

WEEK 01 - EXERCISE SERIES

EXERCISE TASK PARALYSIS

Or: How to trick your brain into doing one embarrassingly small thing.

You are lying there. Phone in hand. A doomscroll of convincing reasons not to move. The workout clothes are either already on you or judging you from the floor. **This is not laziness. This is your ADHD brain stuck at the starting line, engine revving, wheels spinning.**

The goal isn't to get you "motivated." Motivation is a weather system — you can't summon it. The goal is to make the *first action so stupidly small* that your brain can't argue with it. Let's go.

YOUR RIDICULOUSLY SMALL STEPS

1

THE ONLY MOVE THAT MATTERS RIGHT NOW

Sit up. That's it. Just sit up.

Do not stand. Do not put shoes on. Do not think about the workout. Put the phone face-down and sit upright from wherever you are — bed, couch, floor — and hold it for ten seconds.

👏 Place both palms flat on your thighs. Feel your feet touch the floor.

 10 seconds

2

THE GEAR SIGNAL

Put on one piece of workout clothing.

One sock counts. Shoes count. The shirt you already have on counts if it's comfortable. Your brain reads clothing as a behavioral cue — you're not going to the gym yet, you're just *changing costumes*.

👏 Grab the nearest piece of gear with your dominant hand and put it on.

 under 60 seconds

3

THE BRIDGE MOVE

Stand in the room where you'll work out.

Walk to the gym, the living room floor, the driveway, the sidewalk — wherever the workout happens. You are not starting anything. You are just *standing in the right zip code*. Look around. Let your body orient itself to the space.

👏 Arms at your sides, feet shoulder-width apart. Breathe once, slowly.


 30 seconds

4

THE MICRO-COMMITMENT

Do exactly two reps of one movement.

Two squats. Two pushups. Two arm circles. Two jumping jacks. Not three. Not a set. **Two.** Then you can stop and reassess. Science and your therapist both agree: starting is 90% of the battle, and two reps have defeated more paralysis than any pre-workout supplement ever invented.

 For squats: hands on hips. For pushups: hands under shoulders. For arm circles: arms extended out to each side.


 20 seconds

5

THE ASK

Ask yourself: "Can I do two more?"

Not "can I finish the whole workout." Not "was this a good workout." Just: *two more?* If yes, do them. If no, you still won today — you broke paralysis. Repeat the two-rep question as many times as feels honest. Most people find the answer is yes more often than they expect.

 Hands wherever they naturally land. You're already in motion now. Trust that.

 your call

The ADHD brain isn't broken — it's a high-performance engine that stalls at neutral. You don't need to "get motivated." You need to get moving, in the smallest possible way, and let momentum do the rest. Two reps is not a failure of ambition. It is how you become someone who works out.

— Brian Jaeger, MA, CRC, LMHC



This week's reflection (bring it to session)

Which step was hardest to start — and which step surprised you by feeling easier than expected? There's useful information in both answers.



A note on "failure"

If you made it to Step 1 — just sitting up — and nothing else happened, that still counts as data, not defeat. Note what got in the way and bring it in. That's the work.

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