FACTORS THAT CAN INTERFERE WITH CONCENTRATION

EXTRINSIC FACTORS – are more difficult to control

INTRINSIC FACTORS – can be controlled, with effort

1. Hunger
2. Fatigue
3. Distractions
4. Daydreaming / “zoning out”
5. Environment (lighting, chair, room temperature)
6. Personal problems
7. Illness
8. “The opposite sex”
9. Job or family responsibilities
10. E-mail
11. Instant messaging
12. Cell phone and texting
13. Feeling full after a heavy meal
14. Uncomfortable or tight clothing
15. Thinking about sports
16. Soft-spoken professors
17. Others who disturb you
18. TV or music
19. Smells (pleasant or unpleasant)
20. Tasks that need to be done
21. Homesickness
22. Stress
23. Doodling
24. Something you need but don’t have with you
25. Too quiet
26. Pets
27. Different surroundings
28. Weather
29. Feeling overwhelmed by sheer length of reading / studying
30. Lack of interest in subject
31. Studying at night after being in classes most of the day
32. Too much extracurricular involvement
33. Ticking clock
34. Inability to sit still
35. Short attention span
36. Excited about something
37. Thinking too much about something else
38. What else ? ? ?
HOW CAN YOU INCREASE YOUR CONCENTRATION?

1. Develop an interest, by . . .
   a. previewing your chapter or reading material
   b. reading any questions at the end of the chapter
   c. making up your own questions
   d. turning headings into questions
   e. increasing your background knowledge (read newspapers; read nonfiction books; attend cultural events; visit museums; hear speakers on campus)

2. Set realistic goals.
   - Be clear about what your goals are.
   - Be realistic enough to **MAKE** yourself want to read or study.

3. Determine your purpose; decide what you can reasonably accomplish. Don’t just say, “I’ll study all day on Saturday.”

4. Set a time to complete your task(s).

5. Prepare to concentrate
   - Have necessary materials on hand.
   - Be in the proper mental state.

6. Vary your activities.

7. Decrease daydreaming.

8. Relate learning to . . .
   a. what you already know
   b. what you are learning in other classes
   c. your own experiences or those of others you know
   d. what you may need in the future

9. Pace your work.
   - Trying to do too much can destroy your concentration.
   - Try 15 – 20 minute stretches.


11. Make lists of your tasks, and set priorities.

12. Isolate yourself in an environment most conducive to studying and free from distractions.

13. Sit in the same place each time you study.

14. Keep a “distractions list” to write down distracting thoughts. Or keep a tally of how many times you lose your concentration.
15. Respond to the distraction by taking a break when you need to.

16. Try reading aloud.

17. Ask questions.

18. Be firm; tell others that you’re not available.

19. Try positive self-talk or motivation tips. Tell yourself you **CAN** concentrate. Praise yourself when you do.

20. Have more beginnings & endings.


22. Study with others.

23. Get out of your dorm room (avoid bed & pillows).

24. Put a “Do Not Disturb” sign on your door or buy a door hanger with a clever “Do Not Disturb” sign at a craft store.

25. Study in the same room in which you’ll have a test.

26. Eat well.

27. Use the bathroom.

28. Have something to drink.

29. Exercise.

30. Look less at the clock – or remove clock.

31. Do work earlier in the day. Sunlight can help.

32. Force yourself!

33. Turn off TV & computer.

34. Turn off your cell phone and put it far away from where you are sitting.

35. Reserve a little time to “stress out.” Get it out of your system so you can concentrate.

36. What else ? ? ?