



Overwhelmed? Struggling to Start?

Sometimes a “lack of motivation” can actually be overwhelm. With ADHD, struggles with executive functioning skills, sensory processing, and emotional regulation can make it hard to know what we need to get going, but these questions will be a good place to start!

Some coaching questions to ask yourself:

1. Do I know **what steps** I need to do in order to complete this job? How can I find out?
 - Is there a completed job that I can use as a model?
 - Can I speak to someone who’s done this before?
 - Is there an online resource?

2. Do I know **the order of the steps**?
 - Is it important that I start with a certain step to save me time/ effort later?
 - Or are there multiple ways I can start?

3. Am I seeing **all the steps** in this job at the same time (or *more than 1* job) and **shutting down**?
 - How can I “put blinders on” so I can just focus on *my next step*?
 - Do I need to write a *short list* and work from that? (rather than my bigger list)

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4. Am I overwhelmed by the **amount of time** I *think* this will take?

- Can I decide to only work X minutes on this?
- Can I make this fun and race myself (or someone else)? Try guessing how long this will take. Now try to beat that time!
- Is it possible to “just start” *even if I don’t finish*?

5. Am I overwhelmed because of **perfectionism**?

- How can I give myself permission to do work that is “good enough”?
- Will limiting the time I spend on this job help me let go of perfectionism?
- Can I start this job even if I don’t get to finish it today?

6. Is my **environment** the right fit for what I want to do?

- Do I have what I need for the job *readily available* to me? If not, how can I?
- Lighting/ temperature: What does my body need and what do I need for this job?
- Sound: Is the environment noisy/distracting? Too quiet?
- Visual: Is the visual environment overwhelming/ overstimulating? Too stark/ not stimulating enough?
- People: would it help me to get started if I had company or would it be easier to work alone?

7. Do I have **another need** that is making this difficult?

- Have I checked in with my body? (hunger, thirst, fatigue, etc.)
- Am I feeling dysregulated emotionally? If so, what can I do to help me calm/regulate?

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