

# Autism Spectrum Disorders

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## Why saying This Four-Letter Word Can Transform Your Productivity

A neurochemical shift happens in your brain when you say "done" at the end of even the smallest tasks.

By Lisa Evans

Perfectionists are often reminded that "done is better than perfect." But it turns out there's another reason we should all try to create more "done" moments in our workdays. Saying the word done can help you get more accomplished on your to do list. "Telling ourselves that we're done creates not only an emotional reaction but a physiological response as well," says Leslie Sherlin, a psychologist, neuroperformance specialist, and the cofounder of the brain training company SenseLabs

According to Sherlin, when we're concentrated on a task, the brain's electrical activity is heightened. But the moment we say we're done with something, the electrical activity in our brain shifts from being activated and engaged into a more relaxed state. "That relaxed state looks very similar to meditators or individuals who practice mindfulness techniques," he says. A neurochemical shift in the brain occurs simultaneously. Serotonin—known as the body's "feel good chemical"—is released, creating a sense of calmness and satisfaction. This new relaxed state then allows us to take on the next task and builds our confidence. The more often you complete a task, the more confidence you build to achieve the next item on your to-do list, allowing you to take on even more challenging tasks. "What we want to do if we want to set ourselves up for increasing productivity is put minor or smaller challenges in front of us so we build up that 'done' moment," says Sherlin.

How to create more opportunities to say "done":

### Break Tasks Into Smaller Chunks

Productivity has a snowball effect. "As you start to take steps and you make a done moment, you're increasing your confidence and your momentum towards moving forward," says Sherlin. While a task like "do taxes" may seem overwhelming, breaking it down into various stages that are easy to do—such as gather receipts and bank statements—not only makes the task more manageable but creates more opportunities for you to say "done."

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- "The more often you complete a task, the more confidence you build to achieve the next item on your to-do list, allowing you to take on even more challenging tasks."
- "Saying the word *done* can help you get more accomplished."
- "The moment we say we are done with something, the electrical activity in our brain shifts from being activated and engaged into a more relaxed state."

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### Work In 10-Minute Segments

Choose a task and set a timer for 10 minutes. Do as much as you can during that time without getting distracted. When the timer goes off, say "done" and then select the next task you need to perform, setting the timer once again.

### Visualize Yourself Completing The Task

Imagine yourself completing the task. "Even though we haven't achieved the step yet, imagining that step having been achieved creates momentum and motivation, which allows us to get there much quicker," says Sherlin.

### Take Microbreaks

Create opportunities to take microbreaks throughout the day. Going for a walk, grabbing a coffee, or calling a family member or friend allows the brain to reset so you can return to the task at hand more energized.

**FAST COMPANY**

Done.

April 6, 2015

## Improving Executive Function Skills in Students

### Teach students to STOP and Read the Room

#### Space

- Navigate the space
- What kind of space?
  - What's going on?
  - Is it expected or unexpected?
  - How do you get from one place to another within the space?
  - What are the different areas within the larger space?

#### Time

- Get on the Timeline
- Time of day?
  - What kind of time (quiet, talking?)
  - What is happening at this moment in time?
  - Pace?
  - What is coming up?

#### Objects

- Organization/  
Objects
- Organization of the Space— Whole-Part
  - How is that part organized?
  - Location of objects: In sight? Out of sight?
  - Purpose/Priority of objects?
  - Necessity & Relevancy.

#### People

- Read the Person
- Face
  - Body
  - Appearance
  - Mood
  - Pace
  - Saying - Tone

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# Improving Executive Function Skills in Students

Sarah Ward and Kristen Jacobsen

Development of Self Regulation:  
Outside –Inside

**External Regulation:** Being regulated by Another Person

- Self regulation
- Follow the rules
- Shared Language
- “Teacher-regulation” is important but is not the same as self-regulation

**Other Regulation:** Regulating Other People

- Before applying the rules to themselves, children practice by applying the rules to the behavior of other people.
- Audible Speech

**Internal Regulation:** Self-Regulating

- Apply rules to your own behavior: Self Talk
- Stop and initiate action towards a future goal
- Stopping yourself from doing something against the rules
- Initiating actions that follow the rules

Becoming Independent

Learning Something New!

- I Do It/You Watch Me External Regulation
- I Do It/You Help Me Other Regulation
- We Do It Together/I Help You Other Regulation
- You Do It/I Watch You Internal Regulation

*Gradual Release of Responsibility Method*

## Coming Events



April 24, 25, 26, 2016 ~ Charting the C's

April 27 – 30, 2016 ~ Autism Society of MN annual conference

June 20– 21 ~ Summer Institute (formerly Symposium) at Hamline



### ASD Cohort

The Goodhue County Education District ASD Cohort will meet 1 more time during the 2015-2016 school year. The final date is May 3, 2016

We will gather at River Bluff Education Center. Our meeting time will be from 12 - 3, though the starting time is flexible as teachers have differing times that they can leave the classroom as well as some have extended driving times. Feel free to bring your lunch.

Until then, please let me know if there is any way that I can support you.

Lynne Petersen