Executive Skills Problem Checklist

DIRECTIONS:
1. Check (√) problem areas that significantly interfere with effective studying.
2. Look over all the items you’ve checked and choose THREE that you think cause the greatest problems. Place a star (*) next to those.

Working Memory
___ Writing assignment instructions without sufficient detail to understand later
___ Forgetting to bring home necessary materials or bring materials to class
___ Forgetting to hand in homework
___ Forgetting long-term projects or upcoming tests
___ Not paying attention to classroom instructions/task directions
___ Trouble remembering multiple directions or multiple problem steps
___ Losing materials
___ Forgetting to complete assignments
___ Forgetting to check agenda/assignment book
___ Not recording when assignment is due

Task Initiation
Procrastinating/avoiding tasks due to:
___ not knowing how to get started
___ believing the task will “take forever”
___ believing their performance won’t meet expectations
___ seeing the task as tedious, boring, or irrelevant
___ Finding other things to do rather than starting homework
___ Difficulty getting back to work after breaks

Sustained Attention
___ Taking frequent breaks when working
___ Taking breaks that are too long
___ Internally distracted—thoughts, states, moods, daydreams. Please specify:
___ Externally distracted—sights, sounds, technology such as phone, computer, tv, video games. Please specify:
___ Rushing through work—sloppy/mistakes
___ Not knowing limits (how long can sustain attention) or when best study time is
___ Not recognizing when off-task

Planning/Prioritization
___ Not making a study plan (may not know how)
___ Can’t break down long-term projects into subtasks and timelines
___ Having difficulty taking notes or studying for test because can’t distinguish important from non-important
___ Not using or not knowing how to use agenda/assignment book
___ Spending too much time on less important elements—can’t prioritize the most important parts or most important assignments
___ Planning unrealistically (e.g., fails to take into account obstacles to the plan)
Organization
___ Not using or know how to design an organizational system
___ Can’t find things in notebooks or backpacks
___ Losing assignments or important papers
___ Not having neat study area
___ Losing electronic data—forgets where work is stored or what name it’s filed under

Time Management
  Can’t estimate how long a task will take—due to:
___ Overestimating how long it will take to do a task (therefore never gets started)
___ Underestimating how long it will take to do a task (therefore leaves insufficient times)
___ Chronically late (for school, tutoring, other appointments, and obligations)
___ Difficulty juggling multiple assignments and responsibilities because can’t judge time involved
___ Over-committed—juggling too many obligations (and they think they can pull it off)
___ Lacking a sense of time urgency (doesn’t appreciate that deadlines are important)
___ Relying on deadline as activator or motivator
___ Not knowing limits (how long can sustain attention) or when best study time is

Goal Directed Persistence
___ Not having a long-term goal
___ Has a long-term goal but lacking a realistic plan to achieve the goal
___ Not seeing how daily actions impact goal attainment
___ Not seeing studying as important and making minimal effort as a result
___ Giving up in the face of an obstacle
___ “Having a “good enough” mentality that gets in the way of producing quality work
___ “Not on the radar”— seeing work as not relevant or not important enough to do

Metacognition
___ Can’t accurately evaluate skills (e.g., expects to do well on tests in spite of poor past performance; expects to go to a college or get a job without requisite skills or academic record)
___ Can’t identify appropriate study strategies
___ Can’t plan or organize a writing assignment
___ Can memorize facts but missing the larger context (does better on multiple choice tests than essay questions)
___ Having a hard time understanding more abstract concepts (math as well as content area subjects)
___ Having difficulty making inferences, drawing conclusion, grasping the main idea, reading between the lines
___ Failing to check work/proofread