

TECHNOLOGY TOOLS TO INCREASE PRODUCTIVITY/EFFICIENCY FOR EVERYONE

KEEPING TRACK OFF ALL THE STUFF YOU NEED TO DO IN A
VERY BUSY WORLD

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WHO IS THIS GUY?



- Husband & Father
- Vice President - Easterseals Crossroads
- Part time professor
- Active in several volunteer/church roles

WHO IS THIS GUY?



- Director of AT
Easterseals Crossroads
- Got start in Supported
Employment as a job
coach
- 21 years in the assistive
technology
- Host of ATFAQ Podcast

TODAY'S GOALS

1. Answer: Do we NEED help?
2. Determine: some time-tested PRINCIPLES for time/task management
3. Explore: up to date TOOLS that help

GROUND RULES

- Raise your hand
- Wait for microphone (make sure we ALL can hear you)

- Icons:

- Dialog 

- Demo 

iOS



Android



OSX



Windows



Web



WARNING

- You should probably leave now if you're **only** interested in learning about a handful of new apps targeted directly toward people with Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities
- **We will cover** a few of those but today is a higher level presentation that can apply to a **much wider audience**

IS YOUR WORLD TOTALLY UNDER CONTROL?

Or is it more like this?

Or maybe it looks like this?



MY SITUATION WHEN THIS ALL CAME TO A HEAD

- Full time + job at Easter Seals Crossroads
- Adjunct Professor for two universities
- Infant, 2 year old, 18 year old kids
- Starting grad school
- 1,000+ emails in my inbox
- Almost constant anxiety about what I had forgotten to do...



I was not easy to be around...

PRINCIPLES



THE PRINCIPLES

- Inbox zero
- Pomodoro
- Getting Things Done

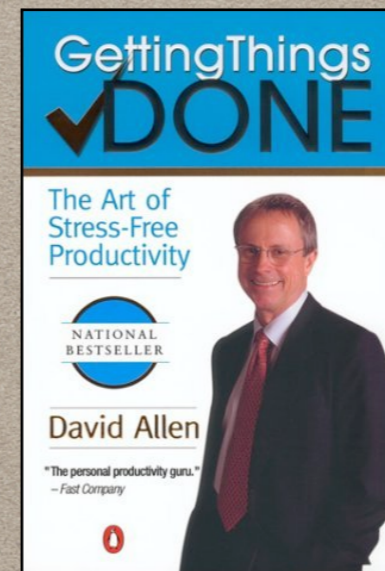
LET'S TALK ABOUT SOME METHODOLOGIES FOR TIME/TASK MANAGEMENT



Merlin Mann



Pomodoro Technique



*Getting Things Done
(GTD)*

WHAT I OBSERVE TO BE THE MOST POPULAR TO DO LIST...



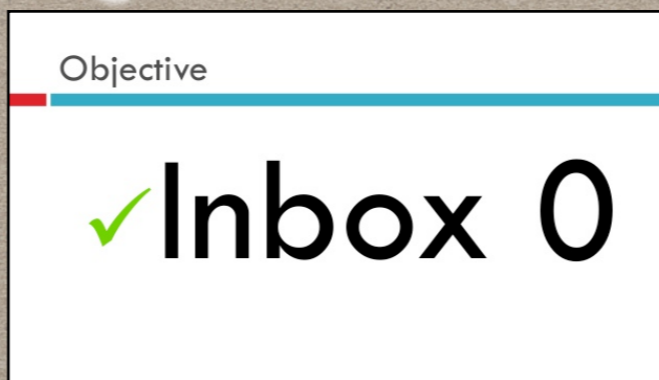
- Your email inbox doesn't make a good to do list
 - Anyone with your email address has control over what's on the top of your to do list
 - Everyone who uses their inbox as a to do list has at least one message that was marked read or somehow slipped through the cracks

IF YOU ARE CURRENTLY USING YOUR INBOX AS YOUR TO DO LIST...


- “Inbox Zero” is one of the most helpful things you can do to improve your time/task management

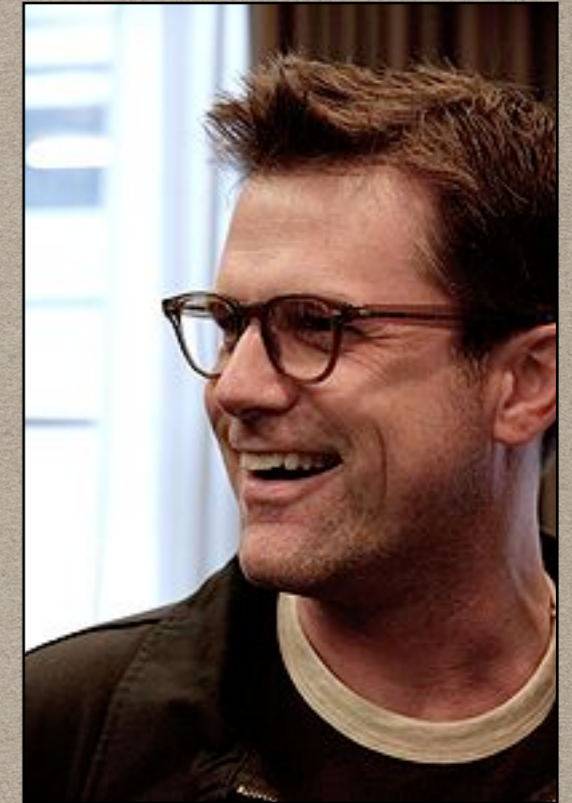


- Never let your inbox go more than 24-hours without completely clearing it out (unless you're on vacation)



INBOX ZERO

- Concept popularized by Merlin Mann
 - Addresses our "addiction" to email
 - Sets limits
 - Gets email back to being used for communication rather than task management or a distraction
 - <http://www.43folders.com/izero>
- Anybody here an inbox zero devotee? 

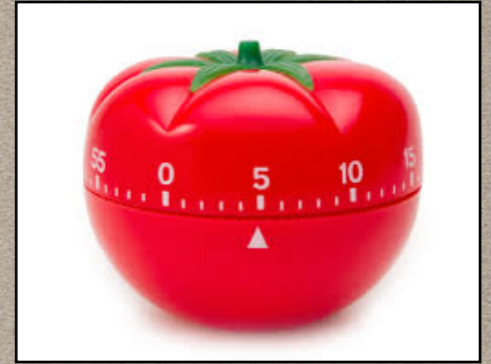


POMODORO TECHNIQUE



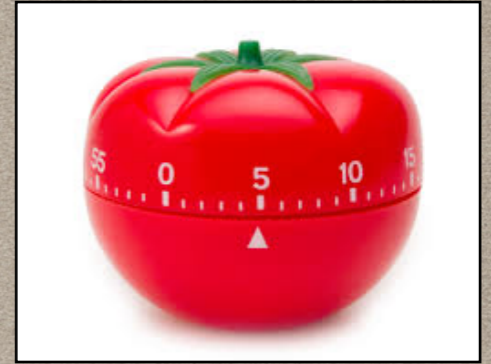
- Italian word for tomato
- Francesco Cirillo (college student) in 1990s
- Named after the tomato-shaped kitchen timer that he used
- 25 minutes of work (typically)
- 5 minute break (typically)

POMODORO TECHNIQUE



- Similar concepts:
 - Timeboxing or iterative/incremental development
- Bursts of work broken up by intention breaks increase productivity
- The break improves mental agility, and reduces fatigue


POMODORO TECHNIQUE



- How it's done:
 - Decide on task
 - Set the timer (usually 25 minutes)
 - Work until timer rings
 - Take a break (usually 5 minutes)
 - After 4 cycles (pomodoros), take a longer break (usually 15-30 minutes)

POMODORO TECHNIQUE



- Tools:
 - Tomato timer (less than \$10 on Amazon)
- Apps:
 - Lots of them available. A couple of good ones:
 - iOS: Pomodoro Timer: Focus on your productivity \$1.99
 - Android: Simple pomodoro: \$0.00
- Anybody here used pomodoro? 

GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)

- A “methodology” made popular by David Allen
- Recognizes:
 - Our life moves very quickly
 - Priorities change throughout the day
 - People have different levels of tolerance for systems and technology



GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)

- Let's watch a video:

BOOK SUMMARY AND REVIEW

GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)

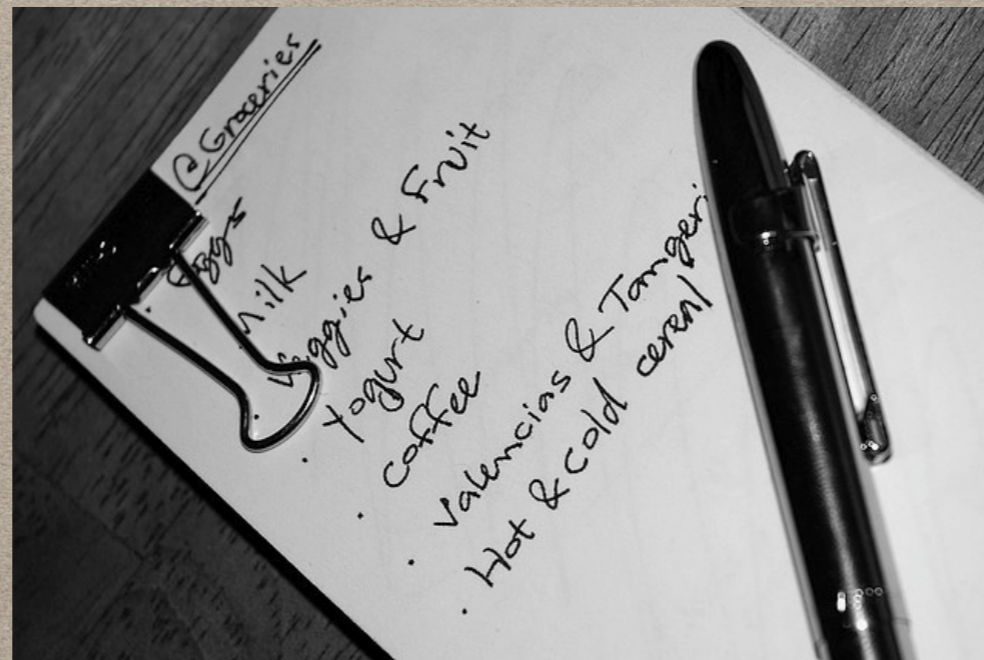
- Basic steps for GTD:
 1. Capture
 2. Clarify
 3. Organize
 4. Reflect
 5. Engage

GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)

- **Capture** (Concept now – tech/tools later)
 - You have ideas at all kind of places and times
 - You remember you need cat food at work
 - You remember stuff you need to do at work when you're buying cat food
 - The trick is find a reliable system for capturing your thoughts – anywhere – anytime

GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)

- Capture (Concept now – tech/tools later)
- The most common and low tech tool for capture



Anywhere - Anytime

GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)

- Capture (Concept now – tech/tools later)
- Then you need a place to put the things you capture



Anywhere - Anytime

GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)

- Capture (Concept now – tech/tools later)
 - First time doing GTD? Time for a brain dump!
 - Sit and capture everything floating around in our head.
 - Make take several hours
 - Work, personal, hobbies, church, **EVERYTHING!**
 - Once you have cleared out your brain you will have time to think
 - The mind is for having ideas, not storing them.

GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)

- Clarify
 - What is this stuff that I captured?
 - Is it actionable?
 - No →
 - Trash - Junk. Pitch it.
 - Incubate - I may want to reconsider it later. Parking lot.
 - Reference - I may need to recall this info later. Archive.



GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)

- Clarify
 - What is this thing that I captured?
 - Is it actionable?
 - Yes → What is the very next action to move that task forward?
 - Do it – 2 minutes or less
 - Delegate it – Get someone else to do it - up, down, sideways
 - Defer it – Tickler file, task list, project list



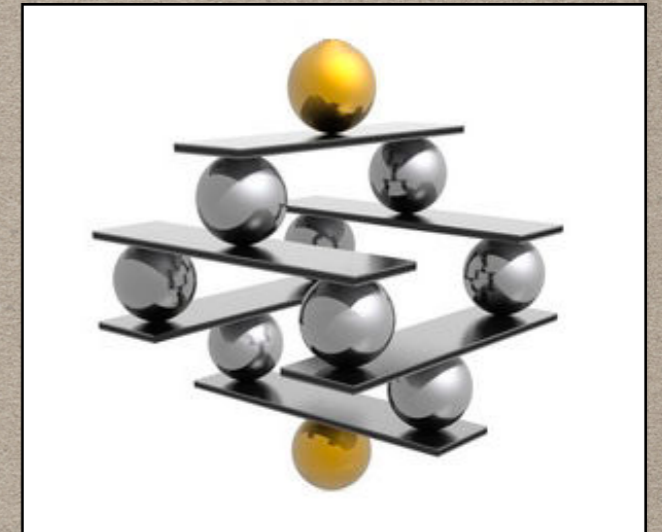
GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)

- Organize
 - Now I have these lists of things to do. How do I make sense of it?
 - Actionable items need to be organized into:
 - Projects
 - Next Actions
 - Waiting for
 - Calendar



GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)

- Projects
 - Project = any outcome that takes more than 1 action to complete
 - I have a ton of them ranging from work projects to a book I'm writing to honey-do projects, to Santa Claus stuff!
 - I see people use: paper lists, file folders, folder of documents on your computer, project management software



GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)

- Next actions
 - The very next action you need to do to move a project toward completion
 - Should start with a verb
 - Call Joe, Search Expedia for flights, Buy lightbulb for fridge
 - I see people use: Post it notes, items on a written list, email messages to yourself, task management system



GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)



- Waiting for
 - There are lots of times when you can't take the next action on an item because you're waiting on someone else to do something
 - You *normally* don't those things to fall through the cracks
 - You need a waiting for list that you check regularly
 - The important thing is that you don't need to see it in front of you all the time because it takes up mental horsepower whether or not you can take an action at that time
 - I see people use the same tools as next actions (paper, post its, etc.)

GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)

- Calendar
 - This is the tool that *almost* everyone is accustomed to using on a regular basis.
 - This represents the “hard landscape” of your action items. Generally you have a specific time & duration, place, and activity.
 - Mistakenly sometimes gets used for: next actions, waiting for, etc.
 - I recommend using it only for things that have a specific time



Why does almost everyone use a calendar?



GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)



- Review
 - Regularly reviewing all of your projects, next actions, waiting for, calendar items, and horizons of focus
 - This is the easiest part to want to skip but is one of the most important parts
 - Gives you a chance to make sure that you're working on the things that are most important and that things don't fall through the cracks

GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)



- My review process
 - Weekly (Sunday evenings + daily mini)
 - Review horizons of focus
 - Past & next two weeks on my calendar
 - Review of all projects
 - Review action steps on all active projects

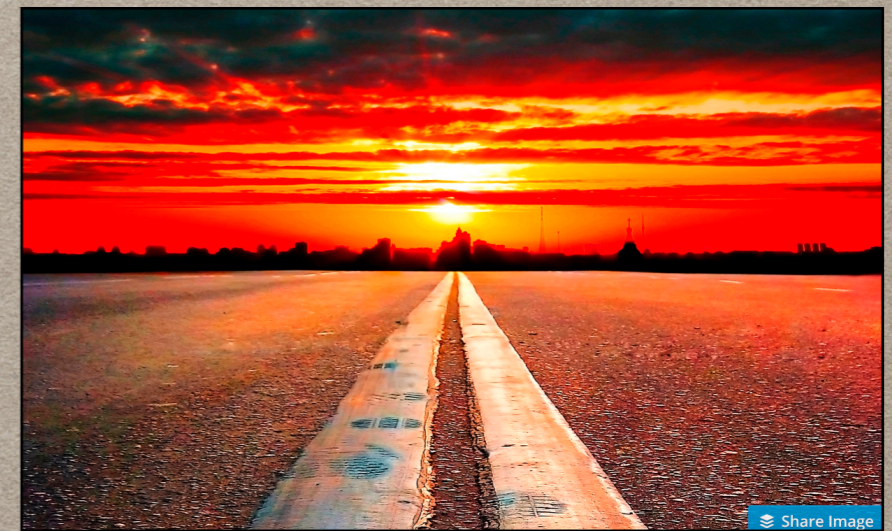
GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)

- Engage (do stuff)
 - My hierarchy:
 - Calendar (hard landscape)
 - Urgent items
 - Projects
 - Correspondence and scheduling
 - Whatever project next needs my attention and has available next actions



GETTING THINGS DONE (GTD)

- Horizons of focus
- 50,000: What is your purpose on this planet?
- 40,000: What are your major goals?
- 30,000: Where is your job going?
- 20,000: What is your job?
- 10,000: What are my projects?
- Runway: What are the tasks I'm working on?



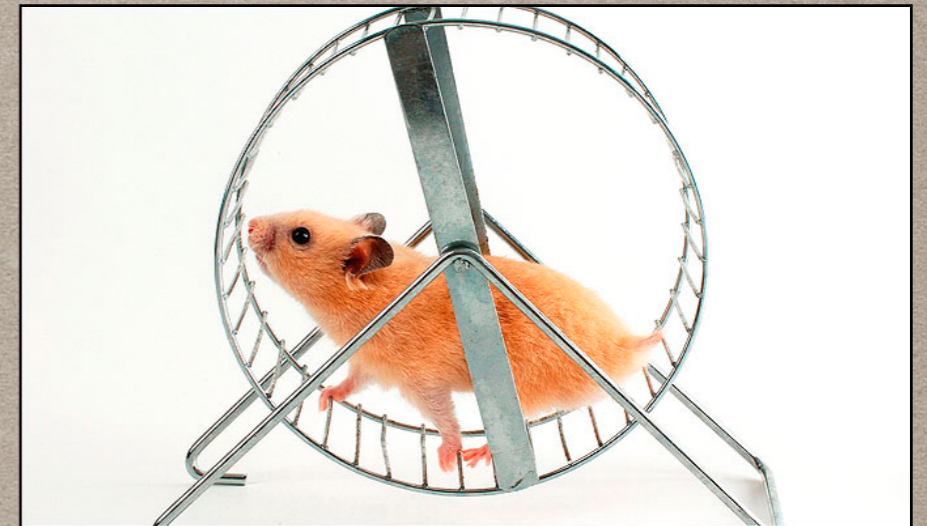
PARTING GTD ADVICE

- The pay off
 - Sense of ease and relaxation
 - Feeling in control as a rule
 - Information at your fingertips
 - Less spinning your wheels



PARTING GTD ADVICE

- Common pitfalls
 - Skipping your weekly review
 - Over capturing and letting it sit
 - Not processing often enough
 - Spending more time on the system rather than actually doing things (Can be fun!)



PARTING GTD ADVICE

- When you become a GTD blackbelt
 - Don't become snobby
 - Everybody's system can be improved – even yours
 - Be careful about taking on too much and getting out of control again
 - Learn to cherish and protect the clarity that you gain



TOOLS



TOOLS - CAPTURE

- You need to be able to capture information anywhere, anytime

- Email **\$0**



-  Drafts **\$10**



-  Scannable **\$0**



-  VoiceMemos **\$0**



TOOLS – STORAGE + NOTE TAKING TOOLS

- Note taking with some storage



- Evernote



- OneNote



- Workflowy



- *\$All have both free and paid versions*

TOOLS – STORAGE TOOLS

- Once you start capturing everything, you need a place to store it that is available anywhere, anytime



- Dropbox



- Box



- Google Drive



- OneDrive



- iCloud



- *\$ All have both free and paid versions*

TOOLS – NOTE TAKING

- Your note taking system needs to be flexible and robust.
- Sometimes I wonder “What was I thinking?!?!”

- Livescribe **\$150**     

-  • Audionote **\$15**    

- Notability **\$6** 

TOOLS – TASK MANAGEMENT

- Reminders *\$0*



- Things *\$50*



- Trello *\$0*




- Remember the Milk *\$0*



- Omnifocus *\$40*



TOOLS – TASK MANAGEMENT

- MeMinder
 - Local software developer
 - CreateAbility Concepts
- Video 
 - <http://buff.ly/1Ox9RHI>

TOOLS – MIND MAPPING & OUTLINING

- Taking notes in a meeting and capturing a quick idea is a very different activity than brainstorming or planning out a project

- MindNode *\$10*



- OmniOutliner *\$30*



- Workflowy *\$0*



TOOLS – TIMERS

- Sometimes you need a little structure to help guard against interruptions and distractions



- Be Focused *\$0-10*



- 30/30 *\$0*



TOOLS – CALENDARS

- Really, most any calendar will do but there are a few with some interesting features

- Google Cal **\$0** & Cozi Calendar **\$20**



- to view multiple calendars

- CW calendar **\$5**



TOOLS – PRODUCTIVITY BOOSTERS

- TextExpander **\$45**
- Phrase Expander **\$60**
- Keyboard Maestro **\$36**
- Mobile Day **\$0**
- "Unsubscribe" email trick



REMEMBER

- The reason that there are multiple approaches and multiple tools is because people have different needs and styles
- There is not a single right way to do this
- Most of the tools are remarkable inexpensive
 - Don't be afraid to try several of them
 - Keep at it until you find what works for you

THANK YOU!