

title: **There is hope. WFH is hard for everyone. It's not just you. Here's something I discovered that I think will be helpful.**
id: kwj00c
url: [here](https://www.reddit.com/r/ADHD_Programmers/comments/kwj00c/there_is_hope_wfh_is_hard_for_everyone_its): https://www.reddit.com/r/ADHD_Programmers/comments/kwj00c/there_is_hope_wfh_is_hard_for_everyone_its
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Post Text

Some background, I started a new job during COVID. It's very far outside of my background. I was a senior .NET developer and now I'm a mid level FAANG server less app developer. Things are so different and I feel utterly lost and inept. Onto the breakthrough... I realized yesterday that we, especially developers with ADHD, rely on external chatter to subconsciously learn. We can't shut out the noise so, if you're like me, have subconsciously learned to harness the noise. When we hear words multiple times we get an alarm in our brain that says "I've heard that word a few times, I bet it's important." And you likely look it up. And maybe that happens a few times because you know you've heard the word and you know you've looked it up, but you don't remember what it means. Well, eventually you remember the word and what it means. So, by the time you get assigned a project and you see that word you know what it is so you don't panic. Right now we don't have that noise, so while we intellectually know that noise is bad for our ADHD, we don't realize that we've learned to harness the noise to our advantage so we panic. So many things are new and we feel like we don't know where to start because it's too much. So everything feels 100x harder. So, a few tips: 1. Take notes during meetings or when people talk. It will help mimic that subconscious learning and you'll likely look through your notes because you remember someone saying a word. 2. The way to kill the wall of panic is to focus on a single brick. With whatever you're working on find the smallest bit of information that you're unfamiliar with and research it. Your one goal is to figure out what this one thing is, what it does, and/or how to use it. 3. Use the 20/5 rule for learning. Kill all potential distractions. Set a timer for 20 minutes. Learn all you can about the thing you're trying to learn. If you come across a new word that seems important write it down. Don't research the new thing. Keep a list of unfamiliar words that you feel are important. This way you won't forget what's important and you are less likely to get distracted from what you're trying to learn at the moment. When the timer goes off take 5 minutes to stretch, exercise, or meditate. Do NOT look at your phone. The 20 minutes are called focused learning. The 5 minutes are called diffused learning. It's a well studied and proven learning technique. After the 5 minutes you can set another timer to do easy or fun things for a bit, but try another round of 20/5 if your brain is up for it. Good luck! Every day is different. Today may be hard but tomorrow may be easier.

Comments

Commenter_2

ID: gj4ybbb, Upvotes: 13

You are so right about the background chatter being important! I was wondering why I was struggling so much lately and feeling so behind all the time, but this makes so much sense! We had an open office setting before COVID, and I had my hands in a little bit of everything. Now I'm realizing it was just because I overheard it and then jumped in wherever I could be useful. Now I'm just sitting in my apartment feeling useless because I'm ONLY doing my work and it's so boring. Who knew I would grow to miss being around people, let alone just how useful if was. Thanks OP! I feel like a weight is lifted off my useless potato shoulders!

Commenter_3

ID: gj8apt2, Upvotes: 3

This sub is so distracting when there are good posts to read. I'll read it later though.

Commenter_4

ID: gj5gc1d, Upvotes: 2

This is so helpful! Good insights, thanks for sharing :)

Commenter_5

ID: gj6b9mt, Upvotes: 2

This is super helpful and you've put into words some thing I've been struggling with for a while!

Commenter_6

ID: gj6rw5y, Upvotes: 1

Very encouraging! Thanks OP I'm going to be using the 20/5 rule more often :)

Commenter_7

ID: gjw2g3r, Upvotes: 1

I love coming here to see others put things I feel and do into words better than I could ever do. Yes, I totally understand this and I feel it! I'm struggling so hard with my job right now that I've just about given up and am anticipating being let go for not performing. I hadn't even realized how much of this learning by osmosis helped me get and keep my finger on the pulse at my last job, and not having that at my current job is a real hinderance.