



COLOR OUTSIDE THE LINES COUNSELING



Getting Started When You Feel Stuck

A practical way to make the first step smaller

Feeling stuck does not mean you are lazy or incapable. A task may be too large, unclear, boring, emotionally loaded, or difficult to begin with the energy and attention you have available. This guide helps you identify the barrier and design a smaller entry point.

• Name the Task

The task I am trying to begin

Why this task matters

• What May Be Getting in the Way

☐ The task is unclear

☐ It feels too large

☐ I do not know where to start

☐ I am afraid of doing it wrong

☐ It feels boring

☐ I am low on energy

☐ There are too many distractions

☐ I need information or supplies

☐ I resent having to do it

☐ I am waiting to feel motivated

☐ I am worried about the outcome

☐ Other

The biggest barrier right now

How difficult does starting feel

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 manageable

nearly impossible

• Make the Task Smaller

What would done enough look like *Not perfect just complete enough for this moment*

The smallest visible action *For example open the document find the email or place one item away*

A five minute version of this task

• Choose My Starting Support

☐ Set a five minute timer

☐ Use a visual checklist

☐ Work beside someone

☐ Put my phone away

☐ Gather supplies first

☐ Use music or quiet

☐ Start with the easiest part

☐ Ask for clarification

☐ Schedule a specific start time

☐ Give myself permission to stop after one step

The support I will use

• Build the Launch Plan

I will start on *Day and time*

I will begin in *Place*

My first action will be

When the timer ends I will decide whether to continue pause or schedule the next step

• After I Begin

What helped me start

What made it harder

What I want to adjust next time

How difficult does the task feel now

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 manageable

nearly impossible

• A Gentle Reminder

You do not have to finish the whole task to practice starting. Beginning is a skill, and small repetitions count.

This resource is for education and personal reflection. It does not provide diagnosis, treatment, medical advice, or crisis care. If you are in immediate danger, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency department. You may also call or text 988 for crisis support.

Created by Raven Thomas, MA, LPCC-S | Color Outside the Lines Counseling

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