

Learning to Concentrate and Focus

Written by Shane Butler
Friday, 07 May 2010 03:48

No matter who you are or what your occupation may be, you will need to concentrate and focus. Whether you are a student, an office worker, or even someone involved in manual labor such as in the construction field, one thing is sure – you will need to devote time and energy to concentration and focus on your occupation and especially the task at hand.

But first of all, just what is concentration? Concentration is defined as deep mental attention towards an object or subject. If you are concentrating on something, you devote all your attention to it.

So, what is the difference between concentration and focus?

Focus would be how you narrow in on the center or core of that which you are concentrating on. So you could be concentrating on something but perhaps not be focused on the main part or issue. If you were really interested in that object or person, and devoted all of your concentration on it, it can probably be said that you are focused.

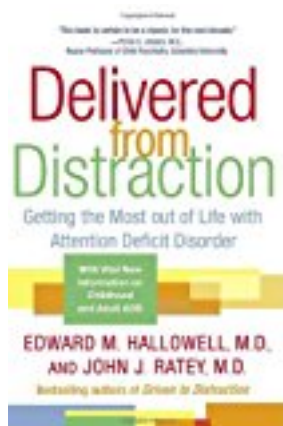
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So how do you learn to focus (meaning you improve the level of your concentration)?

First, you have to accept that there are two types of individuals out there. You could be the type that has learned how to deal with frustration or you could be the type that has not. If you believe you are the former yet find it hard to finish the task you are working on – remember, you can still do more than what you believe you can do. This means really pushing yourself to develop mental stamina by going beyond the point of frustration. Just keep working despite the feeling that you want to give up and you will develop mental endurance.

Second, if you have a tendency to become scatterbrained, try bribing your mind. Do one task at a time but impose time limits – this will prevent your mind from focusing on other less important tasks. Also, remember this doesn't mean you are ADHD. Everyone has some characteristics of ADHD or ADD from time to time. But if you are concerned about it, go read this great book, 'Delivered from Distraction', written by Edward M. Hallowell M.D. and John J. Ratey M.D.. (Two highly successful ADHD Doctors) It's a great at looking at the positive side of ADHD also.



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Third, if you still can't seem to focus, write down your concerns, inspired ideas etc. on a 'to-do' list. This allows you to clear some space in your mind for the immediate task or activity, rather than use your mind as a bulletin board.

Fourth, it's vital to move past the urge to procrastinate. If you have a task to do, and you want to postpone it, ask yourself:

Should I do this?

If I do it, will I keep worrying about it?

If I postpone it, will it be easier to do later?

By asking yourself those 3 key questions, you can gain the motivation to mentally apply yourself towards finishing your goal. Also, like most things, it's easier when you have a habit. Make a habit of getting things done right away or at the planned time, every time.

Remember, figure out how you work and function, make sure to get enough sleep and proper nutrition, and make wise and healthy habits.