



Have you ever finished a work day and not been able to say what you actually got done? You ticked lots off your to-do list today. You attended every meeting on your calendar. By rights you should feel a sense of accomplishment. Instead, you feel deflated and empty. Lots done. Nothing actually accomplished.

It isn't laziness or a failure of effort. It's just a day that pulled you in many directions, with no time to sit and think.

A day like that doesn't leave room for the work that actually matters. Distraction doesn't just take us off course. It stops us from doing what we came in to do.

We spend roughly a third of our adult lives at work, and when that third stops giving us the experience of having made a positive impact, the cost goes beyond the work itself. It shows up in how we feel about our days, and over time, in how we feel about ourselves.

This month's blog explores why distraction has been so hard to fix, despite all the effort that has gone into overcoming it. Given its impact on our wellbeing, it's an issue worth examining.

Read the blog: [Why Hasn't the Distraction Problem Been Solved?](#)

Ninja Nudge | 6 Small Moves to Protect your Focus this Week

THREE FOR YOU:

1. List your top three priorities

Before you open email, Slack, or anything that hands you someone else's priorities, write your top three actions on a post-it and stick it somewhere front and centre. The point isn't list management; it's deciding what your day is for, so when distraction tries to pull you away, you have something visible reminding you what you came in to do.

2. Choose one channel for the next hour

Decide which channel earns the next hour of your attention, email, Slack, Teams, whichever one matters most for what you're trying to move forward, and turn off notifications on the rest or close the apps entirely. When the hour is up, go back only to what you actually need next, instead of checking everything out of habit.

3. Hide your phone before you sit down to think

Out of sight, ideally another room. Your hand reaches for it before you're aware you've reached, and what feels like willpower is mostly a fight with proximity. Putting the phone where you can't grab it makes the focus possible.

THREE FOR THE TEAM:

1. Narrate your focus-time out loud

When you protect time for your own deep work, say so: "I'm offline 9 to 11 to think through the Q3 plan. I'll see Slack at 11." Not as a memo, just as a habit, every time you do it. Your team takes its cues from what they see and hear you do, and saying it gives them permission to do the same

2. Schedule-send your evening messages for the morning

When a thought lands at 9pm and you want to get it down before it disappears, write it, and schedule it to arrive when your team is back at work. Same idea captured, no late-night ping landing on a colleague's phone, and no pressure building over time for people to be reachable outside work hours. Recovery time is what makes focus possible the next day.

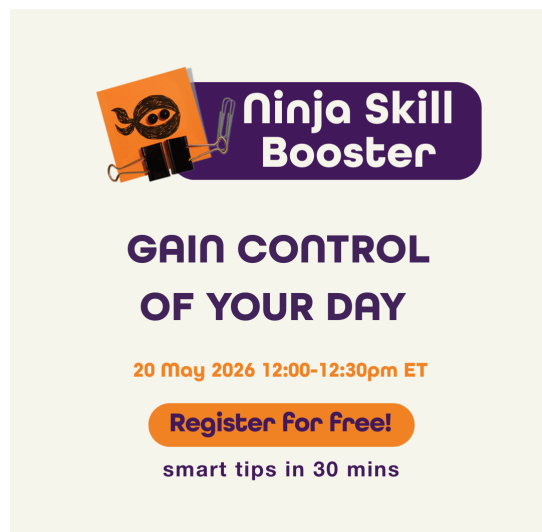
3. Make team decisions findable in one place

Pick a single home for decisions, a shared doc, a project board, a team wiki, and make recording decisions there a team habit. When the next person needs to know what was decided, they go to the place instead of interrupting someone who was deep in their own work.

Free Ninja Skill Booster | Wednesday May 20, 12:00 PM ET

Gain Control of Your Day with Ninja Nick Aiello (30 minutes)

If you regularly end the day wondering whether you tackled what truly mattered, this session is for you.



In 30 minutes, Nick will share concrete ways to:

- shield your attention from the steady stream of distractions
- use small habit shifts to recover time you didn't know you were losing
- spot the productivity-killers that are draining your day without you noticing

Bring a notebook. Bring a colleague. Share with your team.

Wednesday 20th May 2026 @12pm ET

[Express Registration](#)

Spotlight Workshop | How to be a Productivity Ninja®

A practical, hands-on workshop that helps your team get on top of their work, manage attention and commitments, and build habits that hold up when the pressure is on.

Each participant leaves with:

- a working "second brain" to manage tasks, projects, and commitments
- a clear system for capturing, organizing, reviewing, and doing the work
- less mental load and more confidence in managing priorities
- realistic habits for staying in control, even on the hardest days

Learn more: <https://thinkproductivena.com/workshops/become-a-productivity-ninja/>

Resource | Productivity for Busy Brains

When attention doesn't behave the same way every day, generic productivity advice tends to fall apart on contact with real working life.

Productivity for Busy Brains is an ADHD-aware ebook by Giles R. Orford, an ADHD coach and former senior leader, shaped by Think Productive's productivity methodology, with a foreword by Graham Allcott.

It's written for people who have ADHD, or suspect they might, or recognize themselves in the patterns. It also gives leaders useful language for supporting neurodiversity on their teams without turning the conversation into diagnosis.

Buy your copy here: [Productivity for Busy Brains](#)

Warm regards,

Richard and the Think Productive North America Team



Our mailing addresses are:

- 22311 Peachtree, Novi MI 48375 USA
- PO Box 208 Station Main St Marys Ontario Canada

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