The importance of inertia

“an object in motion stays in motion, an object at rest remains at rest”.

It requires energy to move an object from a state of rest to a state of motion, while maintaining motion requires no energy (assuming the object is in a vacuum and there’s no friction).

I’ve noticed recently a disturbing pattern in my day-to-day life – it seems like 80% of the work I accomplish gets done before noon. After I take my lunch break (watch some youtube/read some blogs while eating for 1 hr) my productivity generally goes to shit.

I’ve noticed this more and more recently, and I think it has to do with inertia. Things like social media, youtube, etc, are much easier to avoid if you haven’t touched them yet (in the current day). Once you take your lunch break and start surfing the web, it becomes much more difficult to avoid in the afternoon/evening, when you’re supposed to be back at work.

Once you take a break, it becomes more difficult to start back up. An object at rest remains at rest. And once you do manage to drag yourself back into work mode, now its social media/youtube/whatever that has the inertia, and it will keep interjecting itself at the slightest opportunity.

So, to increase/maintain productivity, you must maintain inertia. Obviously you still need to break for lunch – but don’t stop working. Maintain your inertia while you eat, and carry that momentum forward into the afternoon. It’s a lot easier to maintain speed than it is to accelerate or start from zero.

This applies on a macro scale as well, with habits like the gym, diet, flossing, etc. Once you lose inertia, it takes energy to start back up.