Tweak Your System

I’m Kris, I’m soft dev for 7 years. I started the project for 100commmits.

I tried many apps for

How this time tracker is different from others?

My two biggest painpoints in time tracking apps I encountered:

- it’s cumbersome to enter tasks

- it’s just an excel with buttons

Decided to make my own.

Dividing tasks into smaller steps makes you focus. You won’t

Most apps hit you in a face with full set of functionalities. I want this app to be a transformative journey. Slowly introducing you into the world of order step by step.

The vision

1. Let’s play –
   1. 1 set
   2. Great – paly around, create 2 more
   3. Now focus – take one set that you want to improve
2. Introduction – why dividing into steps is important.
3. Take one task you want to (first one must be positive)
   1. Get better at
   2. Get faster at
4. Divide it into steps
5. Start the timer
6. Focus, finish
7. Analyze

You start with one set of actions. Measure, try to improve. Like washing dishes. I take out from dishwasher, empty the dryer, put in dirty dishes, handwash what’s left.

The idea of ‘the materace commercials’ – you spend 3rd of your life in bed – so buy good mattress.. ok. But what about the other things. How about washing dishesh, <putting cluttery next to each other>

You get one functionality at the begging and as you go the app possibilities expand. Gamification but not in pointless stars, badges and levels way but by creating a meaningful journey. Like a good strategy game. You start with wood and stone and possibility to craft an axe to end up 20h later with 20 resources and whole city to manage.

The greatest challenge here is to balance the constraints and actually create awesome user journey.

I view this project more as interactive guide than ‘an app’.

[there was ‘luxury email’ that had one-on-one personal guidance – maybe not a bad idea – more experienced user guide newbies]

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Welcome to the productive part of the Internet where burnout doesn’t exist, and cold showers bring you gold and fame.

If you’re here you’ve probably seen some time tracking / journaling / habit tracking apps. This one falls into the same category.

But this one is different.

“Hm... how?” you wonder.

Well, I’m glad you’re asking!

I tried many time tracking apps including analogue pen & paper. I survived max 3 days. It’s either because I spent too much time tweaking my categories, or the switching between tasks were too cumbersome (pulling the phone out is itself noticeable effort – that’s why I hope to evolve to communicate with wear os / apple watch).

So, what’s the solution?

1. One button task switch

“But how?” you wonder.

Well, I’m glad you asking!

Instead of every time searching **this** task from the icons/dropdown you prepare yourself. You take your task, divide it into smaller items, write them down, start the timer and then the magic happens – you get 0 friction from timing your actions.

But actually! This ‘mechanic’ isn’t the goal.

It is an outcome.

Of much more important idea.

“What idea?” you wonder.

Well, I’m glad you’re asking!

1. Every minute spent on planning saves you 10 minutes on execution
2. Orient, Observe, Decide, Act

First you plan, then you execute. Repeat.

This gives you another advantage. When you put down your steps and you start the timer… and you know you are timing. And it clicks away the seconds at you. And you know these seconds have a purpose. And it’s one purpose – the one you wrote down.

You will not drift away to do something else. You will not spend 30 minutes writing first sentence of your blog post if you’re measuring time of ‘writing a draft’. You will not fall into a youtube rabbithole because you found something that might be maybe somehow related to another future, potential blog post.

[note] make notes of that – that other things. Cool yt video – put it in ‘to watch playlist’. Cool idea – write it down. Correction for another part of the blog – write down to do after you finish.

“Ok, so this is just pomodoro with ‘chop your task into smaller bites’?” you wonder.

Not quite. Let me elaborate.

1. User journey

Every app I’ve ever had slaps you in the face with their whole system. Sometimes you get 3 smaller slaps. More often is one big slap (maybe with some highlights). In fact, most of the apps in the end are just fancified excel with much less functionality.

This app is supposed to be a journey. A transformative one. You’re now here, more or less organized, wanting to squeeze out more out of precious seconds dripping from your life and I want to get you to the Awarenessland where you will enjoy and cherish every drop of it.

“But how,” you exclaimed in disbelief.

Well. I couldn’t be happier you’re asking.

I intend to use the infamous gamification techniques but in a sensible way. No useless levels or meaningless badges. The possibilities and functionalities should uncover as the time passes. Like in a good strategy game – you start with wood, stone, and the possibility to craft an axe to end up 20 hours later with 20 types of resources and a whole city to manage. Don’t start with tracking 100% of your life. Focus on one thing. Improve. Feel satisfied. Take the next one.

The greatest challenge here is to balance the constraints and create an awesome user journey.

Learning is the most efficient when it’s fun.

So… How it will all look like?

Phase 1: The basic loop

As fast as it’s humanly possible, I want to have the basic loop - to create a set of activities, measure the time and analyze results. So that we can start using it and see what features would add the most value.

Phase 2: Adding features and designing the journey.

Just a couple of features from the top of my head: /planning the day, saving routines, setting goals, tracking habits, making notes, tracking improvements, predicting actions, estimating time.

But the most important is – how to lay it out. How to set up the learning path. My initial guess is

1. One sequence of actions (the basic loop)
2. Bird eye view on the day, loosely interpreted items for whole day,
   1. Morning routine
   2. Idle (nonmeasured time)
   3. Work/learn
   4. evening time
3. Routines
4. Setting and tracking goals
5. Planning a day

But I won’t be able to confirm it after we try out point 1.

Maybe it would be good to include feedback point directly into the app.

Maybe some testers would agree to share their in-app activity.

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[idea] non numeric input: you estimate time for whole task and put divided tasks on linear axis without showing percentage/time/any kind of number.