

Naming and Taming Your Quiet Time Distractions

We constantly have background noise playing in our minds; it's like a running commentary that is observing and latching on to instant stimuli, triggering memories of past situations and events, and prompting thoughts about future events. To dial it down, you need to know what it is—you need to identify it. Then you can name the distraction. Some days it's easier to name the distraction than others. I've found that when I can't quite put my finger on what the distraction is, it's worth stopping for a moment to try to identify it. I can normally name it within a few minutes! In simple terms, it looks like this:

Name Your Distraction

- **Become aware of your distraction.** Acknowledge that you are not as attentive as you would like to be.
- **Identify your distraction.** Take the extra few moments, if necessary, to work out exactly what it is that is distracting you.
- **Declare the name of your distraction.** Say to yourself, out loud, on paper, or internally, "I'm being distracted by . . ."

Having named your distraction, you can go on to the next step.

Tame Your Distraction

In taming your distraction, you think about the level of action required for the distraction you have named.

- **Respond to a distraction.** Some distractions require a response. If you keep thinking about a friend whose marriage is going through a tough time, this is a distraction that should lead to prayer.
- **Feed a distraction.** Give it what it wants, and it will go away quickly. If you find that you're consistently distracted by a rumbling tummy, this is a distraction that a couple of slices of toast or a bowl of oatmeal would sort out!
- **Delay a distraction.** If the distraction is a task that you need to remember to complete later in the day, it often helps to write it down and pick it up after your quiet time. If your phone keeps buzzing, switch it off. • **Dismiss a distraction.** Sometimes it's just nonsense and needs to be ignored! Laugh at it, trash it, or burn it!

[Be Still: A Simple Guide to Quiet Times // Brian Heasley](#)



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