

MCD OS — MENTAL CLARITY + DISCIPLINE

The Daily Standard

Five questions. Three minutes. No willpower required.

Written by Marc Ortiz — creator of Mental Clarity OS

It's not a character flaw. It's a structural failure.

You're capable. Weeks go well, then weeks go nowhere, and you can't explain why.

That's not a discipline problem. It's what happens to anyone without a standard that runs independent of how they feel that day. Motivation is weather. It comes and goes on its own schedule, not yours. A standard is climate — it holds regardless of the forecast.

These five questions are the smallest possible version of that standard. Answer them before the day gets its hands on you, and you've already made your first real decision instead of reacting to whatever shows up first.

No app required for this part. Paper works. A notes app works. The mechanism matters more than the tool.

Five questions. Every morning.

01

What mental clutter am I carrying into today?

Naming it moves it from background noise to something you can actually set down.

02

What must be done today regardless of mood?

This is the line motivation doesn't get a vote on. Decide it before the day tries to talk you out of it.

03

Where will I most likely drift?

You already know your usual failure point. Naming it in advance is half of avoiding it.

04

What standard am I holding myself to today?

Not a goal. A floor — the minimum you won't go below no matter what today looks like.

05

What does "done well" look like by tonight?

Gives you something concrete to check yourself against tonight, instead of a vague feeling.

The rules that make it work

The questions are simple on purpose. Most people break it by overcomplicating the part around them.

- ✓ **Before your phone, not after.** The first input of your day sets the frame for the rest of it. Make it yours, not whatever's in your notifications.
- ✓ **One or two sentences per answer.** If you're writing paragraphs, you've turned this into journaling. That's a different practice — this one only works if it stays fast.
- ✓ **Same five questions, every day.** The value isn't in clever new questions — it's in answering the same five long enough to see your own patterns.
- ✓ **Don't skip a day to "catch up" later.** There's no catching up on a standard. There's just today's answer and tomorrow's.
- ✓ **Reread last week's answers on Sunday.** This is where the real signal shows up — not in any single day, but in what keeps repeating.

That's the whole system. No app, no dashboard, no streak counter required to get real value from it. Everything after this page is optional.

— IF YOU WANT IT AUTOMATED

This is the part I got tired of doing by hand.

Five questions on paper works. It's also easy to let slide when a week gets loud — no reminder, no record, no way to see the pattern without flipping back through old pages.

Mental Clarity OS is the same five questions, built into a private app. You type or talk, it's cleaned into one clear line, and it quietly builds the thing paper can't: a record you can actually look back on. After a few weeks, it shows you your own words from day one next to today. Not a claim. Proof, in your own language.

Mental Clarity OS Starter — \$99

Morning and evening check-ins, AI refinement, weekly and monthly reviews, and Then vs Now — the same standard, minus the willpower to maintain it yourself.

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