

HOW TO IMPROVE PRODUCTIVITY AND CONCENTRATION



# THE POWER OF FOCUS

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# INTRODUCTIONS



Your ability to focus will have a significant impact on your life. In this powerful guide you will learn what focus really is and how it works. You will also learn about the many benefits of increasing your focus and how it can transform your life for the better.

Being able to improve your focus is an essential skill you need to master. You need to ensure that you use the right techniques to do this and, in this guide, you will only find proven techniques that are fully supported by scientific research.

To get the most out of your increased focus you need to develop your self-discipline. You will learn the importance of this and a number of proven methods that you can use to develop your self-discipline.

Everything that you need to know about improving your focus significantly is in this powerful guide. So please read every word and apply what you learn. The steps outlined in the guide require practice, patience and persistence.

# WHAT IS FOCUS AND HOW DOES IT WORK?

## CHAPTER 1



If you can improve your ability to focus then you will be able to achieve a lot more in your life. Having the right level of focus will enable you to achieve anything that you want. Achieving success in your life is all about focus and hard work.

Imagine if you had an infinite power of focus. You can use this solidly for all of the hours that you work each day. With this kind of focus you would be able to accomplish more than you ever did before. It will be possible for you to achieve many things in less time.

At the end of the day, being able to focus on the things that really matter and being able to stay focused most of the time, is the secret to accomplishing more and doing everything a lot better than you did before.

### So, what is Focus?

Focus is a skill of thinking that will allow you to get started on a task without any procrastination. Having good focus skills will ensure that you can maintain your concentration on a task until you complete it.

When people have a good level of focus, they are able to pay attention despite any setbacks or distractions that they may encounter. A high level of focus will ensure that you have the right level of energy and effort to accomplish the things that you need to do.

As an example of focus in action, you will get started with a task immediately and then keep working on this task until you complete it. You will do this without being distracted by your mobile phone, other people, the Internet, television and so on.

### Thinking always involves Focus

Focus is very important to all of us and it is not really possible to think without deploying focus. You need focus to be perceptive, to recall things from memory, to make decisions and to solve problems in your life. It is not possible to do any of these things without the power of focus.

If you have a wandering mind it is going to make you less productive. Tackling a task with a wandering mind is likely to lead to a poor-quality result. You can only produce the highest quality results when you are able to focus on a task. A wandering mind is also likely to make you waste a lot of your precious time each day.

### Three Different Types of Attention

There are at least 3 different types of attention that help you to focus. While you are reading this guide right now these three things will be helping your ability to concentrate on what you are reading.

The first of these is “selective attention”. This enables you to focus on one thing while disregarding everything else. Next, we have “divided attention” which can sometimes be called “attention switching” which you use to manage and process a number of different information sources at the same time.

If you can drive a car then you will use divided attention to do this. You will toggle your attention back and forth throughout your car journey. As you get older, your divided attention can diminish. You can prevent this from happening by using your divided attention more and participating in regular exercise.

Finally, we have “sustained attention”. This is where you are able to maintain your focus on something for a long period of time. While you are sustaining your attention, your brain will sort and route information so that you are able to continue to focus despite the distractions that you face on a regular basis.

For sustained attention your brain will use sensitivity enhancement that will intensify sensory information such as lights and sounds that will ensure that you process things in the most efficient way.

Your brain will also use something called “efficient selection” which is where it will filter information that is important for what you are focusing on and move this up the list of priorities. It will also suppress distractions and interruptions by moving these down to the bottom of your priority list.

### Reasons for a Lack of Focus

There are a number of reasons why you may be suffering from a lack of focus. A major reason is because you are not really interested in the task that you need to complete. On any daily task list there are likely to be things that are less interesting for you to do than others. But you need to complete all of your tasks.

If you attempt to perform a task that is not interesting to you then it is likely that you will hesitate and maybe even procrastinate over it. You will feel that you are trapped at this point having to do something that you have no interest in. The only thing that will push you to complete this task is your desire to complete everything.

A naturally wandering mind is another reason for a lack of focus. If you find that your mind seems to drift all over the place then you will probably start to come up with excuses as to why you do not need to start the task. This is classic procrastination. You will put off a task because you convince yourself that it is not important for you to complete it right now for example.

Procrastination is a total enemy of focus. All of us procrastinate to some level in our lives. But if you have a real procrastination problem then you are going to find it difficult to complete your daily tasks. It will be easy for you to lack focus if you suffer from procrastination and you need to do something about this problem.

## **Disruptions can Break your Focus**

It is always possible for your brain to lose focus when it is confronted with certain distractions. If you experience flashing lights or loud noises then these will generate a lot of neural activity in your brain which will bring them to the forefront of your attention.

Of course, this kind of reaction in your brain is useful if you are about to have a driving accident for example. But it is not useful if you are at home or in your office trying to concentrate on completing a task.

In order for you to remain focused then you need the natural “braking system” in your brain to kick in. This does exist, and experts believe that it is all to do with the ventrolateral prefrontal cortex area of your brain.

Some people can use the brain braking system a lot more effectively than others because it takes a great deal of energy to make it work. You cannot totally rely on this brain braking system to prevent you from being distracted by some things.

## **Self-Induced Distractions**

It is not always external distractions that can cause us to lose focus. Each day we have to face a barrage of information and sometimes your brain can just be overwhelmed by this. When this happens, you will lose your focus and become unproductive.

There is a cost to all of these self-induced distractions. Our attention spans are fairly limited and a self-induced distraction can prevent you from deeper thought that is usually necessary to solve problems and complete more complex tasks.

When your mind wanders from one thing to another you will spend a lot of your precious energy. It will be harder for you to understand certain things, make decisions, use your memory to recall important information and more.

In the next chapter we will discuss the science of focus...

# THE SCIENCE OF FOCUS

## CHAPTER 2



In this chapter, we will discuss the neuroscience behind focus. We will explain everything in layman's terms and try not to confuse you here. It will be useful if you can have an overview of the how focus works from a scientific standpoint.

### **Increase in Neurotransmitters when you Focus**

Have you ever wondered what is going on in your brain when you are focusing? The truth is that there are a number of things happening. The first thing to note is that there is an increase in neurotransmitters such as norepinephrine, dopamine and acetylcholine. These will alter your mood, your memory state and more.

There are neurotransmitters that are associated with focus and attention and these are known as catecholamine transmitters. These are similar to those that you produce when you are in a state of "fight or flight". With a lot of these neurotransmitters in your brain, you are going to be more engaged and alert. Your memory will also improve and you will remember more.

### **The Role of the Prefrontal Cortex**

Your brain will produce the required neurotransmitters to help you to perform certain functions. When you need to focus on something there will be neurotransmitters formed in the prefrontal cortex area of your brain.

This is the part of your brain that provides access to a number of different areas that are necessary for higher level cognitive tasks that require planning, deep thought and memorizing.

Essentially this involves calling upon a network of brain areas that are known as the “attention network” or sometimes called the “executive control network”.

## Impact of the Attention Network

The more that you focus, neurons in your brain will change the rate at which they fire. This in turn alters the brainwaves in the attention network. When you are really focusing hard on something, there will be beta waves present in your prefrontal cortex. Another way to increase the amount of beta waves in your brain is to consume caffeine.

You may be wondering how our brains know that what we are focusing in warrants our attention. Scientists do not have a definitive answer to this but they do know that another area of your brain is involved and this is called the “salience network”. This includes the anterior cingulate cortex ACC.

## Salience Network and ACC

What the combination of the salience network and the ACC do is to enable us to identify something that is important and deserving of our attention at a conscious level. In turn, this directs the attention network to increase your focus with what has been identified.

There will then be a flood of norepinephrine and dopamine and this will encourage the limbic system and the hippocampus area of your brain to commit more of what you are experiencing to your long-term memory.

The great thing about the salience network is that it has a strong connection with motivation and your ability to keep going. In experiments with mice, their salience networks were removed and the result was that they gave up very easily when looking for food in a maze scenario. This suggests a direct link between the salience network and the motivation to continue.

## Internal or External Factors can Direct Attention

Scientists have discovered that both internal and external factors can direct our attention. For example, if you make the decision that something is important and choose to focus on it, then this is known as “top down” attention which will activate your brain using the dorsal attention network.

Alternatively, your attention can also trigger from an external factor such as a noise or some other distraction in your immediate environment. When this happens, your attention will switch in a reflexive way. This is known as “bottom up” attention which emanates from the ventral attention network.

In the next chapter we will discuss the benefits of improving your focus...

# THE BENEFITS OF IMPROVING YOUR FOCUS

## CHAPTER 3



As you will discover in this powerful guide, it is certainly possible for you to improve your focus but it is going to take time and consistent effort on your part to make this transformation. In order to provide you with the necessary motivation for this, you need to be aware of the benefits of improving your focus.

### **Better Focus Improves Control**

Being in control of your life and the things that you do is something that you can work towards when you improve your focus. You will be able to make plans and know that you are going to focus on the individual tasks that make up those plans.

None of us live in a bubble and there will be times when unexpected things happen that can cause you to lose your focus. If your focus skills are at a high level then you will be confident that you can deal with the unexpected and then get right back to completing your tasks.

While it is a very good feeling to know that you can focus on the tasks of your plan at will, you need to be aware that plans are just a “best guess” at what needs to be done to achieve a goal. It is unlikely that any plans that you create will work out perfectly. Increased focus will help you to assess the current situation and make adjustments to your plans if necessary.

### **Increased Focus yields greater Positivity**

When you increase your focus, you will harvest more positive energy. If you do experience negative thoughts then you will be able to deal with these a lot easier and put things in perspective.

By having a higher level of focus you will be able to neutralize negative thoughts by concentrating on positive ones.

People that do not have a strong focus tend to turn their attention to the negative things in life. The more they focus on these negative things, the more overwhelmed they become and they can find that small insignificant issues become major problems for them because of the attention that they give them.

With improved focus you will find it easier to detach yourself from these negative situations and reinvest your focus into more positive things. All of us have obstacles that we need to tackle in our lives and when you are able to focus on positive things it will help you to overcome these obstacles a lot easier.

### **Increased Focus will result in better Self-Awareness**

Increasing your focus will help you connect to your inner self and raise your level of self-awareness. You will see yourself growing all of the time by taking on new challenges and moving out of your comfort zone. Your higher level of focus will provide you with the confidence to tackle new things.

Being more self-aware will help you in many ways. You will be confident that you can tackle any new task because you have the ability to focus on it until it is complete. This will strengthen your belief that you can achieve any challenging goals that you set for yourself.

### **Increased Focus will improve your Problem Solving**

One of the major benefits of increasing your level of focus is that you will improve your problem-solving skills. Without the necessary level of focus it will be hard for you to solve any problem – no matter how small or large it is.

People tend to approach problem solving in different ways. Some people will focus on the problem rather than the solution and this tends to make the problem worse than it really is. When you have better focus you can concentrate on the solution for your problems which is a much better place to be.

### **Increased Focus will help your Decision Making**

A lot of people that have poor focus skills find it very difficult to make decisions. In order to make the best decisions in life you need to use critical thinking and focus on the issue at hand until the decision is made.

Everyone needs to make decisions in their life on a regular basis and having increased focus ability will help you to do this easier and faster. You cannot make the best decisions unless you are able to fully focus on the issue at hand.

You should find that as you improve your focus, it will be a lot easier for you to make the right decisions in life. With increased focus you can dig deep into an issue and weigh up all of the possible options in order to make the correct decision.

## **Increased Focus provides Greater Clarity**

Most people will drift along in life without any direction. With an increase in your focus, you can determine what you want and set challenging goals. You know where you are going and where you want to be and you will be confident that your power of focus will help you to get there.

Not all of your goals and plans will turn out exactly as you expected and sometimes you will need to re-focus in order to get back on the right track. This will be a lot easier for you to do when you have a higher level of focus.

## **Increased Focus Reduces Stress**

If you are completely focused on completing a particular task then you will not be thinking about something negative that can cause you stress. With poor focus and a wandering mind, you will be a lot more susceptible to negative thoughts and paying attention to these which can increase your stress levels.

Overwhelm can cause stress for a lot of people. In a situation where someone has to perform a task that they have never done before, people with poor focus can often become overwhelmed very easily and this can raise their stress levels. With a high level of focus you will be confident that you can achieve any task.

## **Increased Focus will help you minimize Distractions**

Life is full of distractions and if you have poor focus then you are a lot more likely to let these stop your train of thought. It will be very difficult for you to achieve challenging goals in this situation as there will be plenty of distractions to prevent you from doing this.

You can use your improved focus power to help you to minimize distractions. It is important to form empowering habits which will minimize the chances of distractions getting in the way of what you need to do.

By increasing your power of focus you will be able to easily identify the distractions that are most likely to disturb you and take action to eliminate or minimize them. You know that in order to complete your tasks in a quality way that you need to maintain your full focus on them.

Once you are able to minimize distractions in your life there will be no stopping you. You will be able to achieve any goal that you set for yourself because your focus will not be interrupted. If you look at the traits of successful people, having a high level of focus will always be there.

## **Increased Focus will help to Build Momentum**

When you improve your focus power you will be able to complete your tasks faster and in a higher quality way. Once you begin to work on your tasks, completing them quickly and successfully will increase your momentum to tackle the next task and the next.

If your focus is poor then it will be hard for you to build any useful momentum. You will know that you can be distracted at any time and lose your focus. Re-focusing and getting back on track will be tough for you.

### **Increased Focus improves your Satisfaction**

When you complete a long list of tasks every day it is very satisfying. Increasing your focus will help you to achieve your tasks a lot easier and quicker. You will be very satisfied that you are getting things done and making good progress to the achievement of your goals.

In the next chapter we will discuss the setting of a challenging goal to improve your focus...

# SET A CHALLENGING GOAL TO IMPROVE YOUR FOCUS

## CHAPTER 4



Now that you are aware of what focus is and how it works, how do you start taking the necessary steps to improve your focus? A lot of people approach this in the wrong way. They will fight their natural inclination to focus on things which results in poor focus.

### Can you Force your Focus?

While it is possible to force your focus on a task that you need to complete rather than doing something else such as checking your Facebook notification, this does consume a lot of your energy. You will be calling upon your salience network and forcing your focus while trying to block out any distractions at the same time from the ventral attention network.

This is hard work and will make you tired in no time at all. The best way to increase your focus is to choose something that will engage and fascinate you. It needs to truly inspire and motivate you to direct your focus.

### The Role of Flow States

Something that neuroscientists have known about for a long time is the role that “flow states” play with our focus. A flow state is a state of mind where you will experience intense focus and feel highly engaged with what you are doing. Lots of scientists believe that flow states are responsible for some of the biggest breakthroughs in human history.

When you are in a flow state you do not relate to the concept of time. Hours can pass by and you are not aware of this because you are in a flow state. It is even possible for you to forget about visiting the bathroom or having something to eat when you are in a flow state.

From a scientific perspective, flow states always cause an increase in catecholamine neurotransmitters and will cause a decrease in rapid brainwaves. Instead of beta waves, your brain goes into an alpha or theta wave state. While this is happening, a number of areas of your brain will shut down temporarily. You can compare this to being in a meditative state.

When you choose something that you are passionate about to focus on you will always be in a flow state. By going after something that you really desire you will be able to trigger a flow state a lot more easily.

## Set a Challenging Goal

One of the best things that you can do to improve your focus is to set yourself a challenging goal. It is an unfortunate fact that most people do not set goals and have no direction in their life. You can easily change this situation by setting a goal for something that you desire in your life. The more passionate you are about your goal, the more your focus should improve.

The reason that most people do not set goals for themselves is that it takes effort to think about what you really want in your life. If it was easy, everyone would have at least one challenging goal that they are passion about and will put them into a flow state so that they can maintain their focus on it.

## Identifying what you really want

It is not as difficult to identify what you really want from your life as you may think. You simply need to ask yourself the right questions and test your emotions. Take some paper and a pen and find a quiet area where you will not be disturbed.

Think about the different areas of your life such as:

- Finances
- Health
- Relationships
- Career or business
- Skills
- Hobbies

Of course, there are other areas of your life that you can focus on if you want. For each of the life areas that you decide to focus on, ask yourself the question “what do I really want for my finances?” and substitute the life area at the end of the question. So, if you are looking at relationships, the question would be “what do I really want in my relationships?”

Write everything down that comes to mind and do not make any judgments. Your aim here is to create a list of things that you really want to achieve. Once you have been through all of the different life categories it is time to assess your list.

Go through each item on your list and imagine that you have already achieved what you want. Note how strong your feelings are about this. There should be one item on your list that makes you feel more strongly than the others when you imagine that you already have it. This is what you need to create your goal around.

## Add an Emotional Driver to your Goal

Once you have identified what you want you need to think about why you really want it. Wanting more money is a common thing for people but why do you want this extra money? What is the emotional reason for wanting more money?

Maybe you want to buy something special for yourself or your family. How will this make you feel when you have it? Note all of the emotions here and write them down. This will then become an emotional driver to inspire you to achieve your goal.

## Use the SMART Goal Setting Process

The best way to set a goal is to use the SMART goal setting process which stands for:

- Specific
- Measurable
- Achievable
- Related
- Time

Any goal that you set must be specific. It is no use setting a goal to make more money. You need to specify an amount of money that you want to make. This applies to any type of goal that you set. Be sure that it is specific.

All of your goals need to be measurable. It is essential that you can measure your progress towards your goal. A financial goal is easy to measure – you are either making the money you need or you are not. Other goals can be more challenging to measure but you need to figure this out.

Achievable means that it is possible for you to achieve your goal. It does not mean that the goal will be easy for you to achieve but it must be possible. If you are overweight and in your mid-fifties then you are not going to be a professional athlete that wins a lot of gold medals at the Olympics for example. Keep it real.

Related means that it is a goal that fits in with your core values. It is pointless to set a goal that goes against your principles because you will never achieve it. All of your goals need to have a specific time frame.

A goal without a time frame is useless. If you want to make \$100,000 then set a time frame of a year for example. Otherwise, there will always be tomorrow and tomorrow will never come.

## Break your Goal Down into a Plan

At this stage, your goal will be at a high level such as making \$100,000 in the next 12 months. Now it is time for you to figure out how you are actually going to achieve your goal. What things are you going to focus on every day to ensure that you make the right progress to achieving your goal?

The best thing to do is to create a daily plan that you can focus on. This will be a list of tasks that you will start working on today in pursuit of your goal. Each day, you will add new tasks to your plan so that you can get closer to achieving your goal.

## Setting a Goal will Improve your Focus

You may be wondering why setting a goal is going to improve your focus. Well, the answer is that you have made the decision to pursue something that you are passionate about which will help you to get into a flow state and focus on what needs to be done.

Now you have direction in your life with your passionate goal. You have a specific target to aim for and a strong emotional reason to accomplish your goal. It should not be difficult at all for you to focus on what needs to be done to achieve your goal.

In the next chapter we will discuss the importance of self-discipline to improve your focus...

# THE IMPORTANCE OF SELF - DISCIPLINE

## CHAPTER 5



If you look at successful people in life, they always have a lot of ambition which you can say about anyone that has just set a new challenging goal for themselves. The difference is that successful people have the right level of self-discipline to follow through and achieve their goals.

You may believe that you do not have the self-discipline required to achieve your goal. After all, being self-disciplined is a difficult thing to do. But this is not the case and you can develop your powers of self-discipline through consistent effort.

### **The Importance of Self-Discipline**

If you have a high level of self-discipline then you will be able to consistently control your actions, your emotions and your feelings to ensure that you get important things done. In the last chapter you set a challenging goal for yourself and created a plan to achieve that goal. Self-discipline will help you to stick to your plan whatever is happening around you.

Once you are a master of self-discipline you will be able to remain motivated for as long as you want to get things done. You will have the kind of will power necessary to control your actions and all of your impulses.

Will power is all about your ability to keep focused and use your self-discipline to take consistent action which will drive you towards the accomplishment of your goals. Both will power and self-discipline work together to help you.

### **The Benefits of Self-Discipline**

There are a number of benefits to developing your self-discipline. The first of these is that it will reduce stress and anxiety as you will always be confident that you are in control of your actions and emotions. This means that you are much less likely to suffer from stress and anxiety.

Becoming a master of self-discipline will increase your chances of achieving your goals. You will not be suffering so much from self-imposed distractions and setbacks, which means that you will be able to focus on your goals. Having a high level of self-discipline usually means that you can accomplish your goals faster as well.

With a high level of self-discipline, you are far more likely to be happier in your life. You know that you can use the power of your self-discipline to achieve your goals and make the necessary changes in your life for the better.

Finally, you will increase your levels of resilience when you master self-discipline. It will enable you to banish the bad habits that have held you back in the past so that you can accomplish both your short-term and long-term goals.

Use the methods below to develop your self-discipline:

### **Use the Countdown Method to get Started**

One of the things that set successful people apart from the rest is their ability to get started with something right away. They do not wait for anyone or anything to get started on their goals. They know that making a start will help to build the necessary momentum to carry on in the pursuit of their goals.

If you are having difficulty getting started with something then you can use an effective method to force yourself to get going. Start to countdown from 10 and when you reach one get started immediately. This is a proven technique that works well and it is very simple to implement.

What the countdown from 10 enables you to do is to create a shift in your mental state so that you will be sufficiently motivated to make a start on the task. It gives you that much needed push to take the plunge. Use this technique and you will be on your way to mastering self-discipline.

### **Make your Goal Visible each day**

When you create your challenging goal be sure to write it down. Take a copy of your goal and place it somewhere where you will see it a lot during the day. Use your written goal to provide you with inspiration.

If you use a journal, which we strongly recommend that you should, write your goal in your journal. Place a copy of your goal next to your computer, in your kitchen, in your bathroom, at your office – anywhere that you will see it more than once a day.

You probably own a smart phone and you can use a special goal app for free. By recording your goal with this app, you can set reminders that will notify you that you need to be at a certain point to achieve your goal by the deadline you set.

There are a ton of self-discipline quotes that you can use to motivate yourself daily. If you have people that you admire then the chances are that they will have created a self-disciplined quote. Perform a search online for self-discipline quotes that you can refer to every day.

Here are a couple of powerful self-discipline quotes that you can use:

“Self-discipline is the ability to make yourself do what you should do, when you should do it, whether you feel like it or not”

Elbert Hubbard

“Self-discipline begins with the mastery of your thoughts. If you don’t control what you think, you can’t control what you do. Simply, self-discipline enables you to think first and act afterward”

Napoleon Hill

## **Remind yourself Why you Started**

In the last chapter, we recommended that you create an emotional driver for your goal. It is essential that you keep your reason for achieving your goal to remind yourself why you started down this path.

Things are going to get tough for you when you are trying to achieve a challenging goal so reminding yourself of why you started can provide you with the motivation that you need to carry on regardless no matter what obstacles are in your way.

Another technique that can really help you with self-discipline is visualization. You can visualize that you are in complete control of your life and you will be able to accomplish any goal that you set for yourself. Another good tool to use is the power of positive affirmations.

## **Set a Single Goal First**

In the previous chapter we asked you to set only one goal for yourself. When you are going through the process of thinking about what you want to achieve in your life, it is very easy to get carried away and create more than one goal.

The trouble with having more than one goal is that it can overwhelm you, especially if you are in the early stages of developing your self-discipline. You need to have a good level of patience here and avoid being frustrated about not being able to pursue more than one goal first.

## **Master Prioritization**

There will always be certain tasks that you need to perform that are more important than others. You need to decide what these important tasks are and then organize yourself and your day so that you can complete them. When you prioritize like this you are much less likely to suffer from procrastination.

Tasks that are really important will give you a great sense of relief when you have completed them. Maybe you have not completed some of these important tasks and you keep thinking about this. Minimize your stress levels by prioritizing the most important things and getting them done.

## **Identify your Weaknesses**

This is not always an easy thing to do but if you want to be more self-disciplined then it is something that you must do. When you have identified your weakness, you can take the appropriate action to overcome them.

If you know that you have a tendency to start things and never finish them for example, this is a weakness that you can work on. Most people have no idea what their weakness are and it is a very positive step to take to identify yours and take action to overcome them.

## **Set up some Accountability**

One of the reasons that people lack self-discipline when they are working on ways to transform their lives is that there is no accountability. Nobody is going to give them a hard time if they do not complete their tasks for the day for example.

A simple solution to this is to find someone that you know will hold you accountable. It is better if you can find a person that you admire that has already achieved a degree of success in their life. They will be there to pat you on the back and cheer you on when you make the right progress towards your goal and also give you a push if you are lagging behind.

In the next chapter we will discuss how you can regain your focus when you lose it...

# REGAINING YOUR FOCUS WHEN YOU LOSE IT

## CHAPTER 6



Your focus is a very delicate thing. One minute you can be in a total flow state burning through your tasks with ease. And in the next minute something small distracts you and you totally lose your focus. All of the productivity gains that you made while in focus have just disappeared. This is going to happen to you and when it does it is not the end of the world.

The bottom line is that it is very possible for you to regain your focus when you lose it. You need to have the self-discipline to want to regain your focus and carry on from where you left off. Thankfully, there are some proven techniques that you can use to regain your focus.

### **Remind yourself Why you are doing what you are doing**

You are working hard and there are a number of things that can cause you to lose your focus. Suddenly you receive one notification after another on your phone or some distracting emails arrive in your inbox. All of these things mean that you will have to spend more time working and you can see no end in sight.

If any of these things distracts you sufficiently to lose your focus on what you are doing, then you need to redirect your mind so that you can become focused again. One of the most effective ways to do this is to remind yourself why you are doing the thing that required the focus.

Maybe you were working on one of your important tasks to achieve the goal that you set for yourself. If this is the case, read your goal and emotional driver again to remind yourself why you are working on this. By doing this you can change your state instantly to a more positive one and easily regain your focus.

### **Prioritize what you need to do**

Not prioritizing the tasks that you have ahead of you is sometimes the cause for losing focus. Maybe you are having difficulty deciding which tasks are the most important, or maybe you have not prioritized your tasks properly and there is a nagging doubt in your mind that you should be working on another task which is more important.

To be as productive as possible it is not about completing every task on your list. The most productive people will prioritize what the most important tasks are and then focus on these until they are completed. If you have some tasks on your list that are not associated with you achieving your goal then you can do these later.

So, you need to go through a prioritization process with your tasks every day. You need to find a good way of highlighting the tasks that are the most important so that these are always front and center for you. Use a card and write the tasks on there – keep this visible so if you are distracted you are never in doubt about what are your most important tasks.

### **Minimize or Eliminate Distractions**

We could write a whole chapter on this on its own. If you know that certain things are going to distract you when you are focusing on your tasks then either minimize them or eliminate them altogether. Some distractions you will need to minimize rather than eliminate. It is not reasonable to never look at your phone again – it is reasonable to cut this down to a minimum.

If you are someone that just has to respond to notifications on your phone immediately then you need to get out of the habit of doing this. It is very likely that most of these notifications will not be important. There is no need to respond to every email that you receive immediately either. Establish a routine to check emails a couple of times a day.

Be careful not to fall for the concept of “being busy”. Some people will perform a lot of really unimportant tasks so that they look and feel busy but they are not tackling anything important that will help them to achieve their goal.

### **Go for Quality rather than Quantity**

A lot of people have a tendency to try to finish their daily tasks as fast as they can. Ticking off those items on their “to-do” list is the most important thing. If you rush through your tasks then you are not likely to produce results of the highest quality. You will not need to focus too hard but you will probably end up having to do some things again.

Sometimes people can lose their focus because there are too many things on their task list. This can overwhelm them and it is hard to focus in this state. Take a look at your tasks in a calm way and decide on the outcome of the most important ones. By focusing on a quality outcome, you will tend to keep your focus on point.

### **Get Organized**

If you are disorganized then it is going to be more likely that you will lose your focus when you are tackling your tasks. You need some specific information to complete your task but you are not sure where this is on your computer. This will cause you to break your focus as you try and look for it.

It does not take a lot to get organized. You just need a place for everything and everything in its place. When you can instantly retrieve something that you need to complete a task then you are far less likely to break your focus.

If you have a lot of clutter in your working environment then you need to deal with this and get rid of it. Too much clutter can be really distracting and cause you to lose your focus. Your mind can be full of clutter as well which can prevent you from maintaining your focus. Embark on a major decluttering exercise.

### **Use a Re-focusing Object**

You can place an unusual object on your desk to remind you to re-focus if you experience a distraction. It doesn't matter what this object is – it can be something simple such as a candle, a flower, a mini statue whatever works for you.

With this object you can associate it with staying on track to complete your tasks. Each time that you see it you will be reminded to maintain your focus and re-focus if this is necessary. It may take a while for this object to work for you so keep at it.

### **Improve your Health**

If you take care of your body then it will take care of you. By eating properly and getting regular exercise you will benefit immensely when it comes to your focus. Always bear in mind that a healthy body is a healthy mind.

If you do not get a sufficient amount of sleep at night then you will be far more likely to lose your focus. Getting the right amount of sleep will make you feel energized and ready for the day ahead. You will be a lot more productive and able to maintain your focus for longer periods.

In the next chapter we will discuss proven ways to improve your focus...

# PROVEN WAYS TO IMPROVE YOUR FOCUS

## CHAPTER 7



It is our aim with this powerful guide to explain to you how focus works, why it is so important and provide you with proven ways to improve it. When it comes to improving your focus, anyone can do it. Your age doesn't matter nor does how long you have been struggling to improve your focus.

In this chapter we are going to reveal research-backed methods for improving your focus.

### Train your Brain for Improved Focus

You need to get your brain used to a higher level of focus and there are several ways that you can do this. Working the different parts of your brain more that provide your focus is always going to help. We suggest that you participate with different pastimes to train your brain to focus better. Here are some suggestions of what you can do:

- Solve crossword puzzles
- Play sudoku
- Play chess
- Play word searches or scrambles
- Complete jigsaw puzzles
- Play memory games

There was a study conducted in 2015 with nearly 5,000 adults which concluded that spending around 15 minutes each day for 5 days a week can have a significant impact on the ability to focus better. Any brain training game that will help you to develop your short-term memory and test your problem-solving skills is worth pursuing.

As we age then our powers of memory and concentration tend to diminish unless we do something about this. Participating in brain training activities is a great way to stay sharp and improve your focus.

There have been studies conducted with older people to see the effects of brain training and cognitive training. Years later the people that participated in the research had improved their memory, cognition and processing skills.

## Get Enough Sleep

Depriving yourself of enough sleep is very likely to affect your ability to focus. It will also negatively impact other cognitive functions as well such as your attention and memory. While it is OK to experience sleep deprivation now and again, regularly not getting enough sleep is going to take its toll on your mood and your ability to focus.

If you wake up tired every morning then this is going to have an impact on your reflexes and your overall ability to complete any task. There could be a number of reasons why you are not getting enough sleep and health problems can play a part here. But you must try hard to get the recommended amount of sleep every night.

For adults, the experts recommend between 7 and 8 hours of sleep every night. Here are a few suggestions on how you can get a better sleep at night:

- An hour before you plan to go to bed turn off the TV and any other screens
- Maintain a cool but comfortable temperature in your bedroom
- Be sure to wind down before you sleep by taking a bath, reading a book or listening to soothing music
- Try to go to sleep and get up at the same times each day – yes, that means the weekends as well
- Begin a regular exercise routine but don't do something too intense just before you sleep

These tips should help a lot of people. If you feel like you have some kind of medical problem that is preventing you from getting enough sleep then discuss this with your doctor. You need to do everything that you can to ensure you get enough sleep.

## Exercise Regularly

There are definitely links between participating in regular exercise and improving focus. In 2018, there was a study of fifth graders that proved that participating in daily exercise was able to improve the focus and attention in as little as 4 weeks.

Research performed with older people found that participating in the most moderate type of exercise helped to prevent and even reverse memory loss. Gentle exercise on a regular basis was shown to combat brain atrophy which is an age-related issue.

We are not asking you to get up at 5am and run 20 miles here. What we are asking you to do is what you can. This is much better than not doing anything at all. The amount of exercise and the intensity of it is up to you.

Being able to exercise regularly can be a real challenge for some people especially if they have physical or mental health issues. If you are struggling with what exercise you can do and do not want to join a gym, try to think about some enjoyable ways that you could introduce regular exercise into your life. Here are some ideas:

- Walking is a great form of exercise so can you walk your dog for longer or walk your children to school?
- Can you get up a few minutes earlier to perform some gentle stretching exercises in the morning?
- Can you walk to the store instead of jumping in the car?

It is best if you can exercise just before you need to focus on something. You should find that the exercise helps with your ability to focus and your attention span. Remember to do what you can when it comes to daily exercise.

## **Meditation for Improved Focus**

One thing that will certainly improve your focus is meditation and mindfulness. A lot of people are concerned about this but it really is good for you. Practicing mindfulness meditation for a few minutes a day will work wonders for your focus and will help you in other ways as well.

There have been a lot of studies around meditation and improving focus and other cognitive skills. A review of studies conducted in 2013 found that there was sufficient evidence to prove that meditation can help to improve focus and attention.

It really isn't difficult to practice mindfulness meditation. There are plenty of videos and other resources online that will show you how to do this. With a little practice, you will be able to perform mindfulness meditation wherever you are. You can also participate in yoga, deep breathing exercises and other activities to help you meditate.

## **Taking Breaks can Improve your Focus**

Have you ever been working on something, got stuck and then took a break from it only to come back and finish the task? It may seem crazy that this could work to improve focus but scientific experts claim that it works really well.

Let's say that you have been working on your tasks for a while and all of a sudden, your mind starts to wander. You decide to keep at your tasks and try to force yourself to re-focus. But this becomes a real struggle for you and your stress levels start to rise as you become anxious about not completing your tasks.

We have all been there. The next time that this happens to you give yourself a short mental break. You can go for a short walk or just move away from your work environment and get a drink or eat something nutritious. Even better, you can go outside and get some sunshine on your body.

When you return to your tasks it is likely that you will be able to focus on them a lot better than before. You may even experience a stronger motivation to complete your tasks. This is because taking mental breaks can boost your cognitive functions.

## **Change to a Healthier Diet**

The foods that you consume will have an affect on a number of your cognitive functions including your focus and memory. We strongly recommend that you stay away from sugar, processed foods and foods with a high fat content. Eating these foods can give your focus a boost:

- Salmon and trout
- Spinach
- Eggs
- Blueberries

It is also essential that you are hydrated as this will have a positive impact on your focus. Being mildly dehydrated can make it a lot harder for you to focus and to remember things. Be sure to eat breakfast in the morning as this will give your focus a boost. A breakfast high in protein and fiber is best.

### **Consume Caffeine for Improved Focus**

There is research that supports the fact that caffeine can benefit your focus and attention. If you feel that you are losing your focus then you can drink a cup of green tea or a cup of coffee. We are not talking about overdoing it here and drinking several cups of coffee in a day.

In 2017 there was a study which concluded that specific phytochemicals in the “matcha” type of green tea could improve cognitive functionality and help people to relax more. If you are not keen on drinking coffee, you can drink match instead to give your focus and attention a boost.

### **Some Supplements can Improve Focus**

The raking of certain supplements may help with the improvement of focus and other brain functions. It is important that you check with your doctor before taking any supplements if you have any allergies or health issues.

If you have a healthy diet then you should be able to get all of the vitamins that you need from this. But sometimes, taking supplements will make up for any gaps and help to give you a boost. Here are some supplements that may help to improve your focus and your overall brain functionality:

- Omega 3 fatty acids
- Folate
- Guarana seed extract
- Choline
- Flavonoids
- Vitamin K

### **Give your Focus a Workout**

There are certain mental workouts that you can perform to improve your focus. When you perform these mental workouts, you need to devote your attention fully to them for a specific amount of time. Here are some mental focus workouts you can try:

- Doodling or drawing for around 15 minutes
- Sucking on a lollipop until it disappears – you cannot bite the lollipop and you need to pay attention to the taste, the sensation on your tongue and the amount of time that it takes for the lollipop to disappear
- Set a timer for 5 minutes and try to blink the fewest number of times that you can
- Toss a ball or balloon with someone else for a few minutes

These activities are helpful to children who have a problem with their focus. They can help adults as well.

In the next chapter we will discuss the benefits of focusing on one thing at a time...

# THE BENEFITS OF FOCUSING ON ONE THING AT A TIME

## CHAPTER 8



These days “multitasking” is a word that is often used. There is a belief that you can get more done by multitasking than you can by focusing on one thing at a time. We believe that focusing on a single task is a lot better and we will explain why in this chapter.

If you are in the habit of trying to multitask all of the time then we want to encourage you to break this cycle. Trying to focus on a number of different things at once is very difficult and we recommend that you revert to a single tasking mode to achieve the best results.

### **You can rebuild your Focus with Single Tasking**

People have got into the habit of making a lot of switches in their daily lives. They are happy to make a switch between the websites that they view and the apps that they use on their mobile devices. When you make these switches there is a cost in terms of your focus.

When you focus on one thing at a time you significantly reduce the number of switches that you make. By minimizing these switches, you will be better able to rebuild your focus and attention levels on the single task that you want to complete.

### **Focusing on one thing at a time reduces Stress**

It takes a great deal of your energy to try to complete multiple tasks at the same time. Because you are spreading your focus and attention, even the simplest tasks can take a lot longer to complete when you are multitasking. This means that it will take you longer to complete all of your tasks which is likely to increase your stress levels.

By focusing on one task at a time you can significantly reduce your stress levels. You can look forward to each single task that you tackle and enjoy the process a lot more. Multitasking will usually raise your stress levels.

### **You will Get More Done Focusing on One Thing**

You want to get the best use out of your time and be as productive as possible. It may be tempting to attempt to multitask, but the reality is usually that multitasking will slow everything down. By focusing on one thing at a time, you are much more likely to enter a flow state which is a deep focus that will help you to complete a task.

Getting into a flow state is a great experience where you can lose all concept of time and the distractions that are going on around you. Being in a flow state can make you more productive up to a factor of 500%.

### **Be More Creative Focusing on One Thing at a Time**

You may not realize this but constraining yourself to work on one thing at a time can actually boost your creativity. When you decide to work on a single task you will unlock the potential of your brain.

It is much easier for you to think in a deeper way when you focus on one task at a time. When you do this, it is likely that you will find paths, different options and results that you could never find if you are multitasking.

In the final chapter we will discuss the focus best practices that you need to follow to be successful...

# FOCUS BEST PRACTICES

## CHAPTER 9



Here are the best practices that we highly recommend you follow to significantly improve your focus. By following these best practices, you will give yourself the maximum chance of success and all of the benefits that this will bring to you. The concepts are easy to understand, but it will require consistent effort on your part to achieve results.

### 1. Understand what Focus really is

Focus is your ability to concentrate on something without getting distracted. Any thinking activity requires focus because you need it to make decisions and recall things from your memory. You have 3 different types of attention which are “selective attention”, “divided attention” and “sustained attention”.

There are several reasons why you may suffer from a lack of focus including not being interested in something, having a wandering mind and procrastination. Disruptions can break your focus and there are external and self-induced distractions.

### 2. Understand the Science of Focus

It will help you to be a focus master if you understand the science behind it. When you focus you produce more neurotransmitters and there is a lot happening in your prefrontal cortex area that accesses your planning and deep thought skills. There is a network that you access from here called the “attention network”

There is also a part of your brain called the “salience network” which helps you to identify important things that you need to focus on. Making a decision to focus on something is a “top-down” action while being distracted by something external is called a “bottom up” action.

### **3. Know the Benefits of Improving Focus**

Having a higher level of focus will provide more control over your life. An increase in focus will make you more positive and you will become more self-aware. Your problem solving and decision-making skills will improve and you will have greater clarity. You can reduce your stress with better focus, build momentum and derive a lot more satisfaction from what you do.

### **4. Set a Challenging Goal to Improve Focus**

You can force your focus but this consumes a lot of energy and is hard to maintain. The best thing to do is to get into a “flow state” where you are naturally in deep thought because you are passionate about what you are doing. Identify something that you passionately want and set a challenging goal around it. Use the SMART process and add an emotional driver.

### **5. Develop Self-Discipline**

All successful people have a high level of self-discipline. They use it to control their actions and emotions to ensure that they get the important things done. Use the countdown method to get started and place your goal where you can see it for inspiration. Remind yourself why you started, prioritize tasks, identify and overcome your weaknesses and get some accountability.

### **6. Regain your Focus when you Lose it**

A good way to regain your focus is to remind yourself why you are doing what you are doing. Always prioritize and minimize or eliminate distractions. Aim for a quality result rather than speed and make sure that you are organized. Use an object to remind you to re-focus and take better care of your health as a healthy body is a healthy mind.

### **7. Proven Ways to Improve your Focus**

Use research backed methods to improve your focus. Participate in brain training activities and make sure that you are getting enough sleep. Exercise regularly and learn how to meditate to improve your focus. Take mental breaks when you need to and eat healthily. Caffeine can improve your focus and so can supplements. Perform mental workouts to improve focus.

### **8. Focus on One Thing at a Time**

Forget about multitasking because it is better to focus on one thing at a time. When you focus on a single thing you will be able to rebuild your focus. Focusing on one thing will also reduce your stress

levels and you will tend to get more done. It is likely that you will be more creative when you decide to focus on one thing at a time.

# CONCLUSION



Now that you know what you have to do to improve your focus it is time for you to take action. Don't just read this guide and then let it gather digital dust on your hard drive. This is your life, so follow the steps and apply what you have learned.

Most people have poor focus skills because they don't know how to do this properly. They try to figure it all out and then give up very quickly. You now know exactly what you need to do to increase your focus and the steps that you need to take.

We hope that you enjoyed reading "The Power Of Focus" and that you found this guide informative and inspiring. Start right now by identifying what you want and creating a challenging goal that you are passionate about.