



A FIELD GUIDE FOR BRAINS WITH 43 TABS OPEN

The ADHD Rabbit Hole



...and the way out:
The Yap Method

DOUG WONG · ADHDYAP.COM

WELCOME

Hi. I'm Doug. I spent 29 years behind a bar. My brain has always had too many tabs open.

If you grabbed this book, I'm guessing yours does too.

Maybe you've got the diagnosis, maybe you just recognize the pattern: you sit down to do one small thing, and forty minutes later you're eleven browser tabs deep into something completely different, with the original thing still not done – and now you feel worse about it than when you started.

That's the rabbit hole. I've lived in it my whole life.

Here's what I'm not: a doctor, a therapist, or a tech genius. I'm a bartender who learned to listen to people for three decades, got fascinated by AI in my fifties, and discovered something that genuinely surprised me – **this new tool fits the ADHD brain in a way no tool before it ever has.** Not because it's magic. Because of how our brains are wired, and how this thing happens to be built.

So I did what I do: I went down the rabbit hole *on purpose*. I read the studies. I dug into the brain science. I collected what real ADHD coaches actually do with AI in their own daily lives – not what they sell, what they *use*. And I boiled everything I found into a method simple enough that my own bouncing brain can actually run it.

Four words. You'll have them memorized two pages into Part 3, because they rhyme:

YAP → MAP → TAP → SNAP

This little book walks you down the rabbit hole first – why your brain does what it does, in plain language – and then hands you the ladder out.

Let's go.

— *Doug*

READ THIS FIRST

The honest promise (what this book is, and isn't)

Most ADHD content over-promises. This book's whole personality is that it won't. So let's set the rules before we start.

✓ What AI can do

It can **support** you. It can **reduce the load** on your working memory. It can **help you start** – and restart. Those three verbs are backed by real research, and they're the only verbs you'll see in this book.

✗ What AI cannot do

It does not **cure** ADHD. It does not **diagnose** ADHD. It does not **replace** therapy, medication, or a human coach. And no study yet shows any AI tool improves clinical ADHD outcomes. Anyone who tells you otherwise is selling something.

Why I'm strict about this

A December 2025 study in *BMC Psychology* put AI-generated ADHD plans in front of 27 clinical experts. Verdict: theoretically sound, but too generic to work alone – AI should **complement human judgment, not replace it**. That finding isn't a footnote for me. It's the foundation. The method in this book keeps *you* in charge and uses AI as the assistant. Never the other way around.

How to read this book with an ADHD brain (I made it for one)



Short pages

Every idea gets one visual page. No walls of text. If a page bores you, skip it – the book still works.



Skip to Part 3

Impatient? Jump straight to the method. Come back for the science when you're curious why it works.



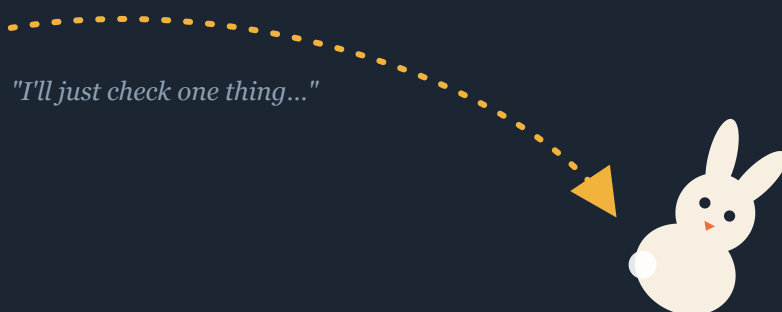
Steal everything

Every prompt is copy-paste ready. This book is a toolbox, not a novel.

PART ONE

Down the Rabbit Hole

What's actually happening in an ADHD brain – the wiring, the chemistry, and why it's not a discipline problem. Spoiler: your brain isn't broken. It's tuned to a different station.



Your brain is a backpack somebody stuffed with a hundred crumpled papers

Somewhere in that backpack is your homework – the one thing you actually need right now. You know it's in there. But it's buried under grocery lists, half-ideas, three worries, a song lyric, and a thing you were supposed to text back four days ago.

A neurotypical brain files papers as they come in. The ADHD brain **throws them all in the bag** – and the bag has no pockets. The clinical name for those pockets is **working memory and executive function**: the brain systems that hold, sort, and sequence what you intend to do. In ADHD, those systems are under-resourced. Not absent. Under-resourced.

That's why "just make a list" advice fails. The problem was never knowing *what* to do. The problem is that everything is **in the bag at once**, crumpled, and reaching in costs more effort than anyone realizes.

Keep this image. The entire method in Part 3 is built on it: dump the bag out, flatten the papers, pick up ONE, and save your place. That's the whole trick.



no pockets.

Anatomy of a rabbit hole

It never *feels* like a decision. It feels like one innocent step, then another. Here's the spiral in slow motion – see if you recognize the timestamps.



Two hours gone — and the worst part isn't the time. It's how you feel about yourself after.

Here's the reframe this book is built on: every hop in that spiral was your brain doing exactly what it's wired to do – chase the most novel thing in sight. That's not weakness. That's chemistry. Next page.

Your brain pays double for "new"

Dopamine is your brain's "this is worth doing" signal. In ADHD brains, that signaling runs differently – routine and repetition barely register, while **anything novel gets flagged as extra-valuable**.

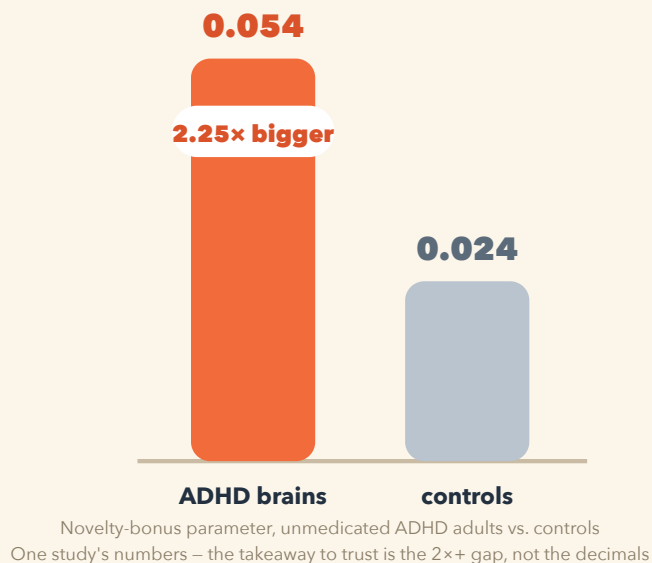
A 2018 peer-reviewed brain-imaging study in the journal *Brain* put a number on it. Unmedicated adults with ADHD showed a **"novelty bonus" more than double** that of non-ADHD controls, with heightened activity in dopamine-related regions when something new appeared.

In plain language: when a shiny new thing shows up, your brain doesn't whisper. **It shouts.**

The catch the study also found: chasing that novelty predicted worse task performance, not better. The bonus is real; it just doesn't aim itself. Remember this – it becomes the plot twist of Part 2.

The novelty bonus, measured

response to novel cues • Brain (2018)

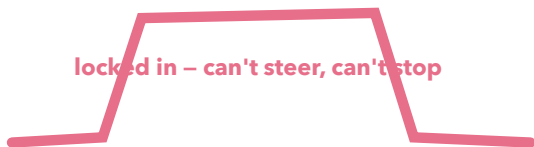


This one number explains most of your life: why deadlines at midnight work when calm afternoons don't, why new projects light you up and week-two projects die, and why the rabbit hole always wins against the to-do list. **The list is old news. The hole is novel – forever.**

Hyperfocus is not flow (and "superpower" talk hurts you)

You've heard it: "ADHD is a superpower – look at that hyperfocus!" It's meant kindly. The research says it's wrong in a way that matters.

HYPERFOCUS



Involuntary. It picks the target, not you – often the game, not the taxes.

Dopamine-driven. Time and body signals vanish: skipped meals, missed pickups, 3 a.m.

Ends in a crash. Documented costs: burnout, missed responsibilities, the "where did the day go" ache.

FLOW



Voluntary. You choose the task; challenge and skill are balanced on purpose.

Aware. You can surface, check the clock, and dive back.

Ends refreshed. This is the state worth engineering – and ADHD students actually self-report *less* of it than peers, not more.

The honest scorecard: no study shows hyperfocus produces objectively better output than ordinary focused attention. What the "superpower" framing really does is set you up: when the power doesn't show up on demand, you conclude you're defective. You're not.

Here's the version that *is* true, and it's the thesis of this whole book: **ADHD has real costs – and with the right support structure, some ADHD traits become real strengths.** The structure is the part everyone skips. It's the part we're here to build.

Every productivity system you've "failed" was built for a different brain

Quick history check on the systems you've probably tried and abandoned – and then blamed yourself for abandoning:



The Pomodoro Technique – invented by Francesco Cirillo, a university student timing himself with a tomato kitchen timer. **Zero ADHD origin.** 25 minutes assumes your attention starts on command and stops politely.



The Eisenhower Matrix – urgent/important quadrants, from a 1950s president. Sorting by importance is *precisely* the executive function ADHD taxes most. The tool's first step is the disability.

1-3-5

The 1-3-5 Rule – one big, three medium, five small tasks a day. Created by a careers-site founder for general office workers, relabeled "great for ADHD" after the fact. Still requires the sorting your brain bills extra for.

None of these are bad systems. They're **borrowed** systems – neurotypical hacks with an ADHD sticker slapped on later. They all share the same silent assumption: that capturing, sorting, and starting are cheap. For you, those are the three most expensive operations in the building.

So flip the requirement. A tool that fits ADHD must do the expensive parts *for* you: catch thoughts at the speed you think them, sort them without your effort, and shrink the first step until it's nearly free. Hold that spec. In Part 2, something finally matches it.

ADHD people have always built their own tools

Here's the part of the story nobody tells you when you're busy feeling broken.

The **Bullet Journal** – the famous analog notebook system – wasn't invented by a productivity guru with a label maker. It was invented by **Ryder Carroll, who has ADHD**, and who says plainly that the method wouldn't exist without it. He built the system his own brain could live in.

When the standard tools don't fit, we don't quit. **We build.** A notebook hacked into a brain. A kitchen timer. Sticky notes on the door. Alarms named things like "NO. THE OTHER THING."

Every generation of ADHD adults has taken the best tool of its era and bent it to fit. The notebook era gave us bullet journals. **This era handed us something new: a tool you can talk to.**

Which brings us to the strangest, most hopeful part of this book.

 **the notebook era**
bullet journals

 **the gadget era**
timers & alarms

 **the app era**
reminders everywhere

 **this era**
a tool you can talk to

Four things to keep from Part 1

1

It's a backpack, not a character flaw

Working memory and executive function are under-resourced – everything lands in one bag with no pockets. The fix is external pockets, not more willpower.

2

Your brain pays double for novel

A measured 2x+ novelty bonus in dopamine circuitry. It explains the rabbit holes, the midnight deadlines, and the week-two project graveyard.

3

Hyperfocus ≠ superpower

It's involuntary, unsteerable, and crash-prone – and flow is what's worth engineering. "ADHD has costs; with structure, some traits become strengths" is the honest line.

4

The tools failed you, not the reverse

Pomodoro, Eisenhower, 1-3-5 – borrowed neurotypical systems that bill you for capture, sorting, and starting. An ADHD tool must make those nearly free.

*"You've been driving a manual transmission your whole life
while everyone swore your automatic was fine.
It was never the driver."*

PART TWO

Why AI Fits the ADHD Brain

For the first time, the newest tool in the world happens to be made of exactly what your brain craves. That's a genuine edge – and a genuine trap. This part covers both, with real numbers.



The first tool ever built out of what your brain actually craves

Remember the plot twist from page 7? Your brain runs a 2× novelty bonus that "doesn't aim itself." Every tool you've ever been handed dealt with that the same way: **by asking you to suppress it.** Sit still. Focus. Stick to the plan. Use the same beige app every day, forever.

Then AI chat arrived – and by pure accident, it's assembled from the three things the ADHD brain is most wired to seek:



Novelty on tap

Every answer is new. Every conversation goes somewhere different. The tool literally cannot become routine.



Zero judgment

It has never sighed at you. You can say the same thing five times, half-finished, at 2 a.m. It doesn't keep score.



Instant response

No waiting-for-Thursday's-appointment. The gap between impulse and answer is seconds – the only speed your motivation reliably survives.

That's the honest version of the "ADHD superpower" claim. It's not that your hyperfocus makes you superhuman. It's that **for the first time, the newest tool in the world and your wiring point the same direction.** Every earlier tool asked the ADHD brain to suppress its cravings. This one is *made* of them.

And yes – you already spotted the problem. A machine made of novelty, judgment-free attention, and instant response is also a perfect rabbit hole. That danger is real, it's measurable, and it gets its own page in a minute. The difference between edge and trap is *structure* – which is exactly what Part 3 installs.

"In 2 seconds I can just scratch that itch"

Researchers ran a diary study – 13 adults with ADHD, tracked for a week. One participant described what happens when a stray thought hits mid-task and they voice-dump it into ChatGPT instead of chasing it:

"In 2 seconds I can just scratch that itch, get it out, and then go back to what I need to do."

DIARY-STUDY PARTICIPANT · PEER-REVIEWED, 13 ADHD ADULTS, 7 DAYS

Read that again. The thought *leaves the head* without derailing the task. The itch gets scratched in seconds instead of costing two hours. That is the backpack getting a pocket – in real time.

A second study (22 ADHD adults, 2026) found something just as interesting: ADHD task management is **social, not solo**. People borrow structure from other humans – "body doubling" (working next to someone just so a person is *there*; it makes starting easier), check-ins – and some participants had already started **reporting their progress to an AI**, because it feels like someone is there.

The cost of one stray thought

CHASE IT

one search → spiral →
task never resumes

~2 hrs

YAP IT OUT

say it → it's captured →
back to the task

~2 sec

Illustrative – the quote is real; the clock is the point

Why this matters: nobody taught these people a method. They invented the move on their own, because the need is that real. Part 3 just gives the move a name, a structure, and a safety rail.

What the measured studies say

Set the hype aside. Here are the rigorous, controlled numbers on how much faster AI makes knowledge work – ranked by how much you should trust them:

Professional writing tasks

40% faster

MIT economists, published in Science – the gold-standard kind of study, 453 professionals · quality also rose 18%

Coding task completion (GitHub Copilot)

55% faster

A proper controlled study – but run by the company selling the tool, on only 95 people. Believe the direction, not the decimal.

Customer-support agents – and here's the ADHD-relevant part

+14% average

+34% for the newest, most-behind agents

A respected economics research group (NBER) · 5,179 real workers · the people struggling most gained the most – the stars gained almost nothing

Sit with that last bar. The biggest measured gains went to whoever was furthest behind on the old way of working. If you've spent your life at a disadvantage in capture-sort-start systems, you're not at the back of this line. **You may be at the front of it.** (That's an inference, clearly labeled – the next page is about exactly what has and hasn't been proven.)

Two honest catches nobody else will tell you

Catch #1 – Raw speed shrinks by the finish line

A 2026 study of 100,000+ software developers found AI boosted raw task activity by 40-180% – but by the time work was actually *finished and shipped*, the real gain was about **30%**. Humans reviewing, deciding, and integrating are still the bottleneck.



the funnel every hype thread leaves out

Translation for us: AI making you *busier* is easy. AI making you *finished* is the actual game – and finishing is a structure problem, not a speed problem. Structure is Part 3's whole job.

Catch #2 – Nobody has measured ADHD brains yet

Every number on the previous page comes from general-population studies. **No rigorous study anywhere isolates ADHD adults and measures their AI speed gains.** Not one. Every "AI makes ADHD brains 3× faster!" claim you've seen online is borrowed math or pure testimonial.

So here's the only honest sentence available, and it happens to be exciting: **"Here's what's proven for everyone. Here's why the fit may be even better for brains like ours. And nobody has measured that yet – we might be the ones who do."**

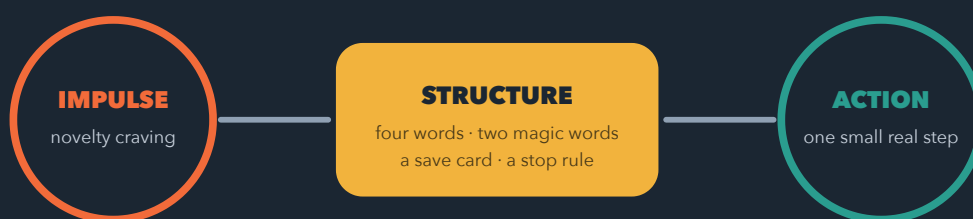
I'd rather hand you a true sentence with a gap in it than a fake number with a bow on it. When someone finally runs that study, you'll already know how to read it: check who ran it, check who was measured, check what "faster" meant.

The same circuit that makes AI magnetic is the addiction lever

Time to say the dangerous part out loud, because it's the part the "AI will fix your ADHD!" crowd skips.

That 2× novelty bonus from page 7? Interface designers know about circuits like it. A 2025 CHI research paper – title worth memorizing: *"The Dark Addiction Patterns of Current AI Chatbot Interfaces"* – connects this exact novelty-seeking mechanism to how chatbots keep people hooked. Endless follow-ups. One more question. One more idea. The machine never gets tired, never says "shouldn't you get back to it?"

Same lever, two directions. The chemistry that lets AI meet your brain where it is, is the same chemistry that can turn a 5-minute question into a 2-hour AI rabbit hole – the old spiral with a friendlier face.



Something has to sit between the impulse and the action. That something is the method.

This is why the Yap Method isn't decoration on top of AI – **it's the guard rail that makes AI safe to lean on.** Used bare, AI is a slot machine for your dopamine system. Used inside a structure, it's a power tool. The next thirteen pages install the structure.

The honest case, in one breath



The fit is real. AI is built from novelty, zero judgment, and instant response – the exact three things ADHD wiring seeks. Every earlier tool demanded suppression; this one doesn't.



Real people found it first. ADHD adults in peer-reviewed studies already voice-dump to AI ("scratch that itch") and report progress to it like a body double. The behavior predates the branding.



The measured gains are real – for everyone. 40% faster writing (MIT's gold-standard study, published in *Science*), +34% for the furthest-behind workers. No ADHD-specific study exists yet. We say so, out loud.



The trap is the same circuit as the gift. Bare AI is a dopamine slot machine; researchers have documented the addiction patterns. Structure between impulse and action is non-negotiable.

*"AI can support an ADHD brain. It cannot cure one.
The difference between those two sentences is everything I know."*

PART THREE

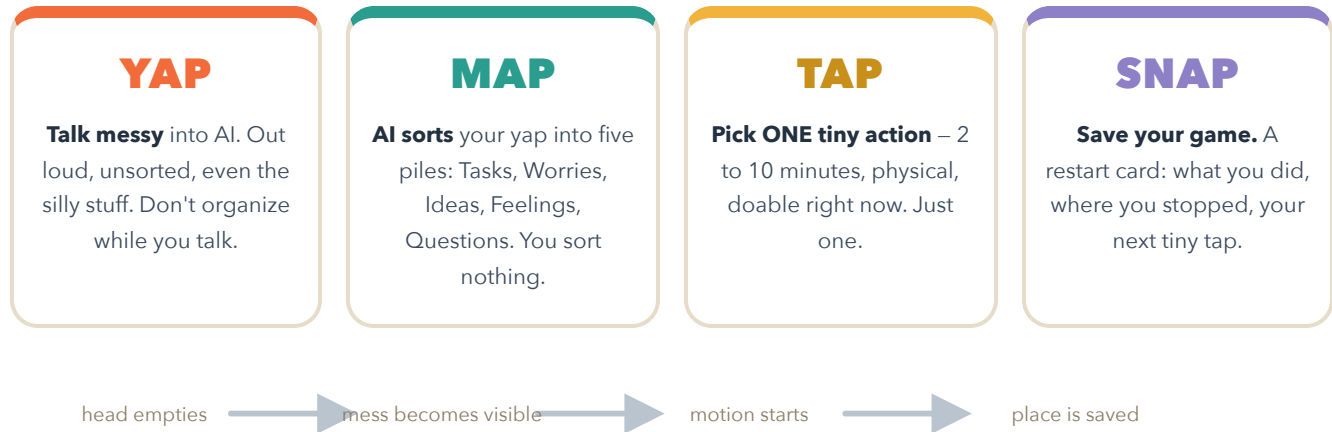
The Way Out: The Yap Method

Four words. Two magic override words. One rule. Small enough for a bouncing brain to actually keep – because I built it for mine.



Four words your brain can actually remember

Here's the entire system on one page. Everything after this is just each word getting its own spotlight.



Why each step exists (the science echo)

A 2026 CHI study co-designed with 20 ADHD university students and 5 experts named the three supports an AI system must give this brain: **task scaffolding** (that's MAP), **reflective execution** (that's SNAP), and **emotional regulation** (that's YAP). I didn't bend the method to match the paper – I found the paper after, and it named the same three needs. TAP is the fourth piece the research kept circling: coaches everywhere use AI for "easier starting points," never master plans.

The core rule, worth the whole book: *"If AI doesn't make your next step smaller, it's not helping."*

The backpack, emptied

Remember page 5? Here's the method as I'd tell it to a kid – because if a system needs a manual, an ADHD brain will lose the manual.



YAP: Dump the whole backpack out by talking – even the crumpled, silly papers. Nobody's grading the mess.



MAP: The AI flattens the papers into neat piles so you can finally see what you've got. You don't sort a thing.



TAP: Pick up ONE paper – something so easy you could do it right now, before the timer in your head runs out.



SNAP: Before you go play – *save your game*. Next time, you don't start the level over.

Why "save your game" is the step that changes lives: losing your place after an interruption is the classic ADHD heartbreak – the report abandoned for three weeks because you can't face figuring out where you were. Nobody else teaches a restart step. It's the most original part of this method, and for most people, the most healing one.

1

STEP ONE

YAP – talk messy

What you do: open your AI app, hit the microphone, and say everything in your head. Out of order. Half sentences. The worry about your sister next to the idea for the garage next to the thing you forgot to buy. **Do not organize while you talk.** Organizing-while-talking is holding the backpack shut with one hand while emptying it with the other.

Why it works: your working memory is the most expensive real estate you own. Every open loop you're "keeping in mind" is renting space. For most of us, talking is the fastest exit there is – faster than typing, far faster than handwriting – and speed matters, because as David Allen (the Getting Things Done creator) puts it: *"if it's not instant, it won't get done."*

The feel to aim for: the "scratch that itch" feeling from page 14. Two seconds, out of the head, back to your life. The first time an intrusive thought leaves without taking two hours of your day with it, you'll understand this whole book.

Starter move (60 seconds): say "I'm going to yap. Just listen – don't solve, don't judge – until I say DONE." Then talk for one minute. That's it. That's the whole first rep.

Rules of the yap

 **Voice first.** Typing invites editing; editing is organizing; organizing is the trap.

 **Messy is correct.** If it comes out tidy, you're doing it wrong.

 **Short is fine.** 60 seconds counts. So does 10 minutes.

 **Silly stuff stays in.** The "dumb" thought is often the load-bearing one.

Never used an AI app? Start here (10 min)

1. On your phone, open the **App Store** (iPhone) or **Play Store** (Android).
2. Search "**ChatGPT**" or "**Claude**" – tap Get/Install. Both are free to start.
3. Open it, create the free account it asks for.
4. The **microphone** is the little  icon beside the message box at the bottom. Tap it, talk, tap again when you're done. That's yapping.

2

STEP TWO

MAP – let AI sort the mess

What you do: when you say DONE, the AI sorts everything you said into five short piles. You watch. That's the step. The sorting – the single most expensive operation for your executive function – **costs you nothing.**

TASKS

call the vet
renew the plate
buy printer ink

things with verbs

WORRIES

money in March
that weird email

named, not solved

IDEAS

the garage plan
video topic!

saved, not chased

FEELINGS

tired of asking
proud of Tuesday

seen, not judged

QUESTIONS

who fixes gutters?
is the 15th a holiday?

parked for later

Why five piles, max five bullets each: clinical experts reviewing AI-made ADHD plans flagged the #1 failure – walls of generic text that re-overwhelm the person they're meant to help. Short piles keep the map smaller than the mess. That's the whole point of a map.

You're in good company: ADHD folks online independently invented near-identical moves – "NOW / LATER / IGNORE" piles, "ask me one question at a time." When strangers keep reinventing the same shape, the shape fits the brain.

3

STEP THREE

TAP – one tiny action

What you do: from the map, the AI gives you exactly **one** physical action that takes 2-10 minutes. Not a plan. Not a top three. One. "Put the insurance letter on the kitchen table." "Open the doc and write one ugly sentence."

Why one, why tiny: ask any ADHD coach and you'll hear the same thing – motivation rarely shows up before action; it shows up *during* it. Waiting to feel ready is waiting for a bus that isn't coming. So the method shrinks the first step below the size that requires readiness. You don't need motivation to do a 2-minute thing. And a started brain is a different brain: momentum is the only reliable fuel we have.

Why physical: "think about the project" is quicksand. "Put the folder on the chair by the door" is a step your body can take while your mind is still arguing. Give the body the job; the mind follows.

Make it silly if it helps. One ADHD adult in the research pairs first actions with gummy bears and dinosaur facts – framed "impossible to fail." If a reward that small gets you moving, that's not childish. That's engineering.

The size test

✗ "Deal with the taxes"

a boulder wearing a to-do's clothes

✗ "Start the tax folder system"

still a project, still quicksand

✓ "Put the W-2 on the desk."

2 minutes · physical · needs no mood

Too big? Say the magic word:

"SMALLER."

(full ceremony on page 26)

4

STEP FOUR – THE ONE NOBODY ELSE TEACHES

SNAP – save your game

What you do: when you stop working – because life, because dinner, because your brain changed the channel – you ask the AI for a **SNAP card**: four lines that save your place. What I did. Where I stopped. My next tiny tap. One thing future-me needs to remember.

Why it's the heartbreak fix: you know the feeling. You finally got rolling on something, life interrupted, and when you came back three days later the restart cost was so high you... didn't. The project joined the graveyard – not because it was hard, but because **you lost your save file.**

Interruptions aren't the enemy; they're the weather. You can't stop the rain. You can stop losing the game every time it rains. If you learn one step from this book, learn this one – it's the most original 25% of the whole method, and the reason projects start *finishing*.

Grew up before gaming? Same move, different words: it's hitting Save on the document before you walk away from the desk.

A REAL SNAP CARD

- ✂ DID: sorted the mail pile, found the insurance letter
- 📌 STOPPED: halfway through the reply email
- 👉 NEXT TAP: reopen draft, write the last two sentences
- 🧠 REMEMBER: the policy number is on the yellow sticky

without SNAP

interruption =
start level over

**with SNAP**

interruption =
pause button



The two magic override words

Teach these as loudly as the four steps. They exist because the #1 *predicted* failure point for a beginner's first AI session is a wall of text – the machine hands back an essay, and the essay re-overwhelms the exact brain it was supposed to help.

"SMALLER."

AI hands you a plan with nine steps? One word. It shrinks. Say it again? Shrinks again.
You never have to negotiate with a plan.

"SHORTER."

AI writes you an essay? One word. It compresses. **You never have to read a wall of text again.** Not from a machine, anyway.

Why one word beats a polite paragraph: in the overwhelmed moment you don't have a paragraph in you – that's what overwhelmed *means*. A single word requires nothing: no explanation, no apology, no executive function. That's what makes it a tool instead of advice.

The master prompt

Paste this once at the start of a session (or into your AI's custom instructions), and the whole method runs itself. It sets every rule from this book in one block:

THE YAP METHOD • MASTER PROMPT

"You are my ADHD-friendly helper. Rules: keep every answer short – no walls of text, one question at a time. I'm going to YAP now. Just listen – don't solve, don't judge – until I say DONE. Then MAP my yap into five short piles: Tasks, Worries, Ideas, Feelings, Questions. Max 5 bullets per pile. No big plan. Then help me TAP: give me exactly ONE tiny physical action that takes under 10 minutes. If it feels too big I'll say SMALLER and you shrink it. When I stop working, make my SNAP card: what I did, where I stopped, my next tiny tap, and one thing future-me needs to remember. Your job is to make my next step smaller – never bigger."

The 10-second version

"I'm going to yap. Listen till I say DONE. Then map it, give me one tiny tap, and snap my save card after."

Works in any AI app

ChatGPT, Claude, Gemini, Copilot – the method is app-agnostic on purpose. The apps will change. The four words won't.

Notice the last line of the prompt. "Your job is to make my next step smaller – never bigger." That single sentence is the anti-rabbit-hole clause. It points the AI's endless helpfulness at shrinking your life instead of expanding your tabs.

For the hard moments

Four situations, four prompts, zero thinking required in the moment – because the moment is exactly when you can't think. This kit is deliberately tiny. A bigger kit would just be another backpack.



When you're overwhelmed right now

"I'm overwhelmed right now. Don't ask me questions. Tell me one tiny thing to do in the next 5 minutes. Two sentences max."

Note the "don't ask me questions." In the spiral, even a friendly question is one demand too many.



When you can't start alone (body double)

A "body double" is just another presence in the room while you work – no help, no talking, just company. ADHD folks find it makes starting dramatically easier. Here, the AI plays that role:

"Be my body double for 10 minutes. I'm working on Project X. I'll check in every few minutes – when I do, cheer briefly and tell me to keep going. Don't give new ideas. At the end, ask what I got done."

Honesty label: body doubling is something ADHD folks *swear by* – the formal research barely exists yet. I teach it as a beloved practice, not a proven one. Try it; keep it if it works for you.

Why "don't give new ideas" appears twice in this kit: AI's default setting is MORE – more options, more angles, more enthusiasm. Wonderful in brainstorm mode, poison in start mode. Every prompt in this kit clips that wire before it can spark.

For restarts and rabbit holes

When you're coming back after days away

"Here's my last SNAP card: [paste it]. Warm me up – remind me what I was doing, where I stopped, and my next tiny tap. Short answer."

This is the payoff of every SNAP you save. Re-entry drops from "stare at it for 40 minutes" to "read four lines."

When the AI itself became the rabbit hole

"I've been talking to you a while without doing anything. Stop giving me new ideas. Pick one action from what we already have, give it to me, then don't reply until I say DONE."

The bravest prompt in the book: it uses the machine to end the session with the machine. Remember page 17 – the trap is real, so the exit has to be pre-built. This is the exit.

The whole kit on one shelf



Four prompts. Print them. Tape them somewhere. Done.

The postcard rule

Yapping means saying real things about your real life into somebody else's computer. So the method ships with a privacy rule, and it's not a footnote – it's taught before every live demo I run:

Never yap anything you wouldn't write on a postcard. A postcard gets read by anyone who handles it. Assume the same.

Three habits make the rule effortless:

 **Fake names, always.** "Person A," "Company B," "Project X." The AI helps you just as well without the real ones.

 **Three never-categories:** medical details, legal details, money details. Those conversations belong with humans who are licensed to have them.

 **When in doubt, generalize.** "A conflict with a family member" works as well as the name and the whole saga.

ADHD coach Paula Engebretson's personal version of the same rule: *"I'm not asking ChatGPT anything I wouldn't be comfortable having anyone else see anyway."* When the pros and the method agree, adopt the habit.



"My SSN is... my diagnosis is... my account number is..." X never



THE ONE RULE

*"If AI doesn't make your
next step **smaller**,
it's not helping."*



Every prompt, every step, every magic word in this method is this one sentence wearing different clothes. When in doubt – when any tool, tip, or shiny new app promises to fix your life – ask the only question that matters: **did my next step just get smaller, or bigger?**

PART FOUR

You're in Good Company

Maybe you're thinking: "Sure, Doug – but does anyone *credible* actually live this way?" Fair. So I went and checked. What follows are the personal, verified AI habits of real ADHD coaches – not what they sell. What they do at their own kitchen tables.

Every quote in this part was checked against its original source in a July 2026 research pass – anything that couldn't be confirmed was cut. (A couple of podcast quotes rely on auto-generated captions, so exact wording may wobble a word or two; the substance was verified.) That's the standard this book runs on.

How ADHD coaches actually use AI in their own lives

The bouncer at the send button · Paula

Engebretson, "I'm Busy Being Awesome"

Before a tense email leaves her outbox, Paula runs it past ChatGPT for tone – a two-second bouncer at the door, checking her words before they get into trouble. Twenty-nine years of tending bar taught me: everyone needs that bouncer.

Breakfast with a co-pilot · William Curb,

"Hacking Your ADHD"

Every morning over breakfast, William plans his day out loud with the ChatGPT phone app – a packing list to react to instead of a blank page to conjure from.

And refreshingly honest on his own show: "I don't personally use most of these tools." Neither should you. Pick two.

The pause between feeling and sending · Tara McGillicuddy, "ADHD Support Talk,"

since 1999

When an email makes her blood spike, Tara drafts her reply *with* the AI first – building a gap between the feeling and the send button.

"That pause alone, before reacting, can be life-changing."

Blunt first, polish second · Marla Cummins,

ADHD & exec-function coach

Marla writes the blunt version in her own words, then hands it to AI to soften – while "still sounding like me" – and always reviews before sending. She started out worried it "might cross ethical lines." Her fix: AI polishes her words. It never replaces them.

Spot the theme: not one of these professionals uses AI to *plan their whole life*. Every single habit is small, specific, and repeatable – tone check, starting point, pause, polish. Tiny taps. They converged on the method's shape without ever hearing its name.

The habits keep rhyming

Interrogate your own stuff · Pete Wright,

"Taking Control: The ADHD Podcast"

Pete keeps years of his D&D game notes in an AI notebook and queries it mid-game when memory fails. His framing is the best one-liner in this whole part:

"I'm not creating something with AI from scratch. I'm interrogating my own stuff with these AI tools." He calls it his "cognitive glasses."

The friction check · Caren Magill, "It's ADHD

Friendly"

Before impulse-buying yet another course, Caren pastes the tempting sales page into ChatGPT and asks for the sober read – a deliberate speed bump between the dopamine and the credit card. That's page 17's trap, weaponized *for* you.

Anything beats a blank page · Lynne Edris,

"ADHD Support Talk" co-host

Lynne uses AI to break "blank page syndrome" – *"Even if it's not exactly what I want, it gets me moving"* – and to make unloading the dishwasher "a little silly or fun." Momentum first, perfection never.

The unfinished-projects club · Eric Tivers,

"ADHD reWired"

Eric asks AI kitchen questions and breaks down tasks – and here's the honesty beat: he's half-started three AI agent projects and finished none. Even the podcast hosts don't finish everything. Welcome to the club; bring a SNAP card.

Coaches use it in teaspoons. Turn the page for what it looks like at full throttle.

"AI is how I do it."

Peter Shankman – entrepreneur, keynote speaker, host of the *Faster Than Normal* podcast – talks about his ADHD in public more bluntly than almost anyone with a business card.

His words, from his own newsletter:

"I have massive ADHD... every minute I waste on a decision I could have automated is a minute being stolen from something that actually matters."

Juggling "two companies, a podcast, keynote speaking, a partner, ADHD, bodybuilding prep, a kid, a dog" – his summary is the title of this page.

He calls ChatGPT a "**phenomenal cheat code**" for task-initiation paralysis: when he's dreading something, he has AI draft version one, then edits. **Editing beats starting.** That's TAP wearing a suit – the blank page is the boulder; a bad first draft is a 2-minute tap.

His stack, translated to the method

- 🗣️ AI drafts what he's dreading → **TAP** (edit, don't start)
- 🧠 AI pressure-tests ideas before clients see them → **MAP** (mess made visible first)
- 📅 Alexa reads his calendar in the shower → **SNAP** (context handed back, zero recall cost)
- 💊 Siri runs medication reminders → structure between impulse and action, automated

The lesson isn't "buy his tools." It's that a person with "massive ADHD" runs a many-ring circus by outsourcing exactly the operations ADHD taxes – capture, decisions, recall – and keeping the human parts for himself.

The productivity world is being rebuilt around AI – right now

One more piece of company for you – the biggest names in productivity itself:

Tiago Forte · "Building a Second Brain"

Weeks after ChatGPT launched, Forte **stopped teaching his own flagship course** – the one his entire company was built on – because he believed AI had made his method obsolete. He spent roughly three years rethinking it and relaunched in 2026 as an AI-centered cohort course.

The man who literally wrote the book on note-taking looked at AI and concluded: start over.

David Allen · "Getting Things Done"

The GTD creator's public stance on AI is measured and worth quoting: it's **"decision support, not direct answers"** – it should guide thinking, not make your choices. And his capture rule is practically a YAP endorsement: *"if it's not instant, it won't get done."*

Forty years of capture wisdom, and the conclusion is the same: speed of capture is everything.

Why this matters to you: if the authors of the world's two biggest productivity systems are tearing down and rebuilding around AI *in real time*, then nobody is "behind." The rebuild started for everyone at once, barely three years ago.

And here's the quiet advantage: those systems were built for filing-cabinet brains and are being *retrofitted* for AI. The method in this book was built *on* AI, *for* a brain like yours, from day one. You're not late to their party. **You're early to your own.**

PART FIVE

Your First Seven Days

Knowledge you don't use is just another crumpled paper in the backpack. So here's a seven-day on-ramp, sized for a real ADHD week – meaning: tiny, forgiving, and with a built-in plan for the day you skip.

One rule for the week: **you cannot fall behind.** There is no behind. Miss a day, shrug, do that day next. The schedule serves you; you don't serve the schedule.

The 7-day yap plan

Each day adds one piece. Nothing takes more than ten minutes. Day 4 is the one I predict will change how you work – it's the step nobody else teaches.

Day 1 – First yap

60 SEC

Open your AI app, hit the mic: "I'm going to yap. Just listen until I say DONE." Talk for one minute. Don't read the reply if you don't want to. Done. Seriously – that's day one. *(No AI app yet? The setup box on page 22 gets you there in 10 minutes.)*

Day 2 – Yap + map

5 MIN

Yap again, longer if it wants to be. Then: "Map that into five short piles: Tasks, Worries, Ideas, Feelings, Questions." Look at your mess, sorted, for the first time. Feel the click.

Day 3 – First tap

10 MIN

"Give me ONE tiny physical action from my map, under 10 minutes." If it's too big, use the word: **SMALLER**. Then do the tap. One is a triumph, not a start.

Day 4 – First save ★

3 MIN

Work on anything, stop on purpose mid-task, and ask for your SNAP card. Save it anywhere – notes app, sticky, photo. You've just ended a lifetime of starting the level over.

Day 5 – First restart

5 MIN

Paste yesterday's SNAP card: "Warm me up – what was I doing, where did I stop, what's my next tiny tap?" Notice what re-entry feels like when it costs four lines instead of forty minutes.

Day 6 – The full loop

10 MIN

Run all four words on something real that's been sitting there: yap it, map it, tap it, snap it. Use the master prompt from page 27 so the AI holds the structure for you.

Day 7 – Look back (the ADHD-forbidden move)

5 MIN

Yap about the week itself: what worked, what felt silly, what surprised you. Have AI map it. Your "worries" pile from Day 2 will already read differently – that's not the AI. **That's you, with pockets.**



The guardrails

I end every class with this page, and I'm ending the teaching part of this book with it too. Not as legal fine print – as the load-bearing wall. The method only stays trustworthy if these stay loud:



AI does not cure ADHD. Nothing in this book changes your neurology. It changes your workflow.



AI does not diagnose ADHD. If this book resonated and you've never been evaluated, that conversation belongs with a clinician – and it's worth having.



AI does not replace therapy, medication, or coaching. The clinical research is explicit: AI plans work best *with* human judgment in the loop. Complement, never replacement.



AI can be confidently wrong. It's a helper, not a doctor – and not an encyclopedia either. Anything that matters, verify.



No study yet shows any AI tool improves clinical ADHD outcomes. The honest verbs remain: support, reduce load, help you start. That's what this book promised, and that's all it promised.

Why guardrails make the method stronger, not weaker: you've been burned by over-promises before – every "life-changing" app that changed nothing taught your brain to distrust the next one. A method that tells you its limits up front is one your skepticism can actually relax around. The honesty *is* the feature.

Sources & further reading

Every factual claim in this book traces to one of these. Where evidence was thin or unverified, the text says so in place. Claims that failed verification were cut before you ever saw them.

The brain science. Novelty bonus in unmedicated ADHD adults (2×+, with the worse-performance catch): neuroimaging study, *Brain*, 2018. Hyperfocus vs. flow distinction and self-report findings: research literature on ADHD attention states; no study shows hyperfocus outperforms focused neurotypical attention.

The clinical caution. AI-generated ADHD executive-function plans reviewed by 27 clinical experts – "theoretically sound, too generic, should complement human judgment": *BMC Psychology*, December 2025. Three needs for AI-ADHD support (task scaffolding, reflective execution, emotional regulation): CHI 2026, co-designed with 20 ADHD university students + 5 experts.

The lived evidence. "Scratch that itch" voice-dumping quote: peer-reviewed diary study, 13 ADHD adults, 7 days. Social task management and reporting progress to AI: 2026 study, 22 ADHD adults. Body doubling's thin research base: review of available literature (a handful of papers, no RCTs).

The speed numbers. Writing 40% faster, quality +18%: Noy & Zhang, MIT, published in *Science* (2023), preregistered RCT, n=453. Support agents +14% avg / +34% novice: NBER working paper w31161 (Brynjolfsson, Li, Raymond), 5,179 agents. Copilot 55% faster (wide confidence interval, vendor-run RCT): GitHub, n=95. Activity vs. shipped-work funnel (40–180% → ~30%): NBER w35275 (2026), 100,000+ developers. *No rigorous study measures AI speed gains for ADHD adults specifically – stated as a known gap, not filled with borrowed numbers.*

The addiction warning. "The Dark Addiction Patterns of Current AI Chatbot Interfaces": CHI 2025.

The people. Coach and creator quotes (Engebretson, Curb, Cummins, McGillicuddy, Edris, Wright, Magill, Tivers, Shankman) verified against their own podcasts, blogs, and newsletters in a July 2026 research pass; quotes that couldn't be traced to a live source were dropped. Forte's course pause and AI relaunch: fortelabs.com. David Allen quotes: 2025 interview via daveedwardsmedia.com. Bullet Journal origin: Ryder Carroll's own account.

A note on rigor. This book was fact-checked the way the method says to work: claims dumped out, sorted, verified one at a time, and the ones that didn't survive were snapped out of the draft. Want the full research trail, links and all? Reply to any of my emails and ask – I'll send it over.

Where this goes next

You made it to the end of a book – with an ADHD brain. I hope you noticed that the book was built so you could: short pages, pictures, skippable parts, no guilt. **That's what tools built for your brain feel like.** Accept nothing less from now on.

If you do one thing today, make it Day 1 of the seven-day plan: sixty seconds, one yap, no reply required. The method only becomes real in your voice.

And since you're on my email list (that's how this book found you) – **reply and tell me how your first yap went.** I read every one, and yes: messy replies are on brand.

What's coming

 **adhd yap.com** – yap a struggle, get the why + a strategy + a copy-paste prompt. Free, no login.

 **Free live classes** – I teach this method in person, in libraries. Beginners welcome; phones encouraged.

 **The Yap Method founding cohort** – four weeks, one word per week, daily 10-minute body-double sprints. Email subscribers hear first.



THE TAGLINE SAYS IT ALL

**Stop organizing.
Start yapping.**

About Doug

Doug Wong spent 29 years as a bartender – three decades of listening to people think out loud – before going down the AI rabbit hole in his fifties. Now he teaches people 50+ (and every ADHD brain who wanders in) how to make AI fit real, messy lives. He is not a doctor, and this book never pretended he was.



*"Your brain was never broken.
It was waiting for a tool
that speaks its language."*



YAP · MAP · TAP · SNAP

© 2026 DOUG WONG · ADHDYAP.COM · FREE TO SHARE, NOT TO SELL