# 7 Wise Ways to Find Focus and Get Things Done

# By Ciara Conlon

It has to be one of mankind’s greatest challenges; staying focused in the fast paced, technology driven world we are living in. Information overload, a common phenomenon, work overload another. But staying focused is perhaps the best way for us to [get things done and move forward](https://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/want-to-get-gtd-ified-check-out-the-14-day-challenge.html) with our lives and our jobs. So how do we keep our eye on the ball when it’s accustomed to bouncing around from court to court?

**Focus on one thing**

“He who chases two rabbits catches none” – Confucius

Wise words from a wise man, but most of us will relate to chasing maybe a dozen rabbits at the same time and a couple of elephants. But if we are to follow the wise words of Confucius we will get more done and achieve our goals quickly. Working on more than one thing at a time will waste valuable time. When we switch from one task to another, it takes our brain time to readjust and concentrate on the second task and precious time is lost in the changeover. The reality being that multitasking is a productivity nightmare.

**Eliminate known distractions**

Last week I suggested an [information detox](https://www.lifehack.org/articles/lifehack/information-detox.html) to help us recognize the amount of information that we consume is unnecessary. A detox also helps us to unwind and relax, an essential part of focus and concentration. If you need to get work done, disconnect from technology. Turn off all notifications and reminders of emails and tweets etc. Take control of all communication and social media and only go to them when you are ready to spend time there. It’s not good to get notifications –  human beings are not strong enough to ignore these teasers.

## Calm the mind

One of our biggest distractions is not as you may have thought – Facebook – it is our own thoughts racing through our minds when we are trying to get something done. These cheeky thoughts often tempt us away from the job that needs doing, or they annoyingly and repeatedly inform while we are working on task A that task B, C and D remain unfinished. Don’t listen, take control of your thoughts and redirect them to the job at hand. [A great way to still the mind is meditation](https://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/what-meditation-can-teach-us-about-productivity.html). It can help to silence the constant chat we all experience from time to time. It can be a great assistance to focus.

## De-clutter

De-cluttering is another way to [eliminate distractions](https://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/tips-and-tricks-for-distraction-free-writing.html), if your desk, office and head are clear, you are minimising the possibilities for distractions. I always start my week by cleaning my office, anything that was left lying around from the past week needs to be dealt with, you need to know that there is nothing you have forgotten about or left undone. If you get into the habit of doing a weekly de-clutter or in GTD terms a weekly review, you can start the week relaxed, focused and ready for action.

## Exercise

We all know exercise creates energy; it is also a powerful way to reduce stress, as endorphins are released by the pituitary gland to block out feelings of pain or stress. Serotonin, another chemical released while exercising, improves our mood and our sense of happiness. Exercise is also responsible for the creation of new neurons in the brain which enable us to process and store information more easily.

## Clarification of Goals

Being clear about our goals and objectives will help us focus and stay on track. It motivates us to continue and persist when we are lacking the inspiration. If your goals is to de-clutter your home and be more organized, your objective maybe to reduce stress and induce calm. For another person the objective may be because they are putting their house up for sale and need the house looking good and attractive. It’s important to clarify your objectives in order to maintain the motivation and ensure that what you are working on is getting you closer to that goal.

## Simplify

The more we simplify our lives and our jobs, the more work we get done. But we don’t just want to get work done, we want to [get the important tasks done,](https://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/scheduling-time-blocks.html) the tasks that make a difference to the big picture. Many of us busy ourselves doing tasks that are unnecessary, wasting time on things that aren’t adding value to our lives or our jobs. If you can simplify and eliminate the unnecessary from your life you will have more time to focus on what is important, and it will also become a lot easier to maintain this focus.

<https://www.lifehack.org/articles/productivity/7-wise-ways-to-find-focus-and-get-things-done.html>