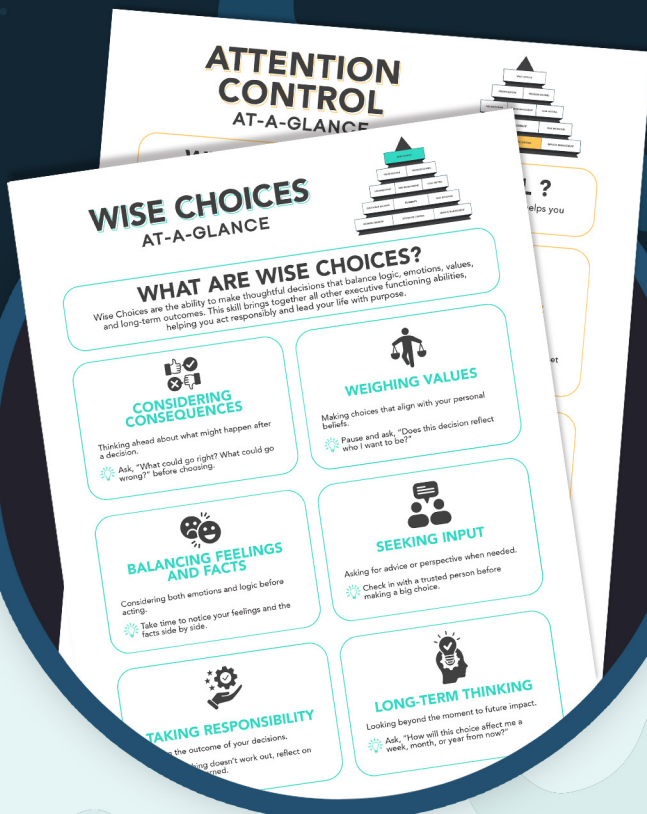


EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

AT-A-GLANCE



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INTRODUCTION

Welcome to ***Executive Functioning at a Glance***, a comprehensive guide designed to help you understand and develop the essential skills that make up executive functioning.

Whether you're a teacher, parent, or counselor, this resource is here to support you in strengthening these critical abilities in yourself and others.

What is Executive Functioning?

Executive functioning is often described as the brain's "management system." It includes the set of mental processes that allow you to plan, focus, remember, regulate, and achieve goals. These skills guide behavior and decision-making in daily life, supporting both academic and personal success.

Strong executive functioning helps individuals stay organized, manage their time, control impulses, and adapt to challenges. Just as an air traffic control system directs planes safely in and out of an airport, executive functioning allows us to coordinate thoughts, emotions, and actions to reach our goals effectively.

What's Covered in This Resource?

This resource breaks down executive functioning into a structured, easy-to-follow pyramid format, guiding you through the development of 12 key skills:

- ▶ **Level 1:** Foundation – Builds the core regulation skills of Working Memory, Attention Control, and Impulse Management
- ▶ **Level 2:** Self-Management – Strengthens your ability to regulate thoughts and behavior through Emotional Balance, Flexibility, and Task Initiation.
- ▶ **Level 3:** Planning & Organization – Helps you manage tasks, materials, and responsibilities with Organization, Time Management, and Goal Setting.
- ▶ **Level 4:** Critical Thinking – Applies skills to challenges with Prioritization and Problem Solving.
- ▶ **Level 5:** Responsible Decision-Making – Brings all the skills together through Wise Choices, enabling independence, resilience, and values-driven action.

Each section includes clear definitions, practical sub-skills, and action steps you can apply immediately to build stronger executive functioning in everyday life.

HOW TO USE THIS RESOURCE

- ▶ **Personal Growth Seekers:** Discover how to strengthen your executive functioning skills to improve focus, productivity, and personal success.
- ▶ **Teachers:** Use these tools to help students develop stronger organization, planning, and self-control—skills that directly improve learning outcomes and classroom behavior.
- ▶ **Parents:** Support your children in building independence by practicing these skills at home. Everyday routines—like chores, homework, and family responsibilities—are perfect opportunities for modeling and reinforcing executive functioning.
- ▶ **Counselors:** Incorporate these strategies into sessions to help students or clients strengthen their ability to manage stress, regulate emotions, and follow through on goals.

This guide is designed to be flexible and practical. You can work through the pyramid step by step, use one skill as a focus for a week or month, or select the skills that best fit your current needs.

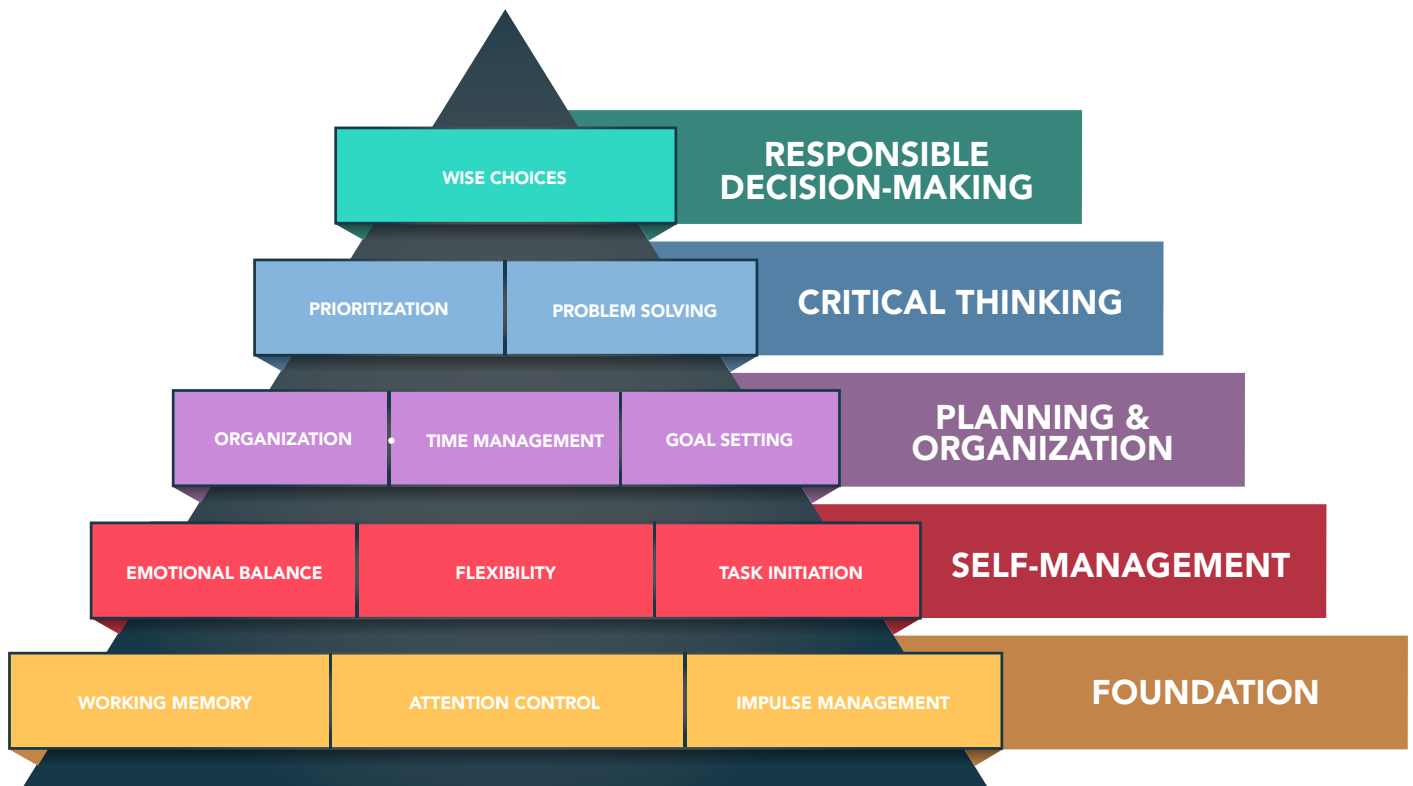
Suggestions for Use:

- ▶ **Individual Learning:** Take time to explore each section, reflect on the action steps, and practice applying them in your daily life.
- ▶ **Classroom or Group Settings:** Introduce the pyramid level by level, using activities and discussions to help students develop each skill progressively.
- ▶ **One-on-One Coaching or Counseling:** Select the most relevant skill for the person you are working with and use the sub-skills as discussion points or practice strategies.

By using this resource, you'll gain a deeper understanding of executive functioning and how it impacts success at school, work, and home. Whether you are building your own skills or helping others, this guide provides a clear, practical path for developing independence, resilience, and confidence.

THE EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING PYRAMID

The Executive Functioning Pyramid is a structured framework for developing executive functioning skills. It begins with core regulation skills and builds step by step toward advanced problem-solving and independence. The pyramid ensures that the skills developed at the base provide the support needed for more complex abilities at the top.



LEVEL 1: FOUNDATION – Core Regulation Skills

At the base of the pyramid are Working Memory, Attention Control, and Impulse Management. These skills allow you to hold information, stay focused, and manage your reactions. Without them, higher-level executive functioning cannot take shape.

Working Memory helps you retain and use information in the moment.

Attention Control keeps you focused and blocks distractions.

Impulse Management allows you to pause, think, and choose appropriate actions.

These skills form the groundwork for all other levels of executive functioning.

LEVEL 2: SELF-MANAGEMENT – Emotional & Behavioral Regulation

The second level focuses on Emotional Balance, Flexibility, and Task Initiation. These skills strengthen your ability to manage emotions, adapt to change, and begin tasks with less resistance.

Emotional Balance keeps your feelings regulated so you can think clearly.

Flexibility allows you to shift strategies and handle change smoothly.

Task Initiation gives you the push to get started, reducing procrastination.

Together, these skills build self-discipline and resilience.

LEVEL 3: PLANNING & ORGANIZATION – Managing Tasks & Time

The third level emphasizes Organization, Time Management, and Goal Setting. These skills help you stay on top of responsibilities, use your time wisely, and create clear paths to achievement.

Organization ensures your materials and environment are orderly.

Time Management allows you to plan and prioritize effectively.

Goal Setting gives direction, motivation, and structure for long-term success.

These abilities are essential for academic performance, productivity, and independence.

LEVEL 4: CRITICAL THINKING – Applying Skills to Challenges

The fourth level focuses on Prioritization and Problem Solving. These skills help you think critically, weigh options, and choose effective strategies for overcoming obstacles.

Prioritization means knowing what matters most and focusing your energy accordingly.

Problem Solving means analyzing challenges, generating solutions, and following through on the best option.

These abilities allow you to apply your foundational and organizational skills to real-world challenges.

LEVEL 5: RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING – Leading with Purpose

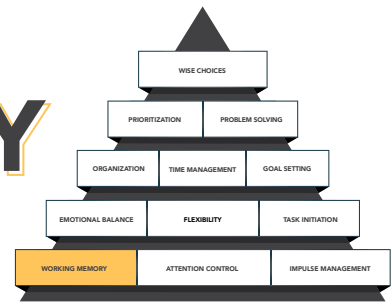
At the top of the pyramid is Wise Choices. This represents the highest level of executive functioning, where all other skills come together.

Wise Choices require balancing logic, emotions, values, and long-term outcomes. They help you make thoughtful decisions, build independence, and take responsibility for results.

By progressing through the pyramid, you ensure that each new skill is supported by a strong foundation. The result is the ability to manage responsibilities, adapt to challenges, and succeed in school, work, and life.

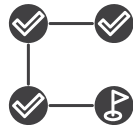
WORKING MEMORY

AT-A-GLANCE



WHAT IS WORKING MEMORY?

Working Memory is the ability to hold and use information in your mind while completing a task. It helps you follow directions, solve problems, and connect ideas without losing track of important details.



REMEMBERING STEPS

Holding multi-step directions in your mind.

 Pause and repeat instructions back before starting a task.



CHUNKING INFORMATION

Breaking large amounts of information into smaller, manageable pieces.

 Group a phone number into three parts to make it easier to recall.



MENTAL MATH

Solving problems in your head without written support.

 Practice adding or subtracting small numbers in your mind during the day.



NOTE-TAKING SUPPORT

Using quick notes to reduce memory load.

 Write down keywords during lessons or while reading to help recall later.



VISUALIZATION

Creating a mental image of information to hold it longer.

 Picture your to-do list by imagining each task as a scene.



SELF-CHECKING

Reviewing information to confirm accuracy.

 Pause after finishing a task to double-check that directions were followed correctly.

WORKING MEMORY

DISCOVERY GUIDE

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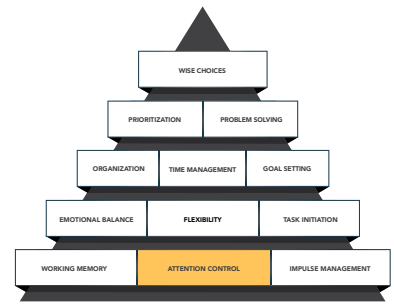
DATE: _____

Think about a time when you were given multi-step directions. How many steps did you remember correctly? What helped you hold onto the information?

On a scale of 1–10, how strong do you think your working memory is right now? Write down one area where it helps you succeed and one area where you'd like to improve.

Make a short list of three everyday strategies you could use to strengthen your working memory (for example, visualization, note-taking, or repeating instructions). Choose one to practice this week.

ATTENTION CONTROL AT-A-GLANCE



WHAT IS ATTENTION CONTROL ?

Attention Control is the ability to focus on what matters and ignore distractions. It helps you stay on task, listen carefully, and complete activities with accuracy.



FOCUSED LISTENING

Paying full attention when someone is speaking.

 Maintain eye contact and repeat back one key point after listening.



SELECTIVE FOCUS

Choosing what to pay attention to while blocking out distractions.

 During homework, turn off devices and set a timer for 15 minutes of focused work.



SHIFTING ATTENTION

Moving your focus smoothly from one task to another.

 When you finish a task, take a deep breath before starting the next one.



SUSTAINED FOCUS

Keeping your attention on a task for an extended period.

 Challenge yourself to read for 10 uninterrupted minutes and gradually increase the time.



NOTICING DISTRACTIONS

Recognizing when your mind starts to wander.

 When you catch yourself drifting, gently bring your focus back to the task.



ATTENTION BREAKS

Taking short pauses to refresh your focus.

 Stand up and stretch for one minute between tasks to reset your concentration.

ATTENTION CONTROL

DISCOVERY GUIDE

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Think about a time you were distracted while working. What pulled your attention away? What could you do differently next time to stay focused?

Imagine you're studying for a big test. Create a short plan with three specific strategies to help you stay focused.

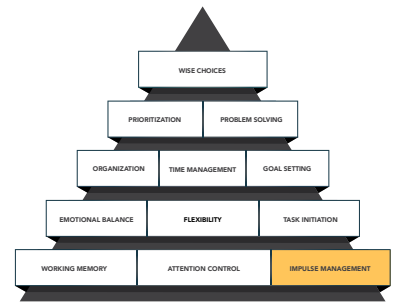
Circle which setting is hardest for you to stay focused in:

- Classroom
- Homework time
- Conversations
- Other: _____

Explain why it's challenging and one way you could improve.

IMPULSE MANAGEMENT

AT-A-GLANCE



WHAT IS IMPULSE MANAGEMENT?

Impulse Management is the ability to pause and think before acting. It helps you make choices that are thoughtful instead of reacting too quickly in the moment.



PAUSE AND THINK

Stopping to consider options before responding.



Count to three silently before you answer or act.



RESISTING URGES

Holding back from doing something that may not be helpful.



Take a deep breath when you feel the urge to interrupt or grab something.



MANAGING EMOTIONS

Keeping strong feelings from taking over your response.



Name your emotion before you decide how to act on it.



CHOOSING WORDS WISELY

Thinking before speaking to avoid hurtful comments.



Ask yourself, "Is it kind? Is it necessary?" before talking.



CONTROLLING REACTIONS

Avoiding quick outbursts in tough situations.



When you feel upset, walk away for a minute before responding.



DELAYING GRATIFICATION

Waiting for a reward instead of giving in right away.



Set a small goal (like finishing homework) before enjoying a fun activity.

IMPULSE MANAGEMENT

DISCOVERY GUIDE

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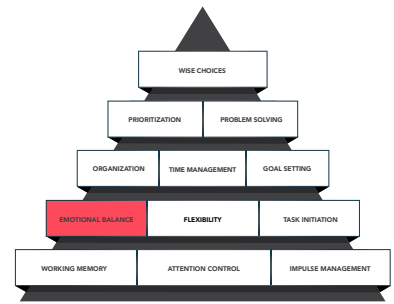
Think about a time when you reacted too quickly and wished you hadn't. What would you do differently if you had paused first?

Rate yourself: On a scale of 1–10, how often do you stop and think before acting? What's one situation where you'd like to improve this?

Imagine you really want to say something during class, but it's not your turn. Write down two strategies you could use to hold back until it's the right time.

EMOTIONAL BALANCE

AT-A-GLANCE



WHAT IS EMOTIONAL BALANCE?

Emotional Balance is the ability to manage your feelings so they don't take over your thoughts or actions. It helps you stay calm, think clearly, and respond in positive ways.



STAYING CALM

Keeping steady when emotions run high.

 Take five slow breaths before reacting in a stressful moment.



NAMING FEELINGS

Recognizing and labeling your emotions.

 Say out loud, "I feel angry" or "I feel proud" to clarify.



HEALTHY OUTLETS

Finding safe ways to release emotions.

 Go for a walk, draw, or write when you feel upset.



POSITIVE SELF-TALK

Using encouraging words to shift your mindset.

 Say, "I can handle this" when challenges arise.



BALANCED REACTIONS

Choosing responses that match the situation.

 Ask yourself, "Is my reaction too big, too small, or just right?"



STRESS RECOVERY

Bouncing back after feeling overwhelmed.

 Do something relaxing (music, stretching, reading) to reset your emotions.

EMOTIONAL BALANCE

DISCOVERY GUIDE

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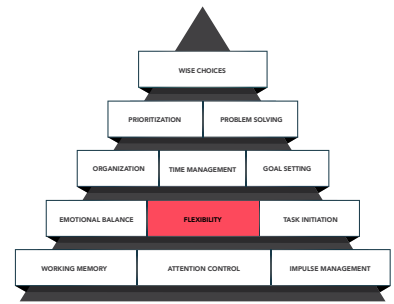
Draw a simple "emotion thermometer" with 5 levels (Calm, Irritated, Frustrated, Angry, Explosive). Mark where you were today and write one strategy you used (or could use) to bring yourself down a level.

Imagine you are feeling very nervous before giving a presentation. Write a short script of what positive self-talk you could say to yourself.

Complete this sentence three different ways:
"When I feel overwhelmed, one thing that helps me calm down is ____."

FLEXIBILITY

AT-A-GLANCE



WHAT IS FLEXIBILITY?

Flexibility is the ability to adapt when plans change or things don't go as expected. It helps you stay positive, open-minded, and ready to try new approaches.



OPEN-MINDEDNESS

Being willing to see ideas from different angles.

 Ask yourself, "What's another way to look at this?"



ADAPTING PLANS

Changing course when things don't go as planned.

 If something is canceled, think of two other fun options.



EMOTIONAL ADJUSTMENT

Managing feelings when unexpected changes happen.

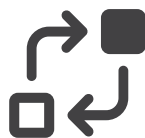
 Pause and take a deep breath when routines shift suddenly.



CREATIVE PROBLEM-SOLVING

Finding new ways to handle challenges.

 Brainstorm three possible solutions before choosing one.



LEARNING FROM CHANGE

Using past experiences to face new situations better.

 Think back on a tough change and note what you learned.



POSITIVE OUTLOOK

Focusing on opportunities instead of setbacks.

 Say, "This could be a chance to try something new."

FLEXIBILITY

DISCOVERY GUIDE

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DATE: _____

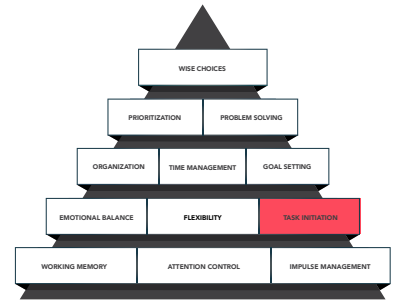
Imagine your favorite activity was canceled today. Write down three new things you could do instead, ranking them from most to least enjoyable.

Think of a time when you had to adjust your plans quickly. What did you do? On reflection, what would you keep the same and what would you change next time?

Circle one: **School / Home / With Friends**. Which of these places is hardest for you to stay flexible? Explain why, and give one idea for how you could improve in that setting.

TASK INITIATION

AT-A-GLANCE



WHAT IS TASK INITIATION?

Task Initiation is the ability to start a job or assignment without unnecessary delay. It helps you overcome procrastination, use your time wisely, and get things done on schedule.



GETTING STARTED

Beginning a task even if you don't feel like it.

 Tell yourself, "Just do the first step," and begin right away.



BREAKING IT DOWN

Turning a big job into smaller, manageable parts.

 Write down three small steps to make starting less overwhelming.



CREATING ROUTINES

Using habits to reduce the need for willpower.

 Pick a set time each day to begin homework or chores.



OVERCOMING PROCRASTINATION

Noticing when you're putting things off and taking action.

 Set a five-minute timer and commit to working until it rings..



USING CUES

Relying on reminders and triggers to prompt action.

 Place your book on the desk as a signal to start reading.



BUILDING MOMENTUM

Using small wins to keep going.

 Celebrate after completing the first step to motivate yourself.

TASK INITIATION

DISCOVERY GUIDE

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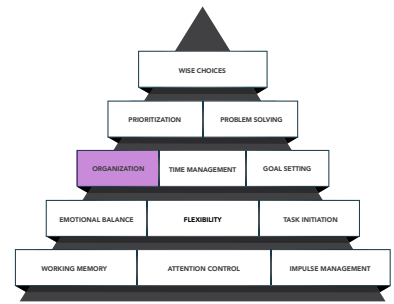
Make a quick "Before and After" T-chart. On the left, write excuses you've used to delay starting something. On the right, write one positive action you could take instead.

Fill in the blank: *If I gave myself only ____ minutes to start a task, I could get it done faster because...*

Think of a task you need to do this week. Write a mini action plan with three small steps you'll take to get started, and circle the first one you'll do today.

ORGANIZATION

AT-A-GLANCE



WHAT IS ORGANIZATION?

Organization is the ability to keep your materials, space, and information in order. It helps you stay prepared, find what you need, and reduce stress when managing responsibilities.



ORGANIZING MATERIALS

Keeping belongings neat and easy to find.

 Put school supplies back in the same spot every day.



ORGANIZING SPACE

Creating a clean and functional environment.

 Clear your desk at the end of each day to reset.



ORGANIZING TIME

Structuring your schedule effectively.

 Write down important dates in a planner or calendar.



ORGANIZING INFORMATION

Sorting ideas and tasks so they make sense.

 Use color-coded folders for different subjects or projects.



PLANNING AHEAD

Preparing what you need before starting.

 Pack your bag or set out clothes the night before.



TRACKING PROGRESS

Keeping up with ongoing responsibilities.

 Check off tasks on a list as you complete them.

ORGANIZATION

DISCOVERY GUIDE

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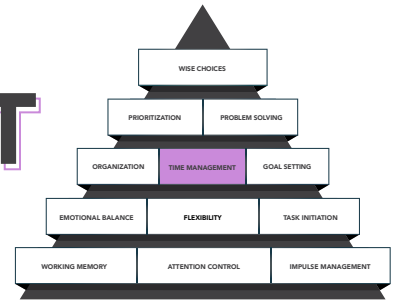
Make a quick sketch of your backpack, desk, or room. Circle one area that often feels messy and write one simple change to organize it better.

Rate yourself: On a scale of 1–10, how organized do you feel right now? What's one area where you'd like to move up by 2 points?

Think of a time when being disorganized caused you stress. Write a short "cause and effect" sentence about what happened and how being organized could have helped.

TIME MANAGEMENT

AT-A-GLANCE



WHAT IS TIME MANAGEMENT?

Time Management is the ability to use your time wisely so tasks get completed on schedule. It helps you prioritize, avoid last-minute stress, and balance responsibilities with free time.



PRIORITIZING TASKS

Deciding what needs to be done first.

 Choose your top three tasks each morning and start with #1.



USING TIMERS

Breaking work into focused sessions.

 Set a 20-minute timer, then take a short break.



PLANNING THE DAY

Making a schedule to guide your time.

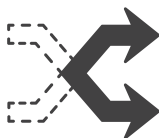
 Write out a daily to-do list with deadlines.



AVOIDING PROCRASTINATION

Finishing tasks early instead of waiting.

 Start with the hardest task first to get it out of the way.



MANAGING TRANSITIONS

Shifting smoothly from one task to another.

 Set a 2-minute “wrap-up” alarm to help you move on.



BALANCING TIME

Making room for both work and rest.

 Plan one enjoyable activity after responsibilities are complete.

TIME MANAGEMENT

DISCOVERY GUIDE

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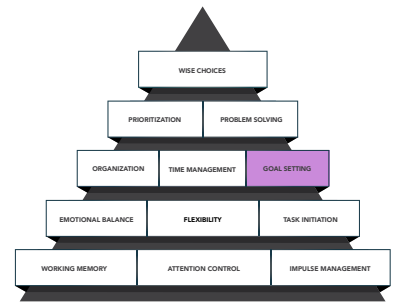
Create a mini schedule for tomorrow with at least three things you need to do.
Assign a start and end time for each.

On a scale of 1–10, how often do you run out of time on schoolwork or chores? What's one strategy that could move you closer to 10?

Fill in the blank: *If I had an extra 30 minutes each day, I would spend it on _____ because...*

GOAL SETTING

AT-A-GLANCE



WHAT IS GOAL SETTING?

Goal Setting is the ability to choose clear, realistic goals and work toward them step by step. It helps you stay motivated, track progress, and achieve what matters most.



DEFINING GOALS

Choosing specific, measurable outcomes.

 Write down one clear goal you want to reach this month.



BREAKING GOALS DOWN

Dividing a big goal into smaller steps.

 List three mini-tasks that move you closer to your goal.



SETTING DEADLINES

Choosing when goals will be completed.

 Mark the finish date on your calendar.



STAYING MOTIVATED

Finding reasons to keep working toward goals.

 Write down one reason why this goal matters to you.



TRACKING PROGRESS

Measuring how far you've come.

 Use a chart, journal, or app to record your progress.



CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Acknowledging effort and achievement.

 Reward yourself after completing each small milestone.

GOAL SETTING

DISCOVERY GUIDE

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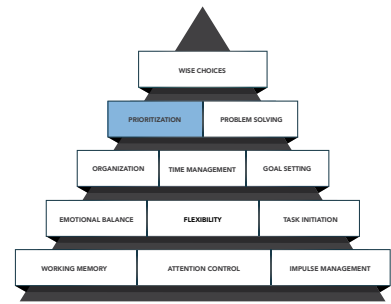
Write down one short-term goal and one long-term goal. Underneath, list the first step you'll take for each.

Think of a time when you set a goal but didn't reach it. What made it hard? Write one thing you'd try differently next time.

Imagine your future self one year from now. Write a short "letter to yourself" celebrating something you accomplished because you stuck with your goals.

PRIORITIZATION

AT-A-GLANCE



WHAT IS PRIORITIZATION?

Prioritization is the ability to decide what is most important and focus your energy there first. It helps you manage responsibilities, reduce stress, and reach goals efficiently.



RANKING TASKS

Ordering tasks from most important to least important.

 Write a list and number items in the order they should be done.



IDENTIFYING DEADLINES

Knowing which tasks are urgent and time-sensitive.

 Check due dates and highlight the ones that come first.



BALANCING IMPORTANCE

Considering both urgency and long-term value.

 Ask yourself: "Does this matter now, later, or both?"



ELIMINATING EXTRAS

Recognizing tasks that can be skipped or delayed.

 Cross off one non-essential item from your to-do list today.



MAKING TRADE-OFFS

Choosing one task over another when time is limited.

 Say, "I'll finish this first, and come back to that after."



USING CHECKLISTS

Tracking tasks to stay on target.

 Check off each item as you finish to keep motivated.

PRIORITIZATION

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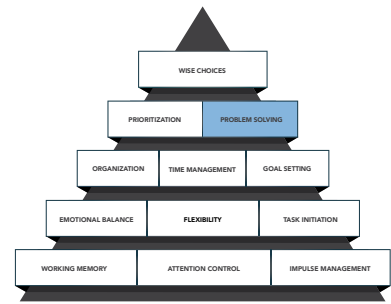
Create a "Top 3" list for today. Write the three most important tasks you need to complete, in order.

Imagine you only had one free hour to finish three assignments. How would you decide which one to do first? Explain your choice.

Fill in the blank: *If I focused on the most important task first every day, my life would feel _____.*

PROBLEM SOLVING

AT-A-GLANCE



WHAT IS PROBLEM SOLVING?

Problem Solving is the ability to analyze challenges, generate solutions, and choose the best option. It helps you work through obstacles calmly and effectively.



IDENTIFYING THE PROBLEM

Defining the issue clearly before acting.



Write the problem in one sentence to make it clear.



BRAINSTORMING OPTIONS

Coming up with multiple possible solutions.



List at least three ideas, no matter how small or creative.



WEIGHING PROS AND CONS

Looking at the benefits and drawbacks of each option.



Make a T-chart of "pluses" and "minuses" for your ideas.



CHOOSING SOLUTIONS

Selecting the option that works best.



Ask: "Which choice fits my values and the situation?"



TAKING ACTION

Putting your solution into practice.



Pick your plan and try it out right away.



REFLECTING AND ADJUSTING

Reviewing the outcome to learn for next time.



Ask: "Did it work? What could I do differently?"

PROBLEM SOLVING

DISCOVERY GUIDE

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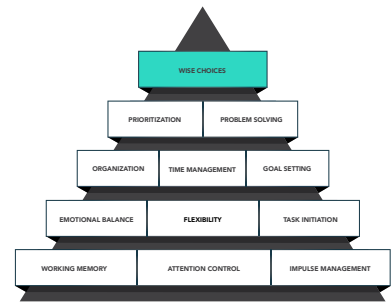
Think of a small problem you faced this week (like forgetting something or getting stuck). Write out the steps you took to solve it — or what you could have done differently.

Draw a comic strip (3 boxes) that shows a character facing a problem, thinking of solutions, and picking the best one.

Complete this sentence three ways: *When I face a challenge, I can...*

WISE CHOICES

AT-A-GLANCE



WHAT ARE WISE CHOICES?

Wise Choices are the ability to make thoughtful decisions that balance logic, emotions, values, and long-term outcomes. This skill brings together all other executive functioning abilities, helping you act responsibly and lead your life with purpose.



CONSIDERING CONSEQUENCES

Thinking ahead about what might happen after a decision.

 Ask, "What could go right? What could go wrong?" before choosing.



WEIGHING VALUES

Making choices that align with your personal beliefs.

 Pause and ask, "Does this decision reflect who I want to be?"



BALANCING FEELINGS AND FACTS

Considering both emotions and logic before acting.

 Take time to notice your feelings and the facts side by side.



SEEKING INPUT

Asking for advice or perspective when needed.

 Check in with a trusted person before making a big choice.



TAKING RESPONSIBILITY

Owning the outcome of your decisions.

 If something doesn't work out, reflect on what you learned.



LONG-TERM THINKING

Looking beyond the moment to future impact.

 Ask, "How will this choice affect me a week, month, or year from now?"

WISE CHOICES

DISCOVERY GUIDE

NAME: _____

DATE: _____

Imagine two friends invite you to do different activities at the same time. Write out how you would decide what to do, step by step.

Fill in the blanks: A wise choice is one that makes me feel _____, helps others by _____, and fits my future goals because _____.

Rate yourself: On a scale of 1–10, how often do you think ahead before making choices? What's one situation where you'd like to improve your score?

THE EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING PYRAMID



EXPANSION PACKS

LEVEL 1: FOUNDATION

WORKING MEMORY

Discussion Starters

1. What makes some information easier to remember than other information?
2. How can practicing “repeating back directions” help in daily life?
3. What’s one memory trick you’ve seen a friend or teacher use?

Mini-Projects

1. **Memory Match** – Have someone show you 8 objects. Hide them and write down as many as you remember.
2. **Step Builder** – Try remembering a growing set of steps (start with 2, add 1 each round).
3. **Daily Recap** – Before bed, write down 3 things you remember clearly from your day.

Scenario Journal Prompt

Your teacher gives you directions for a 4-step project. You only remember the first two steps. What could you do in the moment to handle it?

ATTENTION CONTROL

Discussion Starters

1. Why is it important to notice when your attention drifts away?
2. How do breaks actually help you focus better?
3. What’s the hardest situation for you to stay focused in?

Mini-Projects

1. **Distraction Jar** – Each time you catch yourself distracted, jot it down on a slip of paper. Review what pulls your attention most.
2. **Focus Sprint** – Work for 10 minutes straight without distractions. Track how often your mind wandered.
3. **Listening Test** – Have a partner tell a short story. Repeat it back with at least 3 details.

Scenario Journal Prompt

You’re trying to do homework, but your phone keeps buzzing. What strategies could you use to stay on task without getting distracted?

IMPULSE MANAGEMENT

Discussion Starters

1. Why do people sometimes say things they regret?
2. How can stopping to breathe change what happens next?
3. What's a situation where acting quickly is actually good?

Mini-Projects

1. **Pause Practice** – Each time you want to interrupt, silently count to 3 first.
2. **Choice Chart** – Write two different ways you could respond in a tough situation—one impulsive and one thoughtful.
3. **Gratification Test** – Give yourself a small reward only after finishing a task.

Scenario Journal Prompt

A friend teases you and you want to snap back right away. What could you do instead to keep control of your words?

LEVEL 2: SELF-MANAGEMENT

EMOTIONAL BALANCE

Discussion Starters

1. Why is naming your feelings important?
2. What's one healthy way you release strong emotions?
3. How do your emotions affect the people around you?

Mini-Projects

1. **Feelings Log** – Track your emotions at three times during the day.
2. **Breathing Reset** – Practice a 5-breath calm-down exercise after school.
3. **Balance Check** – At the end of the day, write one “too big” and one “just right” reaction you had.

Scenario Journal Prompt

You feel very nervous before giving a presentation. What steps could you take to calm yourself and give your best effort?

FLEXIBILITY

Discussion Starters

1. Why can it be frustrating when plans change?
2. How does being flexible make teamwork easier?
3. What's a time when flexibility led to something good?

Mini-Projects

1. **Change Day** – Switch up one small routine (like seat choice or route) and notice how it feels.
2. **What If Game** – Brainstorm three different endings to the same situation.
3. **Flex Meter** – After a change, rate yourself 1–10 on how flexible you felt.

Scenario Journal Prompt

Your group project topic changes at the last minute. How would you handle the new challenge and stay positive?

TASK INITIATION

Discussion Starters

1. Why is the first step often the hardest one?
2. How can breaking a task into smaller parts make starting easier?
3. What tricks do you use to stop procrastinating?

Mini-Projects

1. **5-Minute Rule** – Start a task and commit to working for just 5 minutes.
2. **Launch Pad** – Set up your workspace with everything ready before starting.
3. **Countdown Start** – Count down from 5 and immediately begin your task.

Scenario Journal Prompt

You have a project due tomorrow, but you keep putting it off. What steps could you take to finally get started?

LEVEL 3: PLANNING & ORGANIZATION

ORGANIZATION

Discussion Starters

1. How does being disorganized make life harder?
2. Why is it helpful to keep things in the same spot every day?
3. What area of your life feels the most organized right now?

Mini-Projects

1. **Backpack Check** – Organize your bag and remove unneeded items.
2. **Space Refresh** – Clean your desk or room in under 10 minutes.
3. **Color Code** – Create a simple system (folders, labels, or digital) for subjects or activities.

Scenario Journal Prompt

You can't find your homework because your desk is messy. How would you solve the problem, and what habit could prevent it next time?

TIME MANAGEMENT

Discussion Starters

1. What happens when you run out of time on an assignment?
2. Why is balancing work and fun important?
3. How can setting a timer keep you on track?

Mini-Projects

1. **Tomorrow Plan** – Write a mini-schedule for your next day.
2. **Race the Clock** – Time yourself completing a chore and try to beat it next time.
3. **Work-Break Cycle** – Do 20 minutes of focused work, then take a 5-minute break.

Scenario Journal Prompt

You have homework, chores, and a game on the same night. How would you plan your time so nothing is missed?

GOAL SETTING

Discussion Starters

1. Why is it important to celebrate small wins?
2. What's the difference between a short-term and a long-term goal?
3. How do goals help keep you motivated?

Mini-Projects

1. **SMART Goal** – Write one goal that is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timed.
2. **Vision Board** – Draw or cut out pictures representing one of your goals.
3. **Progress Chart** – Create a simple tracker to mark each step completed.

Scenario Journal Prompt

You set a goal to exercise three times a week but missed two days. How would you adjust your plan and keep going?

LEVEL 4: CRITICAL THINKING

PRIORITIZATION

Discussion Starters

1. Why is it tempting to do the easiest tasks first?
2. How do deadlines help you decide what to focus on?
3. What's one thing that feels most important to you right now?

Mini-Projects

1. **Top Three** – Write down three tasks for today, ranked in order.
2. **Need vs. Want** – Make two lists of things you “need” and things you “want” to do.
3. **Red Light Task** – Identify one task you can stop doing because it's not essential.

Scenario Journal Prompt

You have math homework, an English project, and soccer practice tonight. Which one would you do first and why?

PROBLEM SOLVING

Discussion Starters

1. Why is it important to think of more than one solution?
2. How do emotions affect the way you solve problems?
3. What's a problem you solved recently that made you proud?

Mini-Projects

1. **Pros and Cons** – Choose a small decision and list positives/negatives of each option.
2. **Group Puzzle** – Work with friends to solve a riddle or brain teaser.
3. **Step Map** – Draw the steps you would take to solve a common problem.

Scenario Journal Prompt

You lose your homework on the bus. Write about at least two possible solutions and which one you would choose.

LEVEL 5: RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING

WISE CHOICES

Discussion Starters

1. Why should we think about how choices affect the future?
2. How can asking for advice help with decision-making?
3. What's the difference between a "quick" choice and a "wise" one?

Mini-Projects

1. **Choice Tree** – Draw a tree with one decision at the trunk and two possible branches of outcomes.
2. **Future Test** – Write what your life might look like 1 month from now after making two different choices.
3. **Advice Column** – Ask a friend or family member for advice on a pretend tough decision.

Scenario Journal Prompt

Your friend asks you to skip homework to play games. How would you think through this decision to make a wise choice?

RECOMMENDED RESOURCES



Emotional Intelligence Mindset Cards

52 Daily Habits for Confidence, Connection and Social Skills

Each card highlights an Emotional Intelligence skill with a key insight and real-life ways to practice it.

<https://selfpowerpack.com/eqmindmaps/>

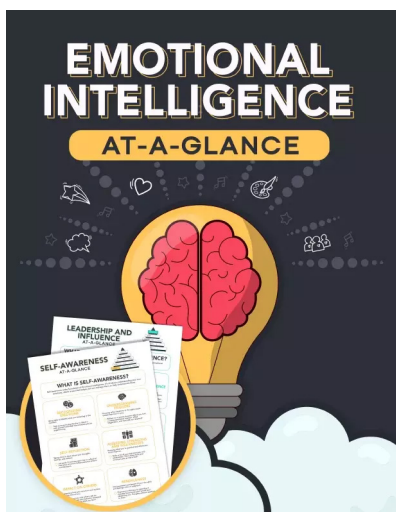


Peel & Stick Coping Wheel

The Wheel breaks down 36 different emotions, divided into six categories. For each emotion there's a suggested coping strategy.

You'll learn how to recognize your feelings, find new ways to cope with stress and build your social emotional skills.

<https://selfpowerpack.com/wheel/>



Emotional Intelligence At A Glance

12 printable "cheat sheets" to boost your EQ, manage emotions and build better relationships!

Each lesson is featured on a printable 1-page handout, packed with easy to follow tips, prompts, and discussion starters.

<https://selfpowerpack.com/eigance/>

Looking for more social-emotional learning resources? Our website is filled with hundreds of printable games, lesson plans, and worksheets to make SEL come alive for kids.

Visit selfpowerpack.com to learn more today.

