

TOOLKIT · VERSION 1

Daily Routine Planner

Anchor routines for mornings, evenings, and the transitions in between.

How to use this toolkit

Skim once, then choose one practice to try this week. Toolkits are living documents — mark them up, share them with your team, and revisit as your needs evolve.

Overview

Predictable routines lower the cognitive cost of being alive. This planner gives you a template to design routines that actually fit your life.

Why it matters

Routines are not rigidity — they're scaffolding. The goal is not to do the same things forever; it's to free up working memory for the things that matter.

Research summary

Habit-stacking and context cues reliably predict behavior change (Wood & Neal, 2007). Predictable routines reduce anxiety and improve sleep across populations.

Practical strategies

Morning anchor

- Same first three actions every morning.
- Protein and water before screens, when possible.
- Sensory prep: clothing, headphones, light.

Transition rituals

- A 5-minute decompression between work and home.
- Same playlist or walk to mark mode-switches.

Evening anchor

- Shutdown ritual: tomorrow's first step on paper.
- Lights down 60 minutes before bed.
- Same wind-down sequence — brain learns the cue.

Ready-to-use scripts & worksheets

Routine design worksheet

1) When does this routine start? 2) What's the first action? 3) What cue triggers it? 4) What's the reward? 5) What gets in the way — and what's the workaround?

Recommended lessons & next steps

- Toolkit: Daily Living Supports — /toolbox
- Family Toolkit — /family

Selected references & further reading

- Wood W, Neal DT. A new look at habits and the habit-goal interface. *Psychol Rev.* 2007.
- Clear J. *Atomic Habits.* Avery, 2018.

Ask the AI Companion

Visit understandingneurodiversity.org/companion to ask follow-up questions about **Daily Routine Planner**. The Companion will recommend lessons, conditions, and research tailored to your role.