spaces?

Example: "Divide the home office into work, storage, and relaxation zones."

7. What organizational tools can help you maintain order?

Example: "Use drawer organizers, labeled bins, and shelving units."

8. How can you establish routines for maintaining organized spaces?

Example: "Set aside time each week to tidy up and reorganize as needed."

Digital Organization Techniques

1. What specific digital spaces do you need to organize (e.g., email, files, desktop, cloud storage).?

2. What are your biggest challenges in organizing these digital spaces?

Example: "I have too many emails and files, making it hard to find what I need."

3. How does disorganization in these digital spaces impact your daily life?

Example: "Disorganization makes it hard to find important documents, leading to missed deadlines and increased stress."

4. What are your organizational goals for each digital space?

Example: Email: "Achieve inbox zero by organizing emails into folders and using filters."

5. List specific steps to begin decluttering.

Example: "Start with one area, sort items into keep, delete, and archive folders, and remove deleted items immediately."

6. List steps to establish a logical folder structure (A folder structure involves organizing files into a hierarchical system, making it easier to find and manage documents.)

Example: "Create main categories, subcategories."

7. What digital tools can help you maintain order?

Example: "Google Drive for cloud storage, Evernote for note-taking, and Trello for task management."

8. How can you establish routines for maintaining organized digital spaces?

Developing a Memory Routine

1. List the areas where you struggle with memory (e.g., forgetting appointments, misplacing items, difficulty recalling names).

2. How do these memory challenges impact your daily life?

Example: "Forgetting appointments causes me to miss important meetings, and misplacing items makes me late and frustrated."

3. What are your goals for improving your memory?

Example: "I want to remember appointments, keep track of my belongings, and recall important information quickly."

Strategy 1: Use of Calendars and Planners

Digital Calendar:

- Set up appointments with reminders.
- Use color-coding for different types of events.

Physical Planner:

- Write down daily tasks and check them off as completed.
- Review the planner each morning and evening.

5. How will you implement the use of calendars and planners?

Example: "I will use a digital calendar on my phone to set reminders for appointments and a physical planner to write down daily tasks."

Strategy 2: Establishing Routines

Morning Routine:

- Review daily tasks and appointments.
- Gather necessary items for the day (keys, wallet, phone).

Evening Routine:

- Review what was accomplished during the day.
- Prepare for the next day (set out clothes, pack bag).
- Update the planner and digital calendar.

6. How can you establish routines to support your memory?

Example: "I will create a morning and evening routine to review my tasks and prepare for the next day."

Using Mnemonics

Mnemonics are memory aids that can help you recall information more easily. Examples:

- **Acronym:** "NASA stands for National Aeronautics and Space Administration."
- **Acrostic:** "Every Good Boy Deserves Fruit (EGBDF) helps remember the notes on the lines of the treble clef in music."
- **Rhymes and Songs:** "Thirty days hath September, April, June, and November..." helps remember the number of days in each month."
- **Visualization:** "Creating a mental image of information can make it easier to remember. For example, visualizing a grocery list as items placed in specific locations in your kitchen."
- **Chunking:** "Chunking involves breaking information into smaller, more manageable pieces. For instance, remembering a phone number as 123-456-7890 instead of 1234567890."
- **Method of Loci:** "The method of loci involves associating information with specific locations. For example, imagining placing items you need to remember in different rooms of your house."
- **Keyword Method:** "The keyword method involves using a familiar word or image to represent new information. Example: To remember that "pato" means "duck" in Spanish, you might imagine a duck with a pot on its head."
- **Peg System:** "The peg system involves associating numbers with words or images that rhyme with or resemble the numbers, then associating each item to be remembered with the corresponding image. Example: For the number 1, imagine a bun. For the number 2, imagine a shoe."
- **Narrative Chain:** The narrative chain method involves creating a story that links together the items you need to remember. Example:

To remember a shopping list (apples, bread, milk, chicken), you might create a story: "An apple fell on a loaf of bread, which soaked up some spilled milk next to a chicken."

- **Mind Maps:** "Mind maps are diagrams used to visually organize information, showing relationships among pieces of the whole. Example: To study for a history exam, you might create a mind map with branches for different periods and key events."
- **Spelling Mnemonics:** "Spelling mnemonics help remember the correct spelling of words. Example: "I before E except after C" helps remember the spelling rule for words like "believe" and "receive.""
- **Music Mnemonics:** "Music mnemonics use songs or melodies to remember information. Example: The alphabet song helps children remember the order of the letters in the alphabet."
- **First-Letter Mnemonics:** "First-letter mnemonics use the first letters of a series of words to form a new word or phrase. Example: To remember the colors of the rainbow in order, use the acronym ROYGBIV (Red, Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, Indigo, Violet)."
- **Link Method:** "The link method involves linking items together in a memorable sequence. Example: To remember a list of items (pen, book, apple), you might visualize a pen writing in a book that's balancing an apple on top."

1. Identify the information you need to remember and why it is important.

Example: "I need to remember the steps for completing a project at work."

2. Choose a mnemonic technique that you think will work best for you.

Example: "I will use an acronym to remember the steps for completing a project."

3. Develop your mnemonic using the chosen technique.

Example: Steps for completing a project (Plan, Research, Execute, Review) Acronym: "PRER"

4. Describe how you will practice using mnemonics daily.

Example: "Each morning, I will create a mnemonic for my top three tasks of the day."

Note-Taking Strategies

1. What specific challenges do you face with note-taking (e.g., difficulty organizing information, missing key details, keeping notes consistent)?

2. How do these challenges impact your daily life?

Example: "Poor note-taking leads to confusion and missed deadlines, increasing my stress and reducing my productivity."

3. What are your goals for improving your note-taking skills?

Example: "I want to organize my notes better, capture key details accurately, and be able to review them easily."

Strategy 1: Using Structured Formats

Cornell Notes:

- Divide the page into three sections: Notes, Cues, and Summary.
- Take notes in the main section, write key points or questions in the cues section, and summarize the notes at the bottom.

Outline Method:

- Use headings and subheadings to organize information hierarchically.
- Indent subpoints under main points for clarity.

4. What structured formats will you use for note-taking?

Example: "I will use the Cornell Notes format for meetings and the Outline Method for lectures."

Strategy 2: Visual Aids and Symbols

- **Bullet Points:** Use for lists and key points.
- **Arrows:** Show relationships between concepts.
- **Diagrams:** Illustrate processes or structures.
- **Color Coding:** Highlight important information using different colors.

5. What visual aids and symbols will you use in your notes?

Example: "I will use bullet points for lists, arrows to show relationships, and color coding to highlight important information."

Strategy 3: Digital Note-Taking Tools

- **Evernote:** Organize notes into notebooks, use tags for easy searching, and attach files or images.

- **OneNote:** Create sections and pages, use drawing tools for diagrams, and collaborate with others.
- **Google Keep:** Make quick notes and to-do lists, set reminders, and access notes across devices.

6. What digital note-taking tools will you use?

Example: "I will use Evernote for organizing meeting notes and Google Keep for quick reminders and to-do lists."

Emotional Regulation

Emotional regulation is the ability to manage and respond to my emotions in a healthy and productive way.

1. How does difficulty with emotional regulation impact your daily life?

Example: "Difficulty with emotional regulation makes it hard to stay calm under pressure, leading to conflicts at work and home, decreased productivity, and higher stress."

2. What are your common emotional triggers? List specific situations, people, or events that trigger strong emotional responses.

Example: "I get very anxious before presentations and frustrated when plans change unexpectedly."

Strategy 1: Deep Breathing

- Sit or lie down comfortably.
- Inhale slowly through your nose for a count of four.
- Hold your breath for a count of four.
- Exhale slowly through your mouth for a count of four.
- Repeat for five minutes.

Strategy 2: Progressive Muscle Relaxation

- Find a quiet place to sit or lie down.
- Tense each muscle group in your body for five seconds, starting with your toes and working up to your head.
- Release the tension and notice the relaxation.
- Move on to the next muscle group.
- Repeat for each muscle group.

Strategy 3: Mindfulness Meditation

- Sit comfortably with your eyes closed.
- Focus on your breath, observing each inhale and exhale.
- When your mind wanders, gently bring your attention back to your breath.
- Continue for 10-15 minutes.

Strategy 4: Visualization

- Sit or lie down in a quiet place.
- Close your eyes and imagine a peaceful scene, such as a beach or a forest.
- Engage all your senses to make the scene as vivid as possible.
- Spend 5-10 minutes in this visualization.

Strategy 5: Journaling

- Set aside 10-15 minutes in a quiet space.
- Write about your thoughts and feelings without censoring yourself.
- Reflect on what you wrote and identify any patterns or triggers.
- Use journaling regularly to process emotions.

Strategy 6: Physical Exercise

- Choose a form of exercise you enjoy, such as walking, running, or yoga.
- Exercise for at least 30 minutes.
- Focus on the physical sensations and movement.
- Notice how your mood changes after exercising.

Strategy 7: Gratitude Practice

- Each morning or evening, write down three things you are grateful for.
- Be specific about why you are grateful for each item.
- Reflect on these items and how they positively impact your life.
- Practice gratitude daily.

Strategy 8: Grounding Techniques

- Identify five things you can see, four things you can touch, three things you can hear, two things you can smell, and one thing you can taste.
- Focus on each sense one at a time.
- Use grounding techniques when feeling overwhelmed.

Strategy 9: Taking a Break

- Recognize when you are feeling overwhelmed or stressed.
- Take a short break from the situation.
- Go for a walk, make a cup of tea, or do something you enjoy.
- Return to the situation with a clearer mind.

Cognitive Restructuring

Cognitive restructuring is a technique used to help individuals identify and challenge irrational or maladaptive thoughts.

1. What is the situation or task that is causing difficulty?

Example: "I need to start working on my project, but I keep procrastinating."

2. What thoughts are going through your mind when you think about the situation?

Example: "I'm going to mess this up," "I don't know where to start," "This is too hard."

3. What emotions do you feel when you think about the situation and your automatic thoughts?

Example: Anxiety, frustration, overwhelm.

4. What evidence supports these thoughts? What evidence contradicts them?

Supporting evidence	Contradictory evidence
<i>e.g., "I've struggled with similar tasks before," "I don't have all the information."</i>	<i>"I've successfully completed other projects," "I can break the task into smaller steps."</i>

5. What are more balanced or realistic thoughts that consider both sides of the evidence?

Example: "I might make mistakes, but I can learn from them," "I can start with small steps and gather more information as I go."

6. What actions can you take based on these new balanced thoughts?

Example: "I will create a task list and start with the first small step," "I will set a timer for 15 minutes and work on it."

Step-by-Step Problem-Solving

1. What is the problem you need to solve?

Example: "I am having trouble meeting project deadlines at work."

2. Why is it important to solve this problem?

Example: "Solving this problem will help me be more productive, reduce stress, and improve my performance at work."

3. What are the key elements or aspects of the problem?

Example: "Time management, task prioritization, and avoiding distractions."

4. How do these components contribute to the problem?

Example: "Poor time management leads to missed deadlines, lack of prioritization causes me to focus on less important tasks, and distractions reduce my productivity."

5. What are some potential solutions for each component of the problem?

Example: Time Management: Use a planner, set reminders, create a daily schedule.

6. How can you evaluate the feasibility of each solution?

Example: "I will evaluate each solution based on its ease of implementation, time required, and potential impact on productivity."

7. Which solutions seem most feasible and effective?

Example: "Using a planner for time management, the Eisenhower Matrix for task prioritization, and turning off notifications to avoid distractions."

8. What specific steps will you take to implement the chosen solutions?

Example: Time Management:

- Purchase a planner.
- Schedule time each evening to plan the next day.
- Set reminders for key tasks.

9. What indicators will show that the solutions are working?

Example: "Meeting deadlines consistently, completing high-priority tasks, and experiencing fewer distractions."

Decision-Making Models

1. What are your common challenges with decision-making?

Example: "I often feel overwhelmed by too many options, have trouble weighing pros and cons, and second-guess my choices."

2. How do these challenges impact your ability to make effective decisions?

Example: "Feeling overwhelmed and unsure leads to procrastination and

Model 1: Pros and Cons List

A pros and cons list involves listing the positive and negative aspects of each option, which helps compare choices and make a balanced decision.

3. How will you implement a pros and cons list in your decision-making process?

Example: Decision: Choosing a new job

Option 1: Job A

- Pros: Higher salary, good benefits, close to home
- Cons: Longer hours, high stress, limited growth opportunities

Option 2: Job B

- Pros: Better work-life balance, opportunities for advancement, supportive work environment
- Cons: Lower salary, longer commute, fewer benefits

Decision:_____

	Option 1	Option 2
Pros		
Cons		

Model 2: SWOT Analysis

SWOT analysis involves evaluating the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats of each option, providing a comprehensive view of the decision.

4. How will you implement SWOT analysis in your decision-making process?

Example: Decision: Starting a new project

Option 1: Project A

- Strengths: Strong team, available resources, high market demand
- Weaknesses: Tight deadlines, limited budget
- Opportunities: Potential for high revenue, market expansion
- Threats: Competition, regulatory changes

Option 2: Project B

- Strengths: Innovative idea, low initial investment
- Weaknesses: Lack of expertise, unproven market
- Opportunities: First-mover advantage, potential partnerships
- Threats: High risk, uncertain ROI

Decision: _____

	Option 1	Option 2
Strengths		
Weaknesses		
Opportunities		
Threats		

Model 3: Decision Matrix

A decision matrix involves evaluating options based on specific criteria, assigning weights to each criterion, and calculating scores to determine the best choice.

5. How will you implement a decision matrix in your decision-making process?

Example: Decision: Choosing a vacation destination

Criteria: Cost (weight 3), Weather (weight 2), Activities (weight 2), Travel Time (weight 1)

Option 1: Beach Resort

- Cost: 4
- Weather: 5
- Activities: 3
- Travel Time: 2

Total Score: $(4*3) + (5*2) + (3*2) + (2*1) = 29$

Option 2: Mountain Cabin

- Cost: 3
- Weather: 4
- Activities: 4
- Travel Time: 3

Total Score: $(3*3) + (4*2) + (4*2) + (3*1) = 28$

Decision: _____

Criteria/weight	Option 1	Option 2
Total Score		

Implementing Solutions

1. What is the solution you have chosen to implement?

Example: "Using a planner to organize my tasks and deadlines."

2. What resources or tools do you need to implement the solution?

Example: "A planner, pens, a daily schedule, and reminder apps."

3. What specific steps will you take to implement the solution?

Example:

- 1. Purchase a planner or download a planner app.*
- 2. Set up the planner with sections for daily tasks, deadlines, and notes.*
- 3. Schedule a daily time to update the planner.*
- 4. Add all upcoming tasks and deadlines.*
- 5. Review and adjust the planner daily.*

4. What is your timeline for implementing the solution?

Example:

- *Purchase planner: by the end of the week*
- *Set up planner: within two days of purchase*
- *Schedule daily update time: immediately after setting up the planner*
- *Add tasks and deadlines: within one week of setting up the planner*
- *Daily review: starting the next day and ongoing*

5. What indicators will show that the solution is working?

Example: "Meeting deadlines consistently, completing tasks on time, and experiencing less stress."

6. What potential challenges might you face in implementing the solution?

Example: "Forgetting to update the planner, feeling overwhelmed by tasks, and losing motivation."

7. How will you overcome these challenges?

Example: "I will set reminders to update the planner, break tasks into smaller steps to avoid feeling overwhelmed, and reward myself for completing tasks to stay motivated."

8. Who can support you in implementing this solution?

Example: "A colleague, a friend, or a family member."

9. How will you involve them in the process?

Example: "I will ask a colleague to check in with me weekly to discuss my progress and seek advice from a friend when I feel stuck."

Exercises for Cognitive Flexibility

Cognitive flexibility is the ability to switch between different thoughts, tasks, or perspectives quickly and efficiently.

1. What situations or tasks do you find challenging due to a lack of cognitive flexibility?

Example: "I struggle with unexpected changes in plans, multitasking, and finding alternative solutions when my initial plan fails."

2. How do these challenges impact your daily life?

Example: "Difficulty adapting to changes makes me feel stressed and overwhelmed, leading to decreased productivity and frustration."

Exercise 1: Mental Shifting

Mental shifting involves moving back and forth between tasks, concepts, or perspectives, which can help improve adaptability.

Example:

- Choose two different tasks (e.g., writing and solving puzzles).
- Set a timer for 10 minutes and work on the first task.
- When the timer goes off, switch to the second task for 10 minutes.

- *Repeat the process for a total of 30 minutes.*

3. How will you practice mental shifting?

Exercise 2: Perspective Taking

Perspective taking involves considering different viewpoints or opinions, which can help improve flexibility in thinking.

Example:

- Choose a topic or situation.
- Write down your perspective on the topic.
- Discuss the topic with a friend or colleague and note their perspective.
- Reflect on how their perspective differs from yours and what you can learn from it.

4. How will you practice perspective taking?

Exercise 3: Creative Activities

Creative activities stimulate the brain, encouraging new ways of thinking and improving adaptability.

Example:

- Drawing: Spend 15 minutes each day sketching something new.
- Writing: Write a short story or poem once a week.
- Playing an Instrument: Practice a musical instrument for 20 minutes daily.
- Trying New Recipes: Cook a new recipe once a week.

5. What creative activities will you engage in?

Adapting to Change

1. What types of changes do you find most challenging (e.g., changes in routine, unexpected events, new responsibilities)?

2. What specific challenges do you face when adapting to change (e.g., anxiety, lack of planning, resistance to new ideas)?

3. How do these challenges impact your daily life?

Strategy 1: Developing a Positive Mindset

A positive mindset helps you stay open to new opportunities and reduces anxiety about change.

Example:

- Positive Affirmations: Repeat affirmations like "I am capable of handling change" each morning.
- Gratitude Journaling: Write down three things you are grateful for each evening.
- Reframing Negative Thoughts: When a negative thought arises, consciously reframe it into a positive one.

4. What techniques will you use to develop a positive mindset?

Strategy 2: Planning and Preparation

Planning and preparation help you feel more in control and reduce the anxiety associated with unexpected changes.

Example:

- Contingency Plans: Identify potential changes and plan alternative actions.
- Flexible Goals: Set goals that allow for adjustments and review them regularly.
- Regular Reviews: Schedule time each week to review and adjust plans as needed.

5. What steps will you take to plan and prepare for potential changes?

Understanding Social Cues

Social cues are non-verbal signals, like body language, facial expressions, and tone of voice, that convey information about how someone is feeling or what they are thinking.

1. What specific social cues do you find challenging to understand (e.g., recognizing sarcasm, understanding facial expressions, interpreting body language)?

2. How do these challenges impact your social interactions?

Strategy 1: Observing Body Language

Observing body language helps you understand how someone is feeling, even if they don't say it out loud.

Example:

- Posture: Notice if someone is leaning in (interested) or leaning back (disengaged).
- Gestures: Observe hand movements and gestures that emphasize points.
- Eye Contact: Pay attention to whether someone maintains eye contact or looks away frequently.
- Personal Space: Be aware of how close someone stands to you.

Strategy 2: Interpreting Facial Expressions

Interpreting facial expressions helps you understand someone's emotions and respond appropriately.

Example:

- Smiling: Indicates happiness or friendliness.
- Frowning: Indicates sadness, confusion, or disapproval.
- Raised Eyebrows: Indicates surprise, curiosity, or skepticism.
- Eye Movements: Notice if someone looks away (disinterest) or maintains eye contact (engagement).

Strategy 3: Listening to Tone of Voice

Listening to tone of voice helps you understand the speaker's emotions and intentions, even if their words are ambiguous.

Example:

- Pitch: High pitch can indicate excitement or anxiety; low pitch can indicate calmness or seriousness.
- Volume: Loud volume can indicate anger or enthusiasm; soft volume can indicate shyness or sadness.
- Speed: Fast speech can indicate excitement or nervousness; slow speech can indicate thoughtfulness or hesitation.
- Inflection: Rising inflection can indicate a question or uncertainty; falling inflection can indicate confidence or.

Strategy 4: Asking Clarifying Questions

Asking clarifying questions helps you ensure that I understand the other person's message correctly and avoid misunderstandings.

Example:

- Can you explain what you mean?: Use this question to get more details about a statement.
- Do you feel...?: Use this question to confirm your understanding of someone's emotions.
- Are you saying...?: Use this question to paraphrase and confirm your understanding of what someone said.

Strategy 5: Practicing Active Listening

Active listening helps you fully engage in the conversation, making it easier to pick up on social cues and respond appropriately.

Example:

- Maintain Eye Contact: Look at the speaker to show engagement.
- Nod to Show Understanding: Use small nods to indicate that you are following the conversation.
- Summarize What the Speaker Says: Repeat back key points to confirm understanding.
- Avoid Interrupting: Let the speaker finish before responding.

3. Describe how you will plan your week using the strategies mentioned.

Example: "Every Sunday evening, I will review my social interactions for the week, identify opportunities to practice these strategies, and set specific goals."

2026 Clinical Alignment

DSM-5-TR (including Sept. 2025 update) · ICD-11 CDDR / 2026 MMS

Classification status

- DSM-5-TR: Not a DSM diagnosis; transdiagnostic functional description · non-diagnostic
- ICD-11 CDDR: Not a standalone CDDR diagnosis · non-diagnostic
- This workbook is non-diagnostic. A title, checklist, or completed activity never establishes a diagnosis.

Pages requiring the updated interpretation

- The audit identified source pages 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 13, 15, 27, 32, 34, 37, 49, 51, 53, 54, 58, 59. The statements below supersede incompatible diagnostic, scoring, safety, or resource wording on those pages.

Diagnostic and differential limits

- A symptom checklist or self-rating cannot establish diagnosis. Any diagnostic discussion must address clinically significant distress/impairment, required course or duration where applicable, developmental and cultural context, substance/medication and medical causes, comorbidity, exclusions, and reasonable differentials without reproducing copyrighted criteria.

Document-specific corrections

- Describe Executive Dysfunction as a contextual, functional, occupational, umbrella, or proposed construct-not a confirmed diagnosis-unless a separately recognized disorder is assessed.
- Where Executive Dysfunction discusses symptoms, add the missing diagnostic frame: clinically meaningful distress/impairment, relevant course or duration, exclusions, developmental and cultural context, substance/medication or medical causes, and plausible differentials.
- Supersede diagnostic-sounding scoring on pages [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 54]: disclose whether each tool is validated or author-created, remove unsupported thresholds, and separate symptom monitoring from diagnosis.
- Replace crisis wording on pages [2] with the current U.S. 988 call/text/chat pathway, 911 or nearest emergency department for immediate danger/medical emergency, and a direction to use verified local services outside the United States.

Measures, scoring, and permissions

- Pages [1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 54] contain named, implied, or author-created screening/rating content; extracted candidate names include: Self-Assessment . These scores are not diagnostic unless the exact instrument, version, validation population, administration, and interpretation are established. Identify provenance for every item set and scoring rule. Obtain publisher permission/license when required; otherwise remove cutoffs and label it as a nonvalidated reflection checklist, or replace it with a properly licensed measure without altering its wording/scoring.

Intervention scope and contraindications

- Use Executive Dysfunction activities as psychoeducation and structured reflection, not diagnosis or a stand-alone treatment plan. Adapt or stop any exercise that worsens distress, functioning, conflict, pain, or dissociation, and escalate care according to the actual presentation.
- ADHD diagnosis requires a full developmental, psychiatric, psychosocial, and cross-setting assessment; a worksheet or rating form alone is insufficient.

Crisis and current resources

- For Executive Dysfunction, use: ·If there is immediate danger or a medical emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department. In the U.S., call or text 988 or use 988lifeline.org for 24/7 crisis support. Outside the U.S., use verified local emergency and crisis services. · Verify all topic-specific agencies and links at publication.

Authoritative references

- <https://www.psychiatry.org/psychiatrists/practice/dsm/updates-to-dsm/updates-to-dsm-5-tr-criteria-text>
- <https://www.psychiatry.org/getmedia/b68a5776-f88c-45c7-9535-fd219d7aa5cb/APA-DSM5TR-Update-September-2025.pdf>
- <https://icd.who.int/browse/2026-01/mms/en>

2026 Clinical Alignment

DSM-5-TR (including Sept. 2025 update) · ICD-11 CDDR / 2026 MMS

- <https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240077263>
- <https://www.samhsa.gov/mental-health/988>
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