

Creating a Concentration Environment

According to Dr. Walter Pauk, a learning skills expert, concentration is focused thinking. When you are focused, you can think with “greater precision and penetrate difficult ideas,” according to Dr. Pauk. Since concentration is an outcome, a product, a result, you must adopt habits that eliminate distractions and concentration will result.

Find a place that is quiet and will stay quiet.

Research is clear that certain sounds slow and even prevent learning. Some of those sounds are most types of music, talking, and intermittent sounds such as doors opening and closing, noise from children, pet sounds, etc. Have everything you will need before you begin to study: pencils, pens, paper, notes, textbooks, reference books, etc.

Study in the same place as much as possible.

You will associate that place with study which enables you to begin concentration sooner, do it deeper, and get the job of learning done faster. Psychologists call this a conditioning effect that speeds learning.

Study with a pencil or pen in hand.

According to an expert in concentration, Dr. Walter Pauk, you should study with a pencil or pen in hand and use it to take notes. The activity of taking notes ensures concentration.

Vary Your Study Activities.

If your study style is not to focus on one subject for long periods of time, then vary what you do. Read and take notes for a while, formulate questions and answers for a time, then recite and review to break the monotony. An example is to do math problems, then take notes from your psychology text, review the psychology notes, and then go back to math.

Eat Well Balanced, Regular Meals.

Research suggests those with healthy diets earn higher grades. Avoid quick uppers such as sugary snacks because quickly rising and falling blood sugar levels negatively affect concentration. High fat foods cause sluggishness and drowsiness. Choose to snack on fresh fruits and vegetables.

Get Plenty of Nighttime Sleep.

Fighting sleepiness lowers concentration. If your living environment prevents sufficient nighttime sleep, elect to change it.

Use a worry sheet.

Each time you catch yourself worrying about something, jot it down on a piece of paper. Then do something about each item as soon as you can.