

FIND YOUR PEACE



Your guide to creating a life of
mindfulness and stress resilience

Week 3: Clarity

Gain Your Singular Focus

When working on a task, you are more effective when your attention is not split in a hundred directions. Remaining squarely focused is the key.

The same is true for personal interactions. When you are with a person and your mind wanders to the twelve other things you have done or need to get to as soon as this conversation is over, your time with them is being wasted because you cannot hear their words, let alone their meaning. They need to be your singular focus.

Attaining this state is actually a core principle of meditation. When a person meditates and they empty their mind of all things other than their mantra, their breathing, or a particular sound, they are getting to a single focus. This one focus allows them to reduce stress by letting all the other items go.

Holding a singular focus for any length of time is difficult in this chaotic world of constant stimulation. But it is an exercise that you should practice at every opportunity. At work with a focus on your tasks; at home with a focus on your family; and in your life with a focus on your friends and/or hobbies.

This meditative technique is so beneficial in our lives. We just need to practice it to get good at it.

ASSESS YOURSELF

Where is your multi-tasking tipping point?

Some people need to do one thing at a time. They are very focused and intentional about that one item. Others have an attention span that works better when they shift focus more frequently. However, both of these personality types have a tipping point where adding more tasks becomes stressful.

Understanding that you have this break point, and where that is for you, is fundamental to finding and keeping your peace.

To assess your multi-tasking tipping point, you will need to review times when you were multi-tasking with two factors in mind:

1. The number of active tasks you typically manage at once and the success rate of completing each one. Your stress level doesn't just depend on the number of tasks done. Tasks that linger on your to-do list can create mental stress even if the number of tasks on is not large.
2. Understanding your tipping point gives you power to reduce your tasks overall, or to drastically reduce them when you have trouble completing some of them.

Both of these strategies are excellent for keeping your mental clarity.



MANAGE EXPECTATIONS

What you can expect to achieve by connecting

We advise you to develop a mental process where you visualize putting tasks away on your “mental desktop”. This practice is a meditation in itself and can be very useful to gain focus. Keep in mind that the point of it is not the visualization itself. In other words, it doesn't matter that you're visualizing a desktop and putting away items one at a time until they're all gone except one. What does matter is the process of mentally focusing on one task at a time. The visualization you choose is just a tool to help get you there.

This means that you can use any visualization you want. Whatever makes sense for you will be the most effective. Perhaps, see yourself with many flowers in a vase, and removing them one at a time; being in a large lot with many cars and driving away with just one of them.

Again, the point is not the specific meditation you create for yourself, but the process of going through the selection and task isolation process.



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Less Is More

Quantity is not quality but we sometimes act like it is. Do you suffer from this confusion?

In diet, people commonly view a giant plate of food as good before they even taste it. To indicate that a particular food is good, they take very large bites. "My food was great, did you see how much I ate?"

In business, some companies want employees to show up a certain number of hours, as if being present a certain quantity of the day equates to a certain quality of performance.

Socially, people often point to a high

number of social media followers or likes as if this indicates the quality of any of those connections.

Less however, is often more. In diet, you actually taste your food more when you take smaller bites. In business, working longer hours under more stressful conditions can degrade performance. And socially, the number of friends matters less than the depth of the relationship.

Take a moment to think of the times when you can pull back, do less, and get more out of the process.

