



EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

The EF Starter Checklist

Ten foundational habits that build the executive functioning skills behind a peaceful, productive, and prosperous life.

Remember: Executive functioning skills are not personality traits you either have or do not have. **They are learnable skills.** This checklist gives you ten places to start — one small shift at a time.

Planning & Organization

SET THE STAGE BEFORE THE DAY STARTS

- Use one system to capture all tasks — not sticky notes, texts, and memory combined
- Spend 5 minutes the night before identifying your top 3 priorities for tomorrow
- Break large projects into the very next physical action step

Time Awareness

WORK WITH TIME, NOT AGAINST IT

- Set a visible timer when starting any task that tends to expand
- Build in transition time between tasks — buffer is not wasted time, it is smart time
- Do a weekly time audit — one week, just notice where your hours actually go

Task Initiation

LOWER THE BARRIER TO STARTING

- Use a 2-minute runway — commit to just 2 minutes on the dreaded task, then reassess
- Pair an unpleasant task with something enjoyable — music, a good drink, a favorite spot
- Reduce friction by setting up your workspace before you need to use it

Emotional Regulation

RESPOND RATHER THAN REACT

- Name the feeling before addressing the problem — labeling reduces intensity
- Build a 10-minute reset into your daily routine — walk, stillness, movement, your choice
- Notice your warning signs before overwhelm peaks, and have a plan for that moment

One Honest Reminder

- You do not need to fix everything at once — pick one item from this list this week
- Progress is not linear — a hard day does not erase the growth you have already built
- Executive functioning is the bedrock — when this improves, everything else does too

Ashley Mangione, MA, MCPC | Executive Functioning Coach | Dynamic Learning Connection

Ready to go deeper? Work with Ashley 1:1 or in a group — dynamiclearningconnection.com | info@dynamiclearningconnection.com