

The
CatalystTM
Calendar



FLOW-INFUSED
TIME MANAGEMENT

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Flow Neuroscience



There is a recurrent sensation in our lives of suddenly *coming back to Earth* or *waking up from a (day)dream* after being on a productive streak or really enjoying yourself for hours. We commonly know it as being “in the zone”, but [Psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi](#) coined the term of [flow state](#), “a mental state in which a person performing an activity is fully immersed in a feeling of energized focus, full involvement, and enjoyment in the process of the activity. In essence, flow is characterized by the complete absorption in what one does, and a resulting transformation in one's sense of time.”

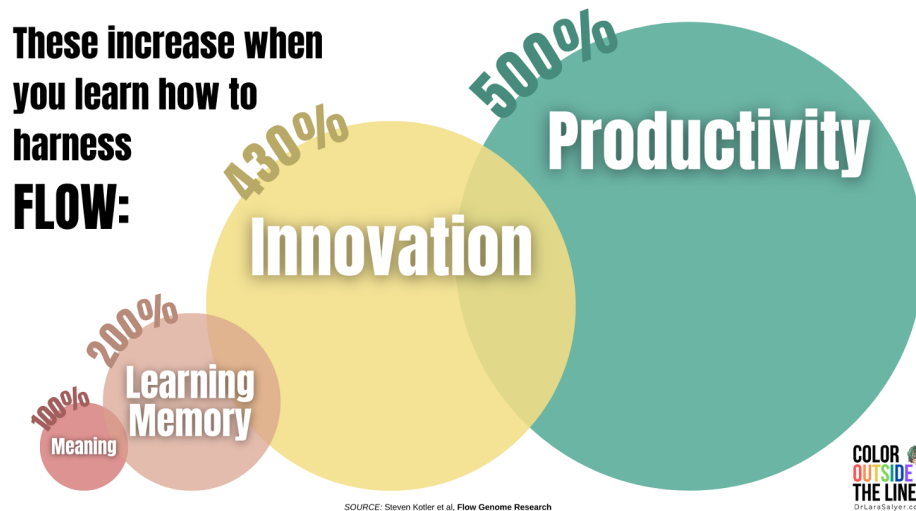
Csikszentmihalyi defined flow as one of the [eight states](#) that we experience when faced with a challenge, which are based on the nature of the task and our skill level are lack of interest, calm, worry, control, anxiety, arousal, and, of course, flow. In each state, we relate to the task in a different way (with indifference, fear, excitement) depending on how challenging the task is and how competent we are. Flow involves “a balance between the challenge of the task and the skills that the individual possesses”, so it happens when the challenge is big but achievable.

[Steven Kotler](#), an expert in ultimate human performance, founded [The Flow Research Collective](#), a research and training organization to understand the science behind how to get humans to perform their best. He conducted a study and found that participants from a wide variety of fields such as entrepreneurs, scientists, and writers reported being [700% more creative in flow state](#).

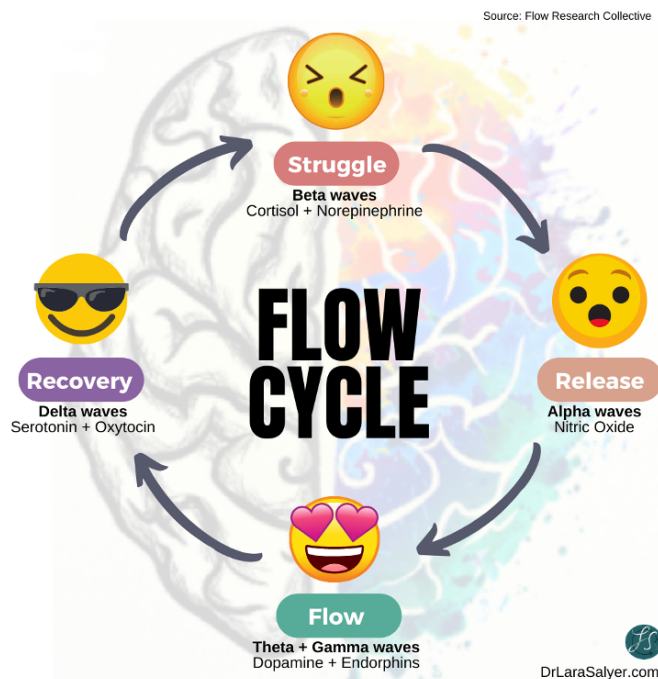
A [study](#) on workplace growth and well-being shows that the balance that represents flow state makes workers, in this case, physicians, “more likely to optimize their experience as professionals and work more effectively, collaboratively, and successfully with their colleagues”.

Whether you're a mountain climber, video gamer, musician, or sports enthusiast, capturing flow state is key to effortless enjoyment and zen. When you enter flow state, your brain releases [five feel-good neurotransmitters](#), which are: norepinephrine, which helps us acquire data; dopamine, which improves pattern recognition and data processing; anandamide, which accelerates lateral thinking and widens the database; and endorphins, which modulate stress levels and keeps us calm.

The way in which our brain plays around will all of them generates feelings of happiness, well-being, and lowered stress –and that is why it is so addictive! These neurotransmitters increase our ability to problem solve, pay attention to detail, and relax our muscles. Flow state has been shown to significantly increase life satisfaction for older adults. It can also aid in motivation in work and employment and even Navy SEALs use it on a daily basis for success.



Accessing flow state is an effective, rewarding, and pleasurable way to combat feelings of burnout, fatigue, and stress. The more you practice accessing this state, the easier it will become for you and the better you will feel in both your personal and professional life.



The AHA! Method™

The Catalyst Advantage™ will help you tap into your inner wisdom, align your values, and emerge as a stronger, more capable practitioner who is organized, efficient, and anti-burnout. You'll learn skills to invite discussion, self-reflection, and tools to navigate your way to becoming an empowered practitioner.

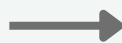
Research shows that the flow model “is a function of challenge and skill”, so it can be practiced. There are some factors that can be considered in order to improve the emotional state and achieve the state of flow:

- **Knowing ourselves:** learning how we behave during flow helps us create that state, as well as knowing our strengths and skills.
- **Balancing challenge and skill:** when we know our set of skills, we can better choose a task that suits them, so the perfect balance can be achieved.
- **Setting clear goals:** having objectives in mind gives direction to our efforts.
- **Concentrating on one task at a time:** multitasking can interfere with flow state, it is better to focus on a particular task.
- **Developing a compensation methodology:** organizing and managing time and method depending on your skills will put us ahead of the game.
- **Soliciting honest and immediate feedback:** obtaining feedback is necessary to help us stay on the path and readjust when needed.

We combine these elements into a simple framework, the **AHA! Method™** which stands for **Anchor-Highlight-Activate**

If burnout is:

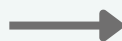
Depersonalization
and Cynicism



Low perceived
Achievement



Emotional
Exhaustion



The solution is:



ANCHOR in personal
mission & motivation



HIGHLIGHT meaningful
milestones & feedback



ACTIVATE embodied
energy and flow

Becoming a Catalyst

The **Catalyst AHA!**[™] method helps you learn one of the most important foundational aspects of flow neuroscience: **containment**. You'll learn to bust the antiquated myth that flow is generated randomly, and creative play is a lucky happenstance. Not true! The most prolific and happy people are those that have devised their own time-blocking methods, **optimized** to their own **energy cadence**.

This guide will help you understand time management in a completely unique way. You'll learn how to:

- **prime** your brain by setting proper time **boundaries**
- **augment** productivity by removing **flow blockers** and planting **flow triggers**
- **prioritize** the often overlooked (and quieter) **recovery phase** of the flow cycle

Learning this system is like learning anything: you will get better each time you practice. Once it becomes second-nature, you'll find that the **AHA!**[™] **planning system** is a **permanent upgrade of your wellbeing**. You'll have all the tools to manage time, boundaries, and energy so you can routinely reflect and realign your goals towards your values. You'll have the confidence to be a Catalyst[™] practitioner who **prioritizes eudaimonia** and understands how to move **past burnout**.

Average Practitioner

Reactive
Rushed
Frantic
Overworked
People-pleasing
Struggles daily
Sleep deprived
Prides on "busy"
Lacks self-awareness

Catalyst[™]


INNOVATIVE *Efficient*
Unique *Flow-centric*
ORGANIZED *Grounded*
Boundaried *CURIOUS*
Anti-burnout
Engaging





AHA!TM Yearly planning

This worksheet helps you think critically about what matters to you. You'll reflect on your values and realign goals as they shift in priority. It's recommended to complete this once per year

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BIG PICTURE

What do you want to be known for and WHY:



3 YEAR GOALS

Write one general goal for each life domain

PERSONAL WELLNESS: _____

COMMUNITY: _____

PRODUCTIVITY: _____

RELATIONSHIP: _____

SPIRITUALITY: _____



1 YEAR GOALS

Write a specific goal for each life domain

PERSONAL WELLNESS: _____

COMMUNITY: _____

PRODUCTIVITY: _____

RELATIONSHIP: _____


SPIRITUALITY: _____



AHA!™

Quarterly planning

We can only work on one or two life domains at a time. When you choose your quarterly goals, be mindful that progress can be diluted if you try to work on too many areas at once. It's recommended to complete this once per quarter (every 3 months).

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QUARTERLY GOALS

Be specific on what you'd like to accomplish at the end of this quarter

Organize sub-goals that would stack towards accomplishing your quarterly goals in these months below:

MONTH 1

MONTH 2

MONTH 3



AHA!™

Monthly planning

Proactively planning your month is the best way to protect your time, boundaries and prime your calendar for flow. Can you schedule days with no public-facing duties? Challenge yourself to reserve afternoons for yourself to prioritize play.

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Su	Mo	Tu	We	Th	Fr	Sa


Important:



AHA!™

Weekly Prep

This worksheet helps you set up your week to align with your deepest meaning and cultivate your own opportunities for flow. The more time you take to think deeply about these answers, the better your brain is primed for eudaimonia!

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ANCHOR

- Name your current top 2 values: _____
- What value-aligned goals will you be working on this week _____

- Why is this important to you *right now*: _____



HIGHLIGHT

- How will you know you've made progress? _____

- What boundaries are needed to protect your energy? _____

- What did you learn from last week that can help you this week? _____



ACTIVATE

- Where can you set flow triggers in your schedule for this? _____

- What non-stimulating activity will you do for flow recovery? _____

- What emotions are you currently working through and where do they live in your body?

While your brain is primed, make a brain dump list of all the things to do this week!

Day Planning

1. **START** by writing your fixed appointments on the planner, located on the left.
2. While reflecting on your weekly goals, **PURGE** relevant tasks in the To Do box
3. **BATCH** similar tasks together (using different highlighter colors).
4. **TRIAGE** and assign a time in your day when you would have energy to match the task
5. **PLOT** "AHA!" flow trigger opportunities during transition periods

5:00
6:00
7:00
8:00
9:00
10:00
11:00
12:00
1:00
2:00
3:00
4:00
5:00
6:00
7:00
8:00
9:00
10:00

To Do:

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QUICK TIPS

If a task is easy or boring, use a **timer** to gamify flow. If a task is overwhelming/hard, **ANCHOR** into the longterm purpose and **HIGHLIGHT** ways to measure progress that feel meaningful to you. **ACTIVATE** your energy by avoiding flow blockers and incorporating flow triggers.



What did you savor today?



You are a **CATALYST.**TM

As you **paint** your world
in vivid colors of **originality**
and **purpose**, you become
a **masterful artist**
who awakens this **magic** in others.

--Dr. Lara Salyer