**background sound of cars on highway**

You can safely talk on the phone and drive, right?

What about texting and driving?

What about eating a McDouble, texting, and driving?

If driving a hunk of metal at 70mph requires 100% of your attention, the research says you can’t. Rather than being able to accomplish multiple tasks at 100%, your brain allocates each task only a fraction of the attention you’d otherwise use. In the short term, you simply cannot focus on multiple things at once.

What’s that mean to your life exactly? Well, take a piece of advice form the experts. When asked at a dinner party, what the single most important factor in their success was? Both Warren Buffet and Bill Gates responded with one word: focus.

You are constantly bombarded with so much information that your brain goes into overdrive. The TV shouts for you to buy x, y, and z. Instagram **Instagram notification sound**, Twitter **twitter notification sound**, and Facebook **notification sound** feeds vie for your attention. And by golly, that email isn’t gonna answer itself. So, what do you do? You switch from one to the next, fragmenting and fracturing your thought and focus. While think you are at peak productivity, you are harming yourself. Quickly switching between activities depletes the oxygenated glucose levels in your brain. The same chemical necessary to focus on a task. Also, every time you quickly switch tasks or trains of thought, your brain releases stress hormones that lead to anxiety and short-term memory loss.

Obviously, multitasking is harmful, but no one can maintain focus on one topic forever. Life is hectic and sometimes you have to accomplish several things in a relatively short span. According to Tim Harford, the solution is slow-motion multitasking.

*Slow-motion multitasking feels like a counterintuitive idea. What I'm describing here is having multiple projects on the go at the same time, and you move backwards and forwards between topics as the mood takes you, or as the situation demands. But the reason it seems counterintuitive is because we're used to lapsing into multitasking out of desperation. We're in a hurry, we want to do everything at once. If we were willing to slow multitasking down, we might find that it works quite brilliantly.*

*I think there are three reasons. And the first is the simplest. Creativity often comes when you take an idea from its original context and you move it somewhere else.*

*The second reason that multitasking can work is that learning to do one thing well can often help you do something else. Any athlete can tell you about the benefits of cross-training. It's possible to cross-train your mind, too.*

*There's a third reason why slow-motion multitasking can help us solve problems. It can provide assistance when we're stuck. This can't happen in an instant.*

Multi-tasking itself is not harmful, but when done in a short time frame, it keeps you from reaching your fullest potential. To be your best self, you should find a happy balance between tunnel vision and multi-tasking. Thus, you could maintain focus and efficiently accomplish tasks with maximum creativity. So, next time you are overly stressed out, tackle things one at a time. Your mind, body, and results will thank you.