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Multitasking

In a world full of competing priorities, multitasking promises important gains for our performance. But did you know that the habit of multitasking actually creates the opposite effect to what it promises?
In fact research shows:

We have between **5** and **8 applications** open at once [1], and switch between applications, on average, **566 times a day**. [3]

We habitually check email **75-100 times a day**, with an average email session of only **38 seconds**. [3]

We multitask **57%** of the time while working on a computer/laptop.[2]

After an interruption due to multitasking, it takes us an average of **9.5 minutes** to refocus. [1]

UNLEARN MULTITASKING IN 3 SIMPLE STEPS

1. **Take a breath.** When faced with multiple tasks, this may feel like a challenge. Remember that with practice, the benefits will outweigh the effort it takes to maintain a singular focus.

2. **Endure the discomfort.** With practice, you'll overcome the tension you feel when stopping yourself from multitasking, and gain enough mental freedom to get ahead of those impulses.

3. **Recall your priorities**. If you find the newly arrived task should take precedence, give it your full attention. If you determine otherwise, choose to say "no".

As you reduce your multitasking habits, you'll find yourself more productive throughout the day.

References:
Research studies: study 1, study 2, study 3.
Book: Hougaard, R., Carter, J. & Coutts, G. (2016). One Second Ahead. Enhance Your Performance At Work With Mindfulness. Palgrave Macmillan

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