

EXERCISE 3: H.A.L.T.

When your mind is so full that you cannot concentrate or focus, try this exercise to ensure your basic needs are met in order to get back on track.

Hungry

Focus on your body, and see if you are hungry. Being hungry affects your mind by:

1. Lowering your blood sugar which depresses your mood and motivation.
2. Preventing your prefrontal cortex (where thinking, impulse, clear thought, focus and executive functions take place) from running at full capacity.

In a Nutshell: When you are hungry, you do not think straight!

Angry or **A**nxious

Notice your body signals, and see if you are either angry or anxious. Being angry or anxious affects your mind by:

1. Releasing cortisol which puts your body in Fight-or-Flight mode, shutting down what it sees as unessential survival systems.
2. Shutting down the rational parts of your brain so you are unable to think and reason through things.

In a Nutshell: When you are angry or anxious, you will get an inaccurate perception of what is going on, and your decision making isn't at its best.

Lonely

Think about your friends, family and other social connections you have. Do you feel lonely? Being lonely affects your mind by:

1. Making you feel unhappy, moody and unsupported.
2. Making you feel physically unhealthy.

In a Nutshell: When you are lonely, you don't feel well mentally or physically.

Tired

Are you physically or mentally tired? Being tired affects your mind by:

1. Decreasing self-control and willpower, opening up the potential to make poor choices.
2. Slowing your mind so it is working at the equivalent of a lower IQ.

In a Nutshell: When you are tired, you are not your best.

SHAKE IT OFF!

"Shake" off that extra cortisol in your body by literally shaking your body. Start with your hands and move to your head and legs. Shake for a few minutes and then relax. This simple exercise will help your body settle down!