



TASK PARALYSIS and ADHD

A GUIDE FOR TEENS LIKE YOU

You're not lazy. You're not broken.
Your brain is just overwhelmed. Let's work with it.



1 WHAT IS TASK PARALYSIS?



It's when you want or need to do something, but your brain feels stuck and you just can't start. It feels overwhelming, confusing, or too big. It's not about not caring—it's your ADHD brain trying to protect you from stress.

2 SIGNS IT MIGHT BE HAPPENING

- ★ Staring at your work but not starting
- ★ Knowing what to do, but feeling frozen
- ★ Doing anything else instead (scrolling, gaming, cleaning...)
- ★ Feeling guilty, frustrated or upset
- ★ Things feel "too much" or "all or nothing"

Small steps count! ♥



3 WHY IT HAPPENS

- Too much to think about at once
- Low motivation or too much pressure
- Not sure where to start or what the first step is
- Fear of getting it wrong or not doing it perfectly
- Overwhelm takes over and your brain hits 'stop'

4 HOW TO BREAK THE FREEZE

Try these small steps to get unstuck:

- 1 Lower the bar**
It doesn't have to be perfect. 'Good enough' is good.
- 2 Make it tiny**
What's the smallest possible step? Example: Open the laptop. Open the doc. Write one line.
- 3 Use a time hack**
Set a timer for 5 minutes. Just do it for 5. You can stop after that.
- 4 Change your space**
Move somewhere else, stand up, put on music, or get a drink.
- 5 Talk it out or body double**
Tell someone what you're doing or work in the same space as someone else.
- 6 Celebrate starting**
Starting is the hardest part—give yourself credit for showing up!

5 TOOLS THAT CAN HELP

- Checklists or visual to-do lists
- Timers (Pomodoro style)
- Reminders & alarms
- Apps you like (Trello, Finch, Focus Keeper, or Todoist)
- Rewards (breaks, snacks, fun things after)
- Write it out (brain dump first)

6 WHAT NOT TO TELL YOURSELF

- ✗ I'm so lazy
- ✗ I just don't care
- ✗ Why can't I be normal?
- ✗ Other people can do it, what's wrong with me?
- ✗ I'll never get through this



These thoughts make it worse.
Be kind to your brain. You've got this. ♥

7 WHAT TO SAY INSTEAD

- ✓ My brain is overwhelmed right now—that's okay.
- ✓ I can take the smallest step.
- ✓ I don't have to do it all at once.
- ✓ Starting is enough.
- ✓ I'm learning how to work with my brain.

REMEMBER: ♥
You're not behind.
You're not lazy.
You're learning different strategies for a brain that works differently. ✨

YOU'VE GOT MORE POWER THAN YOU THINK. ⚡

➡ **PROGRESS > PERFECTION** ⚡
You won't feel motivated first—action comes first.
Tiny steps. Kind thoughts. Keep trying.
You've got this. ♥

NEED EXTRA SUPPORT?

Talk to a trusted adult, teacher, or counsellor. You don't have to do this alone. 💬