

How to manage the competing professional and personal demands on your time and actually get stuff done!

Helene Gidley, Founder A2Agile Inc.
ASVPM Meetup
March 16, 2026

I'm honored to be with you today. Regardless of where you are in your career, whether you are a student, early, mid, or seasoned, in your career, you are here to learn to manage your overwhelm. Getting our work done is a universal struggle for many. I'm going to cover why and what you can do about it.



Why we're here. Getting things completed. How big is your to-do list? How are you managing it today? Put into chat a 1 if your list is 10-20 items. A 2 if its 21-50 items, and a 3 if its over that.

How does it FEEL to have that many things on your to-do list always looking at you?

Photo by [Glenn Carstens-Peters](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Alternate Photo by [Alexander Grey](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Top Disruptors



What I hear from people are lack of focus, not clear on what is done, ordering/prioritizing the work



Small chunks

Focus

Feedback

Background on agile thinking - Focus, small chunks, tight feedback loops

The Art of Agile Living

Kinesthetic

“A sense mediated by receptors located in muscles, tendons, and joints and stimulated by bodily movements and tensions”

Photo by [Yoann Boyer](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Despite our efforts to manage our work, our to-do lists often exist in our heads - things we carry around with us daily. Things that are crowding our abilities to stay focused on the task at hand.

Tactile approach to counteract the out of sight, out of mind effect
200,000 years as humans

The adjective Kinesthetic is from the noun Kinesthesia -

“A sense mediated by receptors located in muscles, tendons, and joints and stimulated by bodily movements and tensions” - Merriam-Webster

The concept of kinesthetics has been around for over 180 years, known as the sixth sense.

The brain gets feedback from the muscles about how the body is moving, therefore becoming engaged. This two-way connection of picking an item up and manipulating it, and engaging the brain, we further our focus and attention on the item. The item become real, not just a concept.

Learning Styles - visual, auditory, kinesthetic, reading and writing

Make Your Work Visible and Concrete

- 1.5 x 2 inch Post Its
- Transform concept to concrete
- Kinesthetic aspect



A2Agile, Inc © 2026

We're going to step through the entire process today. When you leave, you'll have your first Art of Agile Living plan for your work!
You're going to see not only how simple and easy, but how powerful this approach is.

Whats on Your Mind Now?

- Write down at least 3 tasks that you have in your head right now
- Make at least 1 of them work and 1 of them home/personal life related
- Use 1.5 x 2 Post-it notes
- 1 item per post-it note



2 minutes

Define Your Work

Write report

*Give talk to Mari's
group*

Email

Let's look at an example. This might be mine.

These feel a bit big however. And I'm not sure what done looks like on any of these.

Define and Estimate Your Work

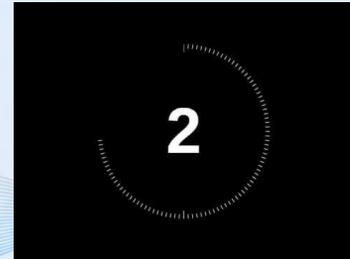


Estimate:

1. Work aversion behavior
2. To get work done - how can I schedule if I don't know how long something will take?
3. Smaller chunks with estimates allow me to schedule the work better into my day
4. Key motivator to getting work done

Do Your Own

- Rewrite the earlier tasks as needed
- Begin to break down your current To Do list
- Use 1.5 x 2 Post-it notes
- 1 Post-it per item
- 5 minutes to 2 hours estimates



2 minutes

On the 1.5 x 2 inch post-it's begin to break down your work
how was it? are they outcome focused? were you able to break things down into
something more manageable?

Ask for 1 or 2 items to be shared with the group.



8 Hour Day Myth

How many hours a day do you think you actually have to be productive?

How much work do you usually schedule for a day?

How much of your work is interrupt driven?

6 hours a day is considered good.
Account for time in meetings! Hard demands on your time.

Photo by [Kevin Grieve](#) on [Unsplash](#)



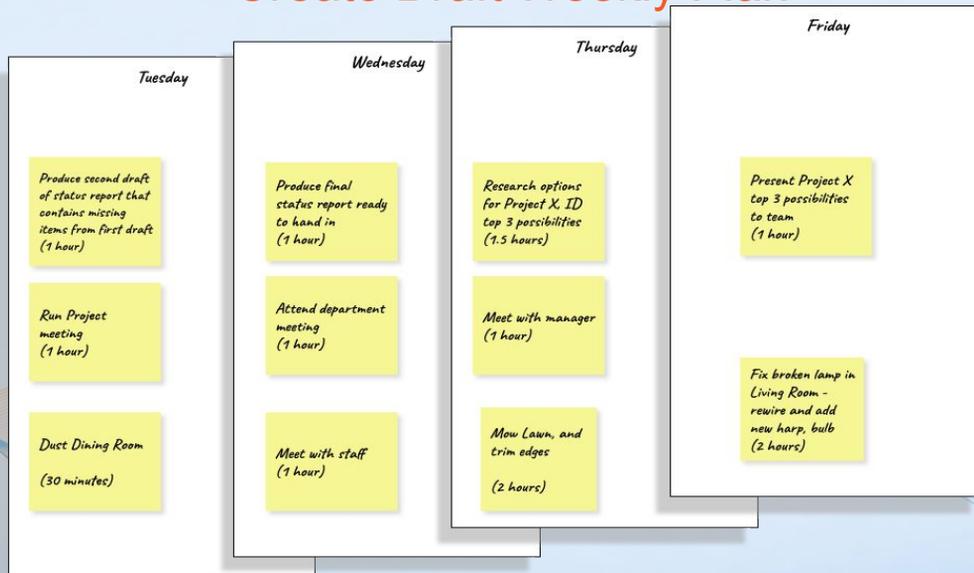
Order work based on when it needs to be completed

Include hard demands on your time



Calendar items go here as well as on your calendar. Seeing everything in ONE PLACE makes it possible to manage all your work.

Create Draft Weekly Plan



Out of sight is actually a good thing when the work is planned
On Monday I'm beginning to lay out what my week will look like
Include any hard demands on your time
Notice impact of visualizing your work!
This is a flexible plan - first pass - a strawman
beyond hard-and-fast commitments (report)
Turned an overwhelming list of tasks into something manageable

Order your items

- Based on when they need to be completed
- Plan your week
- Backlog for items beyond upcoming week



2

How did that feel? What about new items that come up?

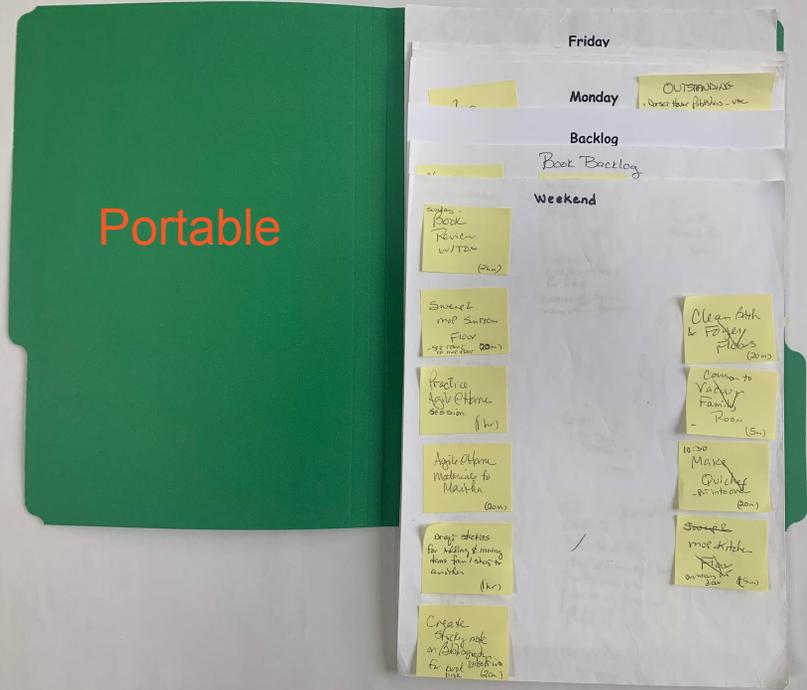
Motivators

- Sense of accomplishment
- Clarity of completion
- Daily ritual
- Autonomy
- Mastery
- Purpose



Dan Pink's AMP motivators

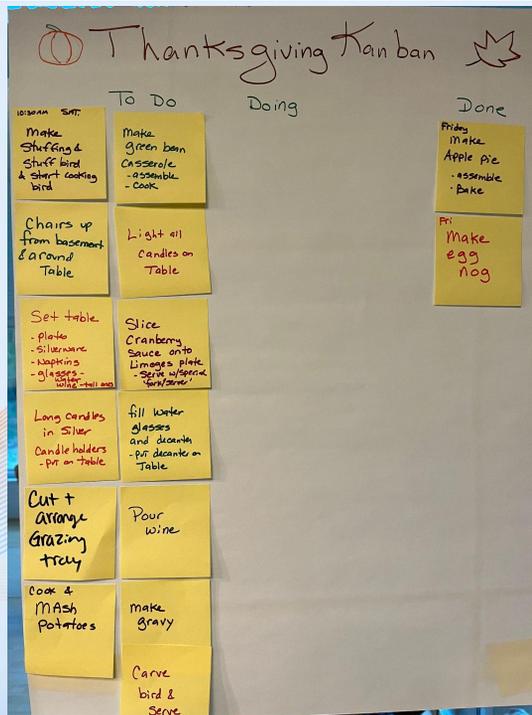
Art of Agile Living leans heavily on Autonomy and Purpose and lets you focus on Mastery



Out of sight, out of mind as positive

Stress-free Family Gatherings

A2Agile, Inc © 2026



Out of sight, out of mind as positive

Next Steps / Questions

Keep Building **YOUR** Action Plan

- <https://www.artofagileliving.com>
- Contact Me
 - <https://www.linkedin.com/in/helenegidley>
- What is **YOUR** question?



Helene@A2Agile.com

A2Agile, Inc © 2026

Book Purchase Link

Website:

- Tutorial videos
- Podcasts
- Forum to connect

This was just a taste.

A lot more in the book and on the videos.

What 1 or 2 things will you do to keep using this method?