

# Book Club Discussion Guide

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## Indistractable by Nir Eyal

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Build a habit of focus with psychology-based approaches and innovative strategies.

**QUOTE** | p. 2 - "The fact is, in this day and age, if you are not equipped to manage distraction, your brain will be manipulated by time-wasting diversions."

**QUESTION** | What is your favorite time-wasting diversion?

**QUOTE** | p. 3 - "The antidote to impulsiveness is forethought. Planning ahead ensures you will follow through."

**QUESTION** | Are you a natural planner?

**QUOTE** | p. 12 - "We can think of traction as the actions that draw us toward what we want in life."

**QUESTION** | Have you ever thought of "traction" as the opposite of "distraction" before?

**QUOTE** | p. 24 - "Most people don't want to acknowledge the uncomfortable truth that distraction is always an unhealthy escape from reality."

**QUOTE** | p. 27 - "If distraction costs us time, then time management is pain management."

**QUESTION** | What are you typically trying to escape?

**QUOTE** | p. 36 - "Resisting an urge can trigger rumination and make the desire grow stronger."

**QUESTION** | When does this typically happen to you?

**QUOTE** | p. 38 - "I've included a Distraction Tracker at the back of this book on which you can note the triggers you experience throughout the day. You can download and print additional copies at NirAndFar.com/Indistractable; keep it handy for easy access."

**QUESTION** | Have you tried tracking your distractions?

**QUOTE** | p. 40 - "When an urge takes hold, noticing the sensations and riding them like a wave—neither pushing them away nor acting on them—helps us cope until the feelings subside."

**QUESTION** | Have you tried avoiding distractions?

**QUOTE** | p. 41 - "By relinquishing our notions about what fun should feel like, we open ourselves up to seeing tasks in a new way."

**QUESTION** | What part of scrapbooking could you make more "fun" by reconsidering what that means?

**QUOTE** | p. 42 - "Instead of running away from our pain or using rewards like prizes and treats to help motivate us, the idea is to pay such close attention that you find new challenges you didn't see before. Those new challenges provide the novelty to engage our attention and maintain focus when tempted by distraction."

**QUESTION** | What kind of new challenge in scrapbooking might help you find motivation?

**QUOTE** | p. 47 - "Just as we don't "run out" of joy or anger, willpower ebbs and flows in response to what's happening to us and how we feel."

**QUOTE** | p. 48 - "Labeling yourself as having poor self-control actually leads to less self-control. Rather than telling ourselves we failed because we're somehow deficient, we should offer self-compassion by speaking to ourselves with kindness when we experience setbacks."

**QUESTION** | Do you believe you run out of willpower by the end of the day?

**QUOTE** | p. 54 - "We never achieve our values any more than finishing a painting would let us achieve being creative. A value is like a guiding star; it's the fixed point we use to help us navigate our life choices."

**QUESTION** | What is one of your values in memory keeping?

**QUOTE** | p. 56 - "You can't call something a distraction unless you know what it's distracting you from."

**QUESTION** | What part of scrapbooking do you seek a distraction from?

**QUOTE** | p. 56 - "The goal is to eliminate all white space on your calendar so you're left with a template for how you intend to spend your time each day."

**QUESTION** | How does this idea make you feel? Do you think it is realistic?

**QUOTE** | p. 58 - "Being indistractable is largely about making sure you make time for traction each day and eliminating the distraction that keeps you from living the life you want—one that involves taking care of yourself, your relationships, and your work."

**QUESTION** | The author implies that all distraction is inherently bad, that our chosen coping mechanisms must be scheduled. Do you agree?

**QUOTE** | p. 62 - "Just as you wouldn't blow off a meeting with your boss, you should never bail on appointments you make with yourself."

**QUESTION** | Do you schedule scrapbooking as an appointment on your calendar?

**QUOTE** | p. 77 - "Regularly aligning expectations around how you'll spend your time is paramount, and must be done in regular, predictable increments."

**QUESTION** | Do you look at your upcoming week and seek out potential times for scrapbooking?

**QUOTE** | p. 78 - "It frees us from the trivialities of our day and gives us back the time we can't afford to waste."

**QUESTION** | As a memory keeper, do you see value in the "trivialities?"

**QUOTE** | p. 83 - "The Fogg Behavior Model states that for a behavior (B) to occur, three things must be present at the same time: motivation (M), ability (A), and a trigger (T). More succinctly, B = MAT."

**QUESTION** | What is your scrapbooking trigger?

**QUOTE** | p. 84x - "The more we respond to external triggers, the more we train our brain in a never-ending stimulus-response loop. We condition ourselves to respond instantly."

**QUESTION** | Are you triggered by notifications?

**QUOTE** | p. 92 - "Signal when you do not want to be interrupted. Use a screen sign or some other clear cue to let people know you are indistractable."

**QUESTION** | How realistic is this strategy in your work or home life?

**QUOTE** | p. 98 - "There's mounting evidence that processing your email in batches is much more efficient and less stress inducing than checking it throughout the day."

**QUESTION** | What is your approach to email?

**QUOTE** | p. 107 - "Our technology gives us a way of being physically present but mentally absent."

**QUESTION** | Do you find this is true for you? How do you think introverts vs. extroverts might look at this statement?

**QUOTE** | p. 111 - "The idea here is to find the best time and place to do the things you want to do."

**QUESTION** | When is your best time to scrapbook?

**QUOTE** | p. 118 - "Moving from one thing to another hurts our concentration by leaving what she calls an "attention residue" that makes it harder to get back on track once we have been distracted."

**QUESTION** | Do you ever get distracting while scrapbooking? What typically captures your attention?

**QUOTE** | p. 142 - "An effort pact prevents distraction by making unwanted behaviors more difficult to do."

**QUOTE** | p. 147 - "A price pact is a type of precommitment that involves putting money on the line to

encourage us to do what we say we will.”

**QUOTE** | p. 160 – “By making identity pacts, we are able to build the self-image we want.”

**QUESTION** | What type of pacts have you tried?

**QUOTE** | p. 175 – “Speaking up sounds easy, but if you don’t feel psychological safety you’ll keep your concerns and ideas to yourself.”

**QUESTION** | Can you think of a time in your life when you clearly felt (or did not feel) psychological safety?

**QUOTE** | p. 213 – “It’s only when kids can monitor their own behavior that they learn the skills they need to be indistractable—even when their parents aren’t around.”

**QUOTE** | p. 225 – “Distractions can take a toll on even our most intimate relationships; the cost of being able to connect with anyone in the world is that we might not be fully present with the person physically next to us.

**QUESTION** | What is one way you can be a better role model for being indistractable to the people in your life?

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on Feb. 27, 2020 at 8:00 p.m. for our discussion.

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