



QUIET YOUR TO-DO LIST: DISCOVER YOUR PRIORITIES AMIDST THE NOISE

With Nikki Kinzer, PCC



Take Control ADHD

Agenda

- Setting The Stage
 - Prioritizing Toolbox
 - Intentional Planning
 - Q & A
-

Setting The Stage

How To Approach Prioritizing

It's not about getting more done in the time you have.
It's about doing what's most important with the time you have.

Defintion of Prioritizing

If you are looking at a series of items or tasks, you determine the order of dealing with those tasks according to relative importance.

This is not easy to do when everything feels important and urgent.

What is True?

NOT EVERYTHING IS EQUALLY IMPORTANT.

ADHD & Prioritizing

You can set up a triage system, similar to what you see in an emergency room. Triage is all about defining—for yourself—the clear and simple structure you are going to follow when you are making the decisions about what to do, and in what order to do it.

Executive Functions

- Organization means having the ability to arrange tasks in a logical order, based on priority and deadlines.
- Planning means you can develop a strategy for completing tasks, including determining what needs to be done first, and estimating the time required for each task.

All or Nothing Mentality

This can impact how you approach and manage your to-do list.
This can often lead to avoidance.

The Emotional Component

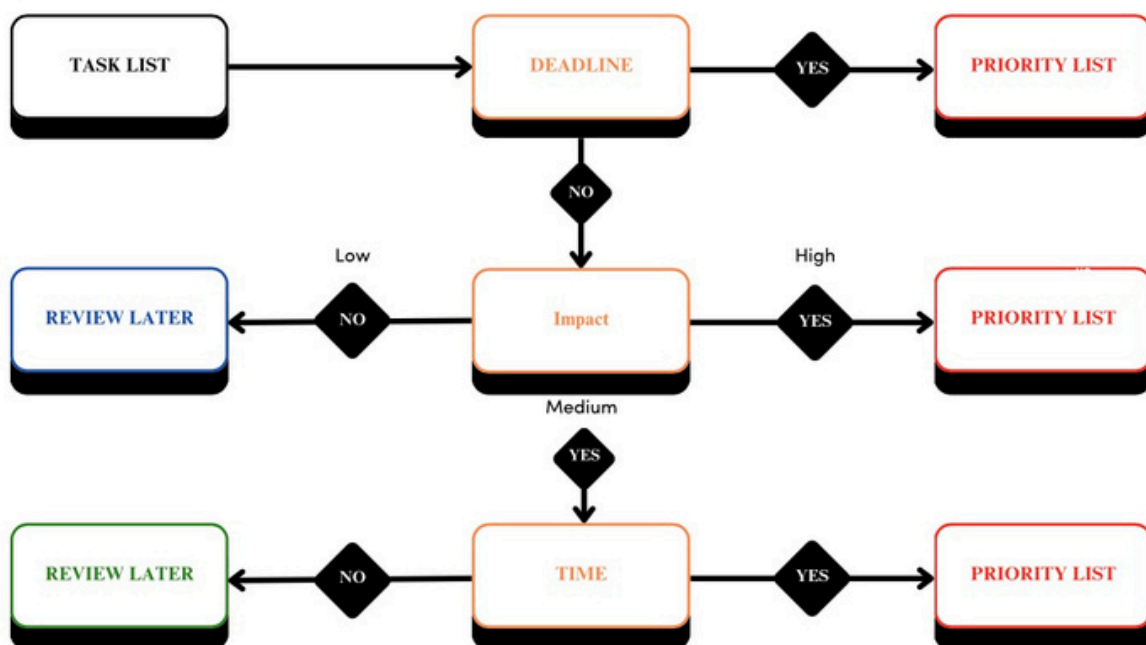
- Shame - “Something is wrong with me.”
- Guilt - Felt about what is not being done.
- Embarrassment - Impact on yourself and other people.
- Fear - Not being good enough, being fired, not being liked, etc.

Prioritizing Toolbox

Mindset

- Prioritize when you feel your best
- Do something fun first
- Breathing exercise
- Awareness—what to expect

The Priority Checklist



The Priority Checklist

There are three qualifiers to consider when prioritizing using the ADHD Priority Checklist:

DEADLINE

- The first, and easiest way, to determine the importance of a task is the Deadline. A valid deadline is a task that is due this week. If it is due this week, the task will be moved onto your weekly Priority List.
 - Tasks with no deadline, or with deadlines more than two weeks out, move on to Impact.

IMPACT

- Next, consider the task's Impact on yourself and others. Consider both negative and positive consequences; the more at stake, the higher the impact.
 - High-Impact tasks are moved to the Priority List.
 - Medium-Impact tasks move on to Time.
 - Low-Impact tasks move to Review Later.

TIME

- Review the calendar to see how much time is available to work on the tasks from the Priority List. You may need to adjust your schedule to fit in the most important work.
 - Intentionally plan what day you will be working on each task.
 - This is only a placeholder. It may change as the week goes by.

The ADHD Time Zone is messy, confusing, and inconsistent.

- Tasks take longer than we expect and there is often this magical thinking that happens where we think we can do more than we can.
- Doing this exercise of reviewing the calendar with your task list will help you see what time is really available.
- Most likely, you will need to decrease expectations and make adjustments.



The Priority Checklist

Example To-Do List

Review each task and assign a Deadline and Impact to the task.

Task	Deadline	Impact
Text Michael to reschedule appointment for next week	Thursday	High
Prep for team meeting	Wednesday	High
Create slides for presentation	2 Weeks Out	Medium-Low
Finish client notes	No Deadline	High
Create rough draft of newsletter	Thursday	High
Outline podcast show	Wednesday	High
Research podcast guests	No Deadline	Medium
Make reservations for birthday dinner	Friday	High
Buy birthday present	Next Monday	Low
Clean up desk area	No Deadline	Medium

Review Calendar

Review the open space on the calendar.

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:00 AM	GPS Planning Sessions			GPS Planning Sessions	
8:30 AM					
9:00 AM		Client Meeting	Podcast Recording		Client Meeting
9:30 AM					
10:00 AM	Body Doubling	Client Meeting	Team Meeting	Body Doubling	Client Meeting
10:30 AM					
11:00 AM		Client Meeting			Client Meeting
11:30 AM					
12:00 PM					
12:30 PM					
1:00 PM			Client Meeting		
1:30 PM					
2:00 PM	Client Meeting		Client Meeting		
2:30 PM					
3:00 PM	Client Meeting		Client Meeting		
3:30 PM					
4:00 PM	Client Meeting	GPS Workshop			
4:30 PM					

In addition to considering the Deadline, Impact, and Time, we also consider Effort.



Intentional Planning

Updated To-Do List

- Finish client notes
- Text Michael to reschedule appointment for next week
- Make reservations for birthday dinner
- Prep for team meeting
- Outline podcast show
- Create rough draft of newsletter
- Research podcast guests
- Clean up desk area
- Create slides for presentation
- Buy birthday present

Reviewing Potential Time Blocks

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:00 AM	GPS Planning Sessions			GPS Planning Sessions	
8:30 AM					
9:00 AM		Client Meeting	Podcast Recording		Client Meeting
9:30 AM					
10:00 AM	Body Doubling	Client Meeting	Team Meeting	Body Doubling	Client Meeting
10:30 AM	Finish Client Notes				
11:00 AM	Text Michael	Client Meeting			Client Meeting
11:30 AM	Make Reservations				
12:00 PM					
12:30 PM					
1:00 PM			Client Meeting		
1:30 PM		Prep Team Meeting		Research Guests	
2:00 PM	Client Meeting	Outline Podcast	Client Meeting	Clean up Desk	
2:30 PM		Newsletter		Create Slide Deck	
3:00 PM	Client Meeting		Client Meeting		
3:30 PM					
4:00 PM	Client Meeting	GPS Workshop			
4:30 PM					

You can choose to include tasks on your calendar, or just block time for them. Try one week with tasks and one week without to see what works best. It's fine to mix both methods; some tasks may be better on your calendar, while others can stay on your weekly list.

Time Block Example

	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY
8:00 AM	GPS Planning Sessions			GPS Planning Sessions	
8:30 AM					
9:00 AM		Client Meeting	Podcast Recording		Client Meeting
9:30 AM					
10:00 AM	Body Doubling	Client Meeting	Team Meeting	Body Doubling	Client Meeting
10:30 AM	Finish Client Notes				
11:00 AM	Body Doubling	Client Meeting	Finish Newsletter	Body Doubling	Client Meeting
11:30 AM					
12:00 PM					
12:30 PM					
1:00 PM		Start newsletter	Client Meeting		
1:30 PM		Admin Time Block		Admin Time Block	
2:00 PM	Client Meeting		Client Meeting		
2:30 PM					
3:00 PM	Client Meeting		Client Meeting		
3:30 PM					
4:00 PM	Client Meeting	GPS Workshop			
4:30 PM					

Intentional Planning

What You Need to Know About Intentional Planning

- Not everything on your task list needs to be time blocked.
- The intention is to work on the task, not necessarily to finish it.
- If you don't finish the task, schedule another time block.
- When time blocking, we are predicting the future and making decisions based on what we know right now.
- Expect that your day and your priorities will shift.
- Consider time blocks as placeholders.
- If the work does not happen, it doesn't mean the time blocking doesn't work for you or that you did anything wrong.

Other Strategies & Tips

The Priority Checklist is a great place to start breaking down what is on your to-do list, but it doesn't stop there. Here are a few extra tips to keep in mind when prioritizing:

Just Because It Is New, Doesn't Mean It Is A Priority

Pause before responding to that email or text message. Where does this new task fit in with the day's other priorities? Someone else's emergency may not be your emergency. Set boundaries around your time to ensure you fit in what is most important to you.

Other Strategies & Tips

Prioritize One Task at a Time

Compare two tasks at a time. This makes deciding which task is more important easier, reducing the overwhelm of assessing your entire list.

Break Your Projects Down Into Action Steps

If the task is too broad, and you are unsure of the next step, break the project down. Use a verb to describe the task. This will make it easier to prioritize against other tasks.

Lower Your Expectations

This is the hard truth: your expectations may be too high, time is limited, and there is not enough time in the day to get everything done. This is not a limiting belief, and it's not your fault. It's a limiting belief to think you can do everything.

Set Clear Boundaries

When you say yes to something, you are saying no to something else. Practice the power of the pause and give yourself time before taking on new projects and obligations.

Set Your Priorities and Close Your List

It's common to second-guess your choices and get distracted by a long to-do list. After identifying your top three priorities for the day, write them down separately, close your task manager, and focus on your work. This will help you concentrate on what needs to be done.

Talk it Out

Many ADHDer's are verbal processors. It helps to organize your thoughts and process the three qualifiers to your tasks. If needed, ask for clarification and a second opinion to ensure you are working on the right things.

Thank You!

We hope you enjoyed the presentation. It is our mission to consistently provide valuable content and services to the ADHD community. If you are looking for other tools or services to add to your ADHD Toolbox, take a look below at the other services we offer at Take Control ADHD.

Thank you for your time and attention,
-Nikki Kinzer & The TCA Team

TAKE CONTROL ADHD SERVICES

Unapologetically ADHD: A Step-By-Step Framework For Everyday Planning On Your Terms by Nikki Kinzer and Pete Wright

This book helps readers plan for projects and tasks, providing a flexible, step-by-step outline for success. Pete Wright shares firsthand experiences living with ADHD, delving into the emotions and practical challenges and demonstrating how Nikki's strategies can be applied in real-life situations.

Coaching Services

If you are looking for more direct support, we encourage you to reach out to learn more about one-on-one ADHD coaching. We offer individual coaching for adults and college students.

Taking Control: The ADHD Podcast

Launched in 2010, the podcast has become a valuable resource for people living with ADHD. Each week, Nikki Kinzer and Pete Wright strive to help listeners with support, life management strategies, and time and technology tips. The show is dedicated to anyone looking to Take Control of their lives in the face of ADHD.



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GPS Membership

Guided Planning Sessions

GPS is a monthly membership program offered at Take Control ADHD. It provides a place where you can learn how to plan with ADHD, with a clear step-by-step process that allows you to have the space and time to build your system with the support of ADHD Coach, Nikki Kinzer, and other members of the GPS community.

GPS Benefits

- Up to 6 Weekly Working Sessions to practice planning.
- 6 Weekly Q&A / Body Double Work Sessions to get your questions answered and to work on those avoided tasks.
- GPS Member Website filled with on-demand learning, including videos, articles, and worksheets.
- Live, Monthly Workshops, including a Quarterly Planning Session and other relevant planning topics.
- Invitation to all TCA events, including Coaching with Nikki and Coffee with Pete each month.

GPS Enrollment is ONLY Open 3 Times a Year.

Head over to the [GPS page](#) on our website and add your name to our wait list. We will contact you as soon as the next enrollment is open.

Questions?

Contact Us: info@takecontroladhd.com