

"the full catastrophe"

- to Control Your Electronics So They Don't Control You.
- to Say No When You Have More to Do Than Time to Do It.
- How to Finish What You Start.
- to Turn Toxic Worry into Problem Solving.
- to Stop Fixing Everyone's Problems-Except Your Own.
- to Stop Underachieving at Work.

But when you invest your energy wisely and see to it that energy tank is always full, you become able to feel positive emotion.

is the on-off switch for learning and for peak performance.

your emotional state drives the quality of your focus and thus, the results you can achieve.

Positive emotion, in turn, galvanizes engagement.

must be interested in order to pay close attention.

You must also be motivated. Interest and motivation equal engagement.

develops naturally when you work in your "sweet spot," the overlap of three spheres: what you love to do, what you are very good at doing, and what advances the mission of the group or what someone will pay you to do.

should be some novelty in what you're doing and some room for creative input on your part to hold your attention. Lack of novelty leads to boredom, which leads to loss of focus.

beware, too much novelty and too much creative input will cause you to wander all over and grow confused.

Structure refers to how you shape your day, how you spend your time, what boundaries you create, what rules you follow, which assistants you employ, what filing system you use, what hours you keep, what breaks you take, what priorities you set up, which tasks you take on and which you farm out, what plans you make, and what flexibility you create. Without structure, focus is impossible.

today's world, if you don't take your time, it will be taken from you.

These five elements-energy, emotion, engagement, structure, and control-combine to create a plan that will allow you to perform at your best without feeling frazzled, frantic, and feckless.

It leads you to respond to others in ways you otherwise wouldn't.

Hyper-speed makes it impossible for you to absorb what's new or different.

spent about two hours 1.86 hours, to be exact of every eight hours at work wasting time, 52 percent of which was spent "surfing the Internet." The total bill for the wasted time was \$544 billion, 52 percent of which equals \$282 billion.)

information overload wastes 25 percent of information workers' time, costing the US economy alone \$997 billion annually.

Another more subtle serpent called "multitasking" seduces millions of us into sabotaging our productivity.

As José Ortega y Gasset wrote in a much different time, "Every destiny is dramatic, tragic in its deepest meaning. Whoever has not felt the danger of our times palpating under his hand, has not really penetrated to the vitals of destiny; he has merely pricked its surface." If the surface of our age has grown vaster and more unavoidable than when Ortega wrote in 1930, we all face far greater risk now of only pricking the surface, missing the vitals of life altogether.

The modern danger is that we grow so engrossed with and seduced by what matters so little, busy with and ruled by whatever presses upon us, that we overlook and thereby destroy our most important projects and goals through neglect.

A heightened distractibility and a persistent feeling of being "pushed or in a hurry, even when there's no need to be, combined with a mounting feeling of how superficial your life has become: lots to do, but no depth of thought or feeling.

An inability to sustain lengthy and full attention to a thought, a conversation, an image, a paragraph, a diagram, a sunset-or anything else, even when you try to.

A growing tendency toward impatience, boredom, dissatisfaction, restlessness, irritability, frustration, or frenzy, sometimes approaching panic.

A tendency to hop from task to task, idea to idea, even place to place.

A tendency to make decisions impulsively rather than reflecting and taking time to think them through.

An increasing tendency to avoid thinking altogether, as if it were a luxury you don't have time for.

A tendency to put off difficult work or conversations, coupled with a tendency to overfill your day with feckless busywork.

A tendency to feel overwhelmed, even when, in reality, you're not.

Haunting feelings of guilt about incomplete tasks, coupled with resentment that the tasks were imposed in the first place.

Difficulty in fully enjoying pleasant moments and genuine achievements.

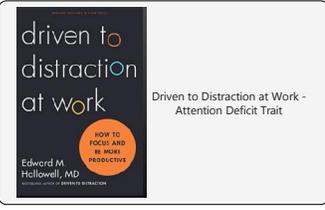
Too often saying to yourself, "I'm working really hard but I'm not getting to where I want to be," both at work and in relationships.

A feeling of loss of control over your own life and a nagging feeling of "What am I missing?"

A recurring thought that "Someday I will make time for what really matters, but I don't have time to do that today."

A growing, compulsive need for frequent electronic "hits," for example, checking e-mails, speaking on your iPhone, sending or receiving texts, Googling random subjects, visiting favorite websites, or playing games, coupled with almost an addict's yen for them when they are unavailable.

A tendency to overcommit, make yourself too available, allow too many interruptions, and say yes too quickly.



Book

**Driven to Distraction at Work**  
by Edward M. Hallowell, MD

Introduction to Attention Deficit Trait - the growing workplace problem

Contents

Part 1 - The six most common distraction at work - and how to overcome them

- Screen Sucking - how to control your electronics so they don't control you.
- Multitasking - how to say no when you have more to do than time to do it
- Idea hopping - how to finish what you start
- Worrying - how to turn toxic worry into problem solving
- Playing the hero - how to stop fixing everyone's problems - except your own
- Dropping the ball - how to stop underachieving at work

Part 2 - Training your attention - how to manage and maintain your ability to focus

- Flexible focus - creating the optimal state for excellence
- Harnessing the power of the body
- Harnessing the power of the mind
- Harnessing the human connection
- Harnessing the power of emotion
- Harnessing the power of structure
- Distracted no More

Key Thoughts

- You can't focus on anything anymore at work, and it's taking its toll on your performance and your sense of well-being.
- we are contending with forces never seen before-and that the modern workplace presents distractions like never before-I also know that any person can learn to modulate distraction and overload well enough to take greater control, while becoming happier, healthier, and more productive in the process.
- this isn't going to let up. If anything, the number of distractions will continue to grow, exponentially.
- manage your time and to-do lists more efficiently, multitask better, be more organized-don't and can't work. They're only Band-Aids. Instead, you have to retrain your attention.
- Even if you can't control your environment, you can learn how to reach a more productive mental state of focus, relying on planning, preparation, and technique instead of the frantic efforts people typically use to control their time and attention.
- "nano-thinking disease,"
- "10% Think Time,"
- Our current problem, the ongoing mental traffic jam-if
- grew out of our most spectacular successes, the amazing inventions that define our era.
- get better at managing our attention and not surrendering it to every distraction.

Attention Deficit Trait

- They come to see me because they've lost their ability to focus on anything; they're always in a rush, bouncing from task to task
- ending the day with a frustrated feeling of neither fulfilling all of their goals nor performing at their best, let alone with equanimity.
- most of these people have a severe case of modern life-what I came to call attention deficit trait, or ADT.
- ADT differs from ADD or ADHD in that it is caused by the context in which it occurs, while true ADD or ADHD are genetic in origin.
- people develop ADT in an effort to cope with the stresses in their lives, and because the symptoms actually help them in the short term, the symptoms are "sticky" and may solidify into firm habits, even when life slows and becomes less stressful.
- "Overloaded Circuits: Why Smart People Underperform."
- ADT originates externally, like a virus. It then penetrates into a person's life via the senses and then the brain. It is brought on by the incessant demands, temptations, and opportunities that hijack our attention, filling our heads with a cacophony of mental noise.
- nothing-the brain loses its ability to attend fully and thoughtfully to anything.
- The average worker suffers a series of minor annoyances, finds memory more of a problem than ever, notices the workday becoming ever more unpredictable but definitely longer, and finds it harder and harder to keep up.
- For most of us, the heat got turned up by the advent of the internet, by the shrinking number of people holding assistant positions, and by the corporate focus on efficiency and productivity, regardless of the human cost.
- the vaporization of attention