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When you're working on a project-big or small-it's inevitable that you'll find yourself stuck from time to time. You're staring at a half completed page or screen--completely paralyzed. We've all been there.

Here's my very simple framework for getting unstuck:

### **1. Identify the Sticking Point**

- a. Segment the project or workstream into its smaller component parts.
- b. Mark whatever has been completed and leave the remaining as open.
- c. The separating line is the sticking point.
- d. It sounds simple, but visualizing the sticking point is very helpful.

### **2. Deconstruct the Sticking Point**

- a. Generally speaking, what we identify as the sticking point on a project is really a macro output consisting of several micro inputs.
- b. Deconstruct the sticking point into these micro tasks.
- c. For example, if the sticking point is a 1-page memo, the micro tasks might be:
  - i. Memo title
  - ii. Executive summary
  - iii. Body structure
  - iv. Next steps
- d. The sticking point should look much less intimidating when broken down into these small, individually manageable tasks.

### **3. Create Separation**

- a. Feeling stuck is a combination of technical and psychological factors.
- b. Identifying and deconstructing the sticking point addresses the technical, but you have to address the psychological as well.
- c. Physical and mental separation from the work is key.
- d. You can approach this separation in several different ways:
  - i. Go for a 15-30 minute walk. Carry a pocket notebook and nothing else. Let your mind wander and jot down any ideas or insights.
  - ii. Take a hot shower.
  - iii. Go for a silent drive.
  - iv. Read some fiction.
- e. The key is to be alone and avoid technology or connectedness for a short period.
- f. Active solitude is a powerful unlock for creativity and non-linear thinking.
- g. You'll come back to your work feeling mentally and physically refreshed-ready to take on the project with new energy.

#### 4. Create Motion

- a. Finally, once you get back to your workspace, dive into the project sticking point.
- b. Move on the easiest micro tasks that you identified earlier.
- c. The blankness of a sticking point is the most challenging part.
- d. Remember: A body in motion tends to stay in motion.
- e. Leverage your refreshed state to work in a short, high-intensity burst.
- f. Think of it as 60 minutes max.
- g. You'll be at your peak creativity after the forced separation, so take advantage of it.
- h. Bias for motion conquers all obstacles.

Ok, that's my simple framework for getting unstuck.

Identify the Sticking Point

Deconstruct the Sticking Point

Create Separation

Create Motion

Give it a shot and let me know what you think.

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