



The Executive Function Rescue Kit

THE 8 EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONS GUIDE



Learn more about specific executive function disruptions, and how the tools will help you overcome them.

1. TASK INITIATION FAILURE

What It Is:

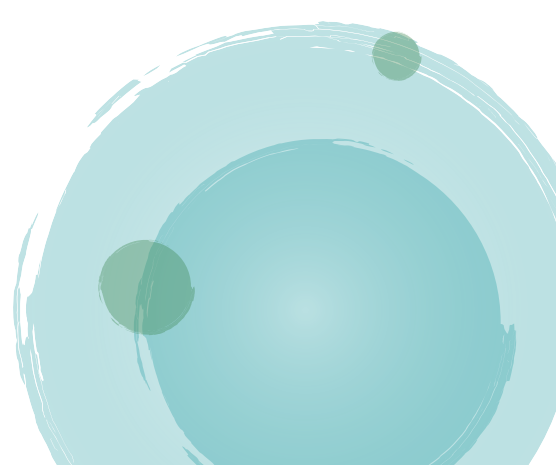
Your brain knows exactly what needs to be done, but your body won't move toward it. It's like standing at the edge of a pool knowing you need to jump in, but your legs are frozen. You're not lazy—your brain's "start" button is jammed. This is one of the most common executive function breakdowns for neurodivergent adults.

What It Looks Like:

You've been staring at a sink full of dishes for 20 minutes. You know you need to wash them. You want to wash them. But you're physically stuck on the couch, scrolling your phone, feeling guilty and frustrated. Or you have a project due and you've opened the document 15 times but can't type a single word.

Why It Happens:

Your brain's reward system (dopamine) isn't activating because the task doesn't feel immediately rewarding. Neurotypical brains can override this with willpower, but neurodivergent brains need an external push—something to trick the "start" mechanism into engaging. That's why the tool for this is called "The 2-Minute Bridge"—it bypasses the broken start button.



2. TASK SWITCHING DIFFICULTY

What It Is:

You get locked into one activity and can't shift to another, even when you desperately need to. It's not that you don't want to switch—your brain literally can't disengage. This is sometimes called "hyperfocus" when it's something you love, but it's just as frustrating when you're stuck doom-scrolling or trapped in a task you hate.

What It Looks Like:

You've been researching something online for 3 hours and you're starving, need to pee, and have a meeting in 10 minutes—but you can't stop clicking links. Or you're cleaning one drawer and suddenly it's been 2 hours and you've reorganized your entire closet when you were supposed to leave for an appointment 30 minutes ago.

Why It Happens:

Your brain's "task switching" mechanism (cognitive flexibility) is rigid. Neurotypical brains can smoothly shift gears, but neurodivergent brains get stuck in loops. Once you're locked in, transitioning feels like slamming on the brakes while driving 70 mph—jarring and almost impossible. The tool for this creates a "mental off-ramp" so you can exit without crashing.

3. WORKING MEMORY BREAKDOWN

What It Is:

You lose track of information the moment it's not directly in front of you. You walk into a room and forget why you're there. You're mid-sentence and forget what you were saying. You put something down and it ceases to exist in your mind. It's not that you're forgetful in the traditional sense—your brain's "mental sticky notes" don't stick.

What It Looks Like:

You're cooking and you turn around to grab a spoon, and suddenly you have no idea what you were doing. Or someone asks you a question while you're in the middle of a task and you completely lose your train of thought. Or you make a to-do list and then forget the list exists 10 minutes later.



Why It Happens:

Working memory is your brain's ability to hold and manipulate information temporarily. Neurodivergent brains have a much smaller "mental RAM"—you can only hold 1-2 things at once before everything else vanishes. Neurotypical brains can juggle 5-7 items. The tool for this externalizes your memory so you're not relying on your brain to hold everything.

4. PLANNING & PRIORITIZATION OVERLOAD

What It Is:


You look at everything you need to do and you're so overwhelmed you can't figure out where to start, so you freeze and do nothing. Or you start with the wrong thing and waste hours on something that doesn't matter. Your brain can't sort "urgent vs. important" or break big projects into steps, so everything feels equally massive and terrifying.

What It Looks Like:

You have 10 things on your to-do list and you spend 2 hours staring at it, rewriting it, color-coding it, but never actually starting anything. Or you have a huge project due and instead of working on it, you clean your desk, organize your files, and respond to emails—anything except the actual important task.

Why It Happens:

Your brain's "executive control center" (prefrontal cortex) struggles to rank tasks by importance or break them into sequential steps. Everything feels like a priority, or nothing does. Neurotypical brains can instinctively sort and sequence; neurodivergent brains see a chaotic pile. The tool for this gives you a simple sorting system so your brain doesn't have to figure it out.



5. ATTENTION REGULATION ISSUE

What It Is:

You can't control where your attention goes. Either you're completely distracted by everything (every sound, every thought, every notification pulls you away) or you're so hyper-focused on one thing that you can't notice anything else. You don't get to choose—your brain's attention system is either too loose or too rigid.

What It Looks Like:

You sit down to work and suddenly you're noticing the hum of the fridge, the person walking past your window, the feeling of your socks, and you've read the same sentence 6 times without absorbing it. Or you're so deep in a task that someone calls your name 5 times and you genuinely didn't hear them—it's not rudeness, it's neurological.

Why It Happens:

Your brain's "attention filter" is broken. Neurotypical brains can decide what to focus on and tune out distractions. Neurodivergent brains either let everything in (attention deficit) or lock so hard onto one thing that everything else disappears (hyperfocus). The tool for this helps you reset and recalibrate your attention without fighting your brain.

6. COGNITIVE FLEXIBILITY BREAKDOWN

What It Is:

You struggle when things change unexpectedly or when you need to think about something in a new way. Your brain likes predictability and sameness, and when something disrupts the plan, you get stuck, frustrated, or shut down. This isn't about being "stubborn"—your brain genuinely has trouble adapting on the fly.

What It Looks Like:

Your morning routine gets disrupted (you run out of coffee, or someone texts you) and suddenly your entire day feels ruined and you can't get back on track. Or you're working on a problem one way and someone suggests a different approach, and



instead of pivoting, you feel irritated and resistant—not because you don't want to, but because your brain is locked into the original path.

Why It Happens:

Cognitive flexibility is your brain's ability to shift perspectives, strategies, or plans when circumstances change. Neurodivergent brains are "sticky"—once you're on a path, it's hard to deviate. Neurotypical brains are like water, flowing around obstacles; neurodivergent brains are more like a train on tracks—changing direction requires intentional effort. The tool for this creates a "mental reset" to help you shift gears.

7. ORGANIZATION & SEQUENCING PROBLEM

What It Is:

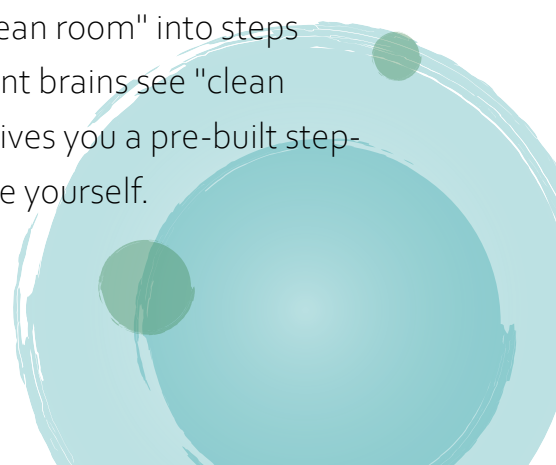
You don't naturally know how to organize information, spaces, or tasks into logical order. You can't intuitively figure out "Step 1, Step 2, Step 3" for a project, or you create systems that make sense to you but confuse everyone else (or even confuse future-you). Everything feels scattered and chaotic, and you're constantly reinventing the wheel.

What It Looks Like:

You want to clean your room but you don't know where to start—do you start with the floor? The desk? The closet? So you bounce between all of them and nothing gets finished. Or you're trying to write a report and you keep jumping between sections randomly instead of writing it in order, and it takes 3× longer than it should.

Why It Happens:

Your brain doesn't automatically sequence tasks or organize information hierarchically. Neurotypical brains can instinctively break "clean room" into steps (pick up trash → make bed → organize desk). Neurodivergent brains see "clean room" as one giant, undifferentiated blob. The tool for this gives you a pre-built step-by-step decoder so you don't have to figure out the sequence yourself.



8. IMPULSE CONTROL & EMOTIONAL REGULATION ISSUE

What It Is:

You act or react before you can think it through, or your emotions hijack you so intensely that you can't think clearly at all. You might hyperfocus on something compulsively, say things you regret immediately, or get so overwhelmed by frustration/anxiety that you shut down completely. It's not that you don't care about consequences—your brain's "pause button" doesn't work reliably.

What It Looks Like:

You're hyperfocused on a video game or scrolling social media and you can't stop even though you're late, exhausted, or have something important to do. Or someone says something mildly annoying and you snap at them way harder than the situation warrants, and you regret it immediately. Or you're so frustrated that you want to throw your laptop across the room (and maybe you do).

Why It Happens:

Your brain's "impulse control center" (inhibitory control) is weak, and emotional regulation is tightly linked to executive function. When emotions spike, they flood your prefrontal cortex and shut down rational thinking. Neurotypical brains can pause, assess, and choose a response; neurodivergent brains often react immediately. The tool for this is called "The Emergency Brake"—it gives you a physical/mental circuit-breaker to interrupt the impulse loop.