



Module 7: Focus Time

In this video we're going to talk about Focus Time.

The last video we talked about getting all of our thoughts and our to do list on paper, and the thing about when you're writing all these things down is there's going to be things on there that you're going to want to dedicate Focus Time to. So I want to introduce you to the idea of Focus Time.

So what is Focus Time? It is two hours, no interruption, no notification time, where you are working to produce a result. That means that there is a beginning and an end to whatever project you're doing. It's not work that is your average daily work, the checking the emails. It is not the meeting with someone. It is time that you know you're going to accomplish something.

I was thinking about some examples of what this might look like. It's like creating a podcast, or creating a video, or creating a blog. It's usually something that's creative driven. It's something that you know is going to be completed by the end of it. I was thinking about creating a project proposal or analyzing data and presenting this Excel sheet to your boss, or graphs, or creating a presentation. All of these things would be classified as Focus Time because at the end of it you're producing a result.

The rules for Focus Time are similar to the rules of Monday Hour One.

You have to have no notifications, so your phone is turned off. You need to turn off the notifications to your email. You need to be in a distraction free environment. Do as much as we possibly can to limit that distraction or to eliminate it entirely because this is going to be the time where you're doing your most important work.

See, when it comes to our work, I remember reading that the average worker will be distracted pretty much once, or interrupted, once every 40 seconds, and so it's like how much time, how much attention that we have available to us and how many times we get interrupted in the day is so common. When we're working in front of a computer, the brain likes to be distracted. There's pleasure in that. There's this idea of if a notification goes off, oh I need to look at that. So your

primitive brain is going to want to be distracted. This is why it's so important that we actually set apart this time, this Focus Time, to get work done.

I want to tell you how to make the most out of Focus Time. And there's three things I want to focus on. One is being able to prepare beforehand some of the items that you might need for that Focus Time. For example, you might need a document within your email, or you might need to know some information from a coworker, and you have to access Slack or whatever communication you use to understand what was that part of the project. And the temptation could be, is that, if you do get into it, if you do do this in your Focus Time, you're going to go into your email and there's going to be ten other things there for you to accomplish. There's going to be your boss sent you a note, oh, I need to pay attention to that. There's going to be your coworker who said this about the project. So you need to get that stuff beforehand so that your Focus Time is actually focused.

Then the second thing is being able to strategize what time of day you're going to do this two hours. What time of day you're going to have this Focus Time. For me it's in the morning because that's the time where I'm most fresh. That is the time where I am ... my brain is at its highest capability. It's also the time where I actually don't even check my email until after my Focus Time. That's what I start my day with is getting my most important work done, beginning to end, there's a result there, and then I move on.

The third thing is that you want to commit and decide that what your planned is going to take the two hours that you've set it for, because you're going to wonder how long is this going to take. We're going to think, how much can I accomplish in two hours? The thing is, you just get to decide how long it's going to take, and I can tell you right now, it's going to take you two hours because that's all you're going to give yourself. That may seem difficult for you, but I want to promise you it's so freeing and actually so empowering for you and you will recognize how productive you can be when you decide that whatever you've scheduled in that Focus Time is going to be complete in two hours.

Let me give you an example of what might belong in Focus Time from our to do list. I'm looking at our to do list, everything that was with the 4th of July beach trip, like getting the sand toys and the bathing suits, everything for the kids, that's not something that I would spend my nice Focus Time, my dedicated Focus Time. Prepping for client sessions. That's something that's normal part of the routine that I do during the week that I can schedule for, other time.

When it comes to writing my weekly email, that is definitely something that I want to spend time on, and my best brain time, because I want to be able to think about my audience, or I want to be able to think about how can I write this in such a way that will serve them best. This is also something that produces a result right at the end, so it's perfect for Focus Time. I'm able to put, write weekly email, and I know what's entailed in that in terms of thinking, editing, pairing down so that by the end of this two hours I have a beautiful email to send to my audience.

You're going to want to use your Focus Time for results that require your prefrontal cortex, that are going to require the best that your brain has to offer. That's why writing a weekly email, I want to give that my best time and my best brain energy.

Another example would be quarterly taxes. You might think, why would I want to spend any time on taxes? Well, we know it's important and we also know that it takes a lot of brain power to research what do I even need to prepare for taxes, or to analyze all the statements, or to go through my spreadsheets of my budget. That's stuff that takes mental energy. That's stuff that doesn't just come easy. It's not something your primitive brain would enjoy. You have to use your prefrontal to be able to accomplish these things and that's why it's part of Focus Time.

Focus time is actually going to be two hours, every single workday, that you're going to set apart, and it's going to be your best time where you can do work that produces a result. Here's what you're going to start noticing when you do Focus Time. You are going to actually get more things done, and I'll tell you from personal experience, I did have a life where I did not do Focus Time, and what ends up happening is that you do work so haphazardly. You don't have any dedicated time to do the most important work, you're being distracted, interrupted by other people. I remember receiving so many requests and I would respond to them on the fly. It's so sporadic that you really don't get to accomplish everything that you want to do.

Now, post, getting into The Life Coach School and being able to implement Focus Time in my life, I find that it's like, I'll talk to people and they'll always say, I just want to get away. It's like, I want to get away so I can think about my life, or think about the things that I want to accomplish. Or, I want to get away ... the example of the writer that goes to the cabin. I want to get away so that I can actually focus and write my book. The truth is, Focus Time is exactly that. It is your time away, in a space where it's quiet and no distractions, no notifications, two hours, every day, of doing that. And the life that you can create when you do that is so amazing, and I find that that's what gives me so much, not so much ... not so much joy and success and accomplishment, but it's so peaceful to be able to set apart that time and get things done that I know I'm going to make the biggest difference for me and my job, and for me in my life.

One final note, you're going to think that you don't have time for this. You're also going to think that's impossible, that, oh my boss will always need something, or I will always need to do this, or my kids will always interrupt me. For one, that's not true, and for two, it is imperative that you do this. You must set apart two hours of Focus Time where you are using the best that your brain has to give in order to create the results that you want. I can't tell you how often I've seen people do this and then, all of the sudden, they have more time than they thought was possible. My promise to you is that you think you don't have time, you may think this isn't possible, but if you do it, you'll find that it not only is possible and that you can create your life deliberately, but you will get so much more done.