

HALFDONE

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OPEN TABS FOCUS KIT

# Your brain has 47 tabs open.

## This is how you close them.

A focus kit for brains drowning in mental noise.

Brain dump. Tab triage. Evening shutdown.

reply to email

did I pay that?

the project idea

what was I doing

tomorrow's thing

# What is inside.

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One tool per chapter. One action per chapter. That is all.

## CHAPTER 01 · BRAIN DUMP P

# Empty your mental RAM.

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Your brain is not a storage device. It was never designed to hold your to-do list, your worries, your half-formed ideas, your social obligations, and your work deadlines simultaneously. But that is exactly what you are asking it to do and it is costing you enormous cognitive energy just to maintain that load, before you have done a single thing.

The brain dump is a simple, structured process: you get everything out. Not just tasks thoughts, worries, things you are carrying emotionally, ideas you have not acted on, things you keep forgetting, things you feel guilty about. All of it. Onto paper. Out of your head. When you are done, your mental RAM is clear and focus becomes possible.

"I got 31 things out of my head in 12 minutes. I had no idea I was carrying all of that. The moment I finished writing the last one, my shoulders physically dropped."

# The 10-minute brain dump protocol

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Set a 10-minute timer. Do not edit. Do not organize. Just capture.

## Tasks & to-dos

Everything you need to do, should do, said you would do, or feel like you are supposed to do.

## Worries & anxieties

Things bothering you, things that feel unresolved, what-ifs, and low-grade dread.

## Half-formed ideas

Projects you want to start, things you are curious about, plans that exist only as feelings.

## People & conversations

Things you need to say to someone, responses you owe, relationships feeling off.

## Decisions pending

Things you are in the middle of deciding, things you have been avoiding deciding.

## Emotional background noise

Anything else you are carrying resentments, hopes, things that feel incomplete.

## CHAPTER 02 · TAB TRIAGE

# Do it, drop it, or defer it.

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Once you have done a brain dump, you will have a list. Possibly a long one. The mistake most people make next is trying to do everything on it. That is how the list becomes another source of overwhelm instead of relief. Tab triage gives every item exactly one of three outcomes and nothing sits in limbo.

## DO IT

Takes under 10 minutes? Do it immediately, right after the triage. Do not schedule it. Just do it now.

## DROP IT

You are not going to do this. Not really. You have been carrying it for weeks. Consciously decide to let it go. Cross it off. Done.

## DEFER IT

Real task, not urgent. Put it on your actual to-do list with a specific day. Now it is captured your brain can let go of it.

# The triage rules

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## If you cannot decide it is a Drop

Genuine indecision after 10 seconds means you do not care enough to do it. Drop it. You can always add it back.

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## Defer gets a day, not "someday"

"Someday" is where tasks go to die. Defer means Tuesday. Or next Friday. A real day. No day = it is a Drop.

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## Do-it items get done before you close the triage

Do not defer your 10-minute tasks. Do them immediately after sorting. The momentum is the point.

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## Emotional items get their own category

Worries and emotional load do not get triaged like tasks. They get acknowledged and then consciously set down. See Chapter 04.

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## Re-triage weekly

Your brain dump + triage is a weekly habit, not a one-time fix. Do it every Sunday or Monday morning.

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The goal of triage is not to do everything. It is to have nothing floating undefined. Every item has a status. Status = your brain can let go.

## CHAPTER 03 · FOCUS TRIGGER

# Force single-tab mode.

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Even after a brain dump and triage, your brain needs a signal to shift into focused work mode. Without that signal, it defaults to scanning checking email, jumping between tasks, monitoring for new inputs. The focus trigger is a short ritual that tells your nervous system: this is the window. One thing. Now.

## The 5-step focus trigger (3 minutes total):

### Step 1 Name the one thing (30 sec)

Say out loud or write down: the single task you are about to do. Not the project the specific action. "Write the intro paragraph." "Fix the bug in line 47."

### Step 2 Clear the physical space (60 sec)

Phone in another room. One browser window. Irrelevant tabs closed. Drink of water on desk. Nothing else in your visual field that relates to other tasks.

### Step 3 Set the container (15 sec)

Set a timer. 25 minutes is classic, but 20 or 30 works too. The timer is your permission slip you are not allowed to switch until it goes off.

### Step 4 Take one breath (15 sec)

Literally. One slow breath in, slow breath out. This is not meditation it is a physiological pause that reduces cortisol and signals the switch from scattered to focused.

### Step 5 Start the first sentence (go)

Type the first word. Write the first line of code. Make the first cut. The starting action breaks the paralysis. Do not wait to feel ready.

## When focus breaks mid-session

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Your focus will break. A thought will surface. An urge to check something will appear. This is normal it is your brain's attention system doing its job. The question is what you do in that moment.

### A thought surfaces about another task

Write it on your capture list (a piece of paper next to you). Do not open a new tab. Do not act on it. Just write it and return.

### You feel the urge to check your phone

Notice the urge. Name it: "I want to check my phone." Wait 30 seconds. The urge usually passes. If it does not it is a sign you need a break, not a distraction.

### You get interrupted by someone

Say: "I am in a focus window, I will come back to you in [X] minutes." Then write a note about what you were doing so you can return to it.

### You finish the task before the timer

Good. Note the win. Start the next task or end the session. Do not just drift consciously choose.

### Your mind goes completely blank

This is rest, not failure. Sit with it for 60 seconds. If nothing comes: break. Then restart with the 5-step trigger.

## CHAPTER 04 · CLOSE THE TABS

# Let go of what you will not do.

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This is the hardest chapter. Not because the concept is complicated it is not but because it requires you to be honest with yourself about things you have been avoiding being honest about. Some of your open tabs are not tasks. They are guilt. They are versions of yourself you hoped you would become. They are things you said yes to and now wish you had not. They need to be closed. Not deferred. Closed.

## What a tab you need to close looks like:

It is been on your list for more than 3 months

You feel a flash of guilt when you see it, then skip past it

You cannot picture the specific next action you would take

If a friend told you they were dropping it, you would say "that is fine"

It belonged to a version of you that you are no longer trying to be

Keeping a tab open you will never close is not optimism. It is a slow drain. Every time you see it, your brain spends energy processing it. Closing it consciously is a decision, not a failure.

## The close-the-tab ritual

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Do this for each tab you are closing. Takes 2 minutes per tab.

### 1. Name it clearly

Write the full tab in one sentence. Not "the thing" what it actually is.

### 2. Acknowledge it

Say: "I was going to [X]. I am choosing not to." Out loud if you can.

### 3. Find the real cost

What are you actually giving up? Be specific. Often it is less than the guilt suggested.

### 4. Release the version

Who was the version of you that wanted this? Let them go too. Kindly.

### 5. Cross it off

Physically cross it off your list. Not delete cross off. You can see that you decided.

### Your Chapter 04 action:

Find one thing on your list you have been avoiding for 3+ months.

Do the ritual. Cross it off. Notice how you feel after.

## CHAPTER 05 · EVENING SHUT

# Stop carrying work to bed.

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Most people do not have a sleep problem. They have a mental-load problem that shows up at night because that is the first time all day they have stopped moving. The moment you lie down, your brain which has been holding everything together through sheer momentum finally has space to surface all the unresolved things. The evening shutdown gives those things somewhere to go before you get to bed.

## The 5-minute evening shutdown sequence:

### 1. Capture (60 sec)

Do a mini brain dump everything that surfaced today that is not captured yet. Not processed, just written.

### 2. Tomorrow's one thing (30 sec)

Write down the single most important thing for tomorrow. Just one. Your brain will stop trying to remember it.

### 3. Today's one win (30 sec)

Write one thing that went okay today. Not productivity anything. A good cup of tea counts.

### 4. Close open loops (2 min)

Scan your list. Anything urgent that is genuinely unresolved: either do it now (under 2 min) or write the specific next step so your brain knows it is handled.

### 5. Physical close (30 sec)

Close the notebook. Close the laptop. Say literally "I am done for today." The physical act matters. It signals your brain the session is over.

## Why this works and what to expect

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The Zeigarnik effect is a well-documented psychological phenomenon: your brain holds unfinished tasks in active memory, generating low-level cognitive load until they are resolved. The evening shutdown gives each open item a resolution either captured, completed, or consciously deferred. That resolution signal is what allows your brain to actually rest.

### What people notice after 2 weeks of evening shutdowns:

- Falling asleep faster brain is not running background processes
- Waking up less often with "oh no I forgot to" thoughts
- Starting the next day with more clarity and less inertia
- Less of the Sunday anxiety that comes from unresolved week
- Better separation between work and rest you feel the difference

You do not need to resolve everything before bed. You need to capture everything. The act of writing it down tells your brain: this is held. You can let go now.

### Your Chapter 05 action:

Do the 5-minute shutdown tonight. Every night this week.  
On day 3, notice whether you fall asleep differently.

**BONUS · NOTION BRAIN DUMP TEMPLAT**

# Your Fillable Brain Dump Template

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Open. Duplicate. Dump everything. Triage. Sleep.

The fillable template is pre-built for everything in this kit. Weekly brain dump space, triage columns, focus session log, evening shutdown checklist, and a "closed tabs" archive where dropped items live (in case you ever want to revisit them).

## Setup (2 minutes):

- Open the fillable PDF template included in your download
- The template is ready to use no setup needed
- Do your first brain dump in the Weekly Dump page
- Triage using the three-column view
- Run the evening shutdown checklist tonight

### What is in the template:

- Weekly brain dump page
- Focus session log
- Closed tabs archive
- Triage board (Do/Drop/Defer)
- Evening shutdown checklist
- Monthly review page

# You have everything you need.

Do a brain dump. Triage what is on it.

Use the focus trigger when you sit down to work.

Close the tabs you are never going to open.

Run the evening shutdown before you sleep.

That is the whole kit.

Your head will feel different by Friday.

**The HalfDone Team**