

A person with blonde hair tied back is seen from the side, looking out at a sunset over a body of water. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow. The person is wearing a dark jacket. The background is a soft, out-of-focus landscape with water and distant hills.

## HOW TO STAY FOCUSED WHEN YOU'RE OVERWHELMED

212-Careers

Feeling overwhelmed is a mental state that reflects your belief that you have too much to handle. Your senses are overloaded with input, and your brain becomes overwhelmed. It tries to process more information than it can, which leads to stress, anxiety, poor performance, and other negative experiences.

Incidentally, feeling overwhelmed is a perception, not necessarily a reality. You may see a situation as impossible to deal with when it isn't that difficult to handle. That doesn't matter to your brain. If you perceive a situation or experience as being overwhelmed, that is your reality.

Feeling overwhelmed leads to a lack of focus. If you need to stay on task and concentrate but are experiencing a mental meltdown, here are a few tips to improve your focus and mental state.

### **Get up and Get Moving**

Moderate to intense physical activity improves your self-confidence. That means you feel better about dealing with information overload. You are confident you can stay focused on the task. Confident people are capable people, which means you will be more capable of concentrating after a little physical activity.

Feeling overwhelmed can lead to stress and depression, and guess how exercise influences those mental states? You guessed it: A burst of physical activity lowers stress and depression. Just a few minutes of physical exercise will boost your mental health. You are rewarded with increased energy and better focus.

Feeling overwhelmed is no fun. Get moving, and you will be rewarded with feel-good endorphins that turn your negative emotional state into a positive one.

## **Meditate**

Meditation is a stress reliever and mood booster. There are several traditional meditation practices, but you only need to find a quiet space and clear your mind. Minimize sensory distractions and embrace the current moment.

If your mind starts racing and your nonstop inner chatter starts up, consciously push those thoughts away. Get into a comfortable sitting or lying position. Breathe deeply and fully experience the breathing process. Exhale and repeat. A daily meditation process can prevent mental feelings of being overwhelmed. Meditation is also effective for treating mental overload after it develops.

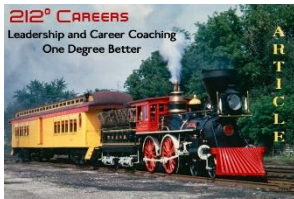
## **There's an App for That**

Apps are small pieces of software you download to your phone and computer. Some apps can improve your concentration. Here are five focus-boosting apps that can help you clear the mental clutter when you feel overwhelmed.

1. Freedom
2. Brain.fm
3. Focus Keeper
4. RescueTime
5. Stay Focused

## Ask Yourself If It's Necessary

Feeling overwhelmed often results from dealing with too many things at once. List everything that is worrying you. Be honest with yourself and objectively decide whether you should be concerned. We often invest mental energy in unnecessary thoughts or experiences that are better ignored.



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