

# Planning Guide: Step 1 - Know Yourself

## Step 1A - Know Your Strengths

Before you can successfully plan your day, you need to know the best time for you to get things done and the best way for you to get things done. This comes from knowing your strengths and challenges.

## Step 1B - Know Your Values

Knowing and checking in with our values help us stay motivated, which is something neurodivergents tend to struggle with.

## Step 1C - Have Healthy Habits

Habits are actions we do when our brains go on autopilot. If you create strong habits, your brain will do them automatically. At least most of the time.

Habits are especially helpful for neurodivergent brains because:

- They build confidence when you start to see lasting change
- They reduce the number of choices you have to make every day, which gives your brain more space to be creative

*Habit Tip:* Because like many neurodivergent people, I struggle to balance how I spend my time, I find it helpful to make habits for the 5 Life Zones:

- Mental health and relationships
- Physical health
- School and work
- Adulting (things like chores, appointments, cooking)
- Passions and hobbies

## **Bonus Tip: Link Your Habits Together Into Routines**

Routines are basically when you take several of your habits and do them in the same order – and usually around the same time – every day. Instead of having your habits be separate tasks like “brush teeth,” “pack backpack,” and “eat breakfast,” you would begin to automatically know to do them in that order as part of your morning routine.

Here’s my morning routine:

1. Take meds, brush teeth
2. 20-30 minutes of cardio
3. Shower
4. Meditate for 10 minutes
5. Plan for 10 minutes

You might need some way to remind yourself of the routine at first – maybe write down all the steps somewhere and put “morning routine” on your daily schedule – but eventually it’ll become automatic.

### *Know Yourself References*

- Baird-Goldman, K. (2022). Chapter 4: Building Systems to Support Organization and Planning. In *The CBT Workbook for Adult ADHD*. Rockridge Press.
- Clear, James. (n.d.). *The Habits Guide: How to Build Good Habits and Break Bad Ones*. Habits. <https://jamesclear.com/habits>