EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING DIFFICULTIES AND STRATEGIES

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| **SKILL** | **WHAT IT MEANS** | **STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT** |
| Self-control | Develop clear decision-making processes to avoid making rash choices | Practice mindfulness techniques – deep breathing and continuing to ten to reduce impulsive reactions.  Establish routines and use visual reminders and charts |
| Working Memory | The ability to hold and manipulate information in mind for short periods | Utilise mnemonics such as acronyms or visualisation techniques to break down complex tasks into smaller steps  Use reminders, calendars or digital tools to enhance organisation and recall information |
| Emotional Control | The ability to manage and regulate one’s emotions in order to respond appropriately to different situations | Practice mindfulness techniques such as deep breathing and continuing to ten to reduce impulsive reactions.  Establish routines and use visual reminders and charts |
| Problem Solving | The ability to analyse and resolve challenges or obstacles that arise during tasks or projects | Strategies like defining the problem, brainstorming solutions, evaluation options, breaking down into smaller parts, seeking input and taking a systematic approach |
| Task Initiation | The ability to begin and engage in tasks without unnecessary delay, procrastination or hesitation | Use strategies like setting time limits or implementing a ‘just start’ approach to overcome procrastination.  Break tasks into smaller, more manageable parts to reduce overwhelm.  Prioritise the most difficult or important tasks first to initiate momentum |
| Flexibility | The capacity to adapt to changing circumstances and adjust plans as needed | Challenge rigid thinking patterns by actively seeking out different perspectives and brainstorming alternative solutions.  Problem-solving exercises and engage in activities that foster creativity and open mindedness |
| Organisation | The ability to create and maintain order by arranging and categorising tasks, materials and information | Establish efficient systems of categorising such as colour coding, labelling or filing systems to reduce clutter and improve organisation.  Create designated spaces for items and develop a routine for decluttering and maintaining neatness |
| Time Management | The skill of effectively utilising time and allocating it to different tasks and responsibilities | Strategies like creating schedules, setting priorities, breaking tasks into smaller steps, using timers or reminders and eliminating distractions can be used to improve time management |

Developed from various information sources on Executive Functioning deficits. Some sources include:

[www.ADDitudeMag.com](http://www.ADDitudeMag.com)

<https://theadultspeechtherapyworkbook.com/executive-functioning-strategies-for-adults/>