

Six Habits Guaranteed to Help You Focus Better!

1) Stay Hydrated – Your body is mostly water and every cell in it needs water to run smoothly. If your urine isn't a light yellow or nearly clear most of the time it's likely you are chronically dehydrated.

Besides causing all of your organs some distress, not having enough water in your body makes it difficult for your brain to run smoothly which can give you headaches, make your thinking foggy and cause you to feel downright miserable. On the other hand, you'll be more focused and livelier when you're hydrated.

To find out more about the benefits of being hydrated check out *The Ultimate Guide to Hydration - Why Water is the True Elixir of Life and How You can Stay Hydrated Throughout the Day* by Gordon Sharp



2) Eat Colorful Foods – Red, green, orange, blue, pink and yellow—colorful foods give you a sharper mind. White, pale, and brown foods (bread, rice, spaghetti, meat, etc.) don't give you enough variety of vitamins, minerals and other ingredients needed for a healthy brain and mind.



The colors matter. They not only provide the nutrients you need to create energy to live and focus but they also help protect your body from harm and disease. Interested in learning more about plant colors and how they can benefit you—here's a cool book about the subject: *The Color Code: A Revolutionary Eating Plan for Optimal Health* by James Joseph, Daniel Nadeau and Ann Underwood.

3) Get Enough Sleep – Your brain needs to dream or you will have trouble thinking and paying attention when you are awake. Dreaming also helps you handle your emotions and remember things. Everything you experience each day is figured out when you sleep. Get enough sleep and your mind is ready for a new day of experiences, don't get enough and it feels foggy.

Each person needs a different amount of sleep, but generally six to eight hours is the range for most people. Getting enough sleep for you is vital to having a focused life.

Want to learn how to sleep better? Then read *The Harvard Medical School Guide to a Good Night's Sleep* by Larry Epstein and Steven Mardon.



4) Exercise — This is the only proven miracle drug. Give your body a workout and your brain must come along for the ride. Even a short ten-minute walk has been shown to improve your ability to focus. (Researchers have found that children and adults, who exercise before doing a mental chore like homework, perform better than those who did the task without exercising first.)

One reason is because when you exercise more oxygen is flowing to your brain, and that extra oxygen gets rid of some of the waste products in your nerve cells (think of cleaning your car's battery cables) which helps your brain work better.



5) Purposely Pay Attention for a Few Minutes

Every Day — Pick a time, maybe right after you turn your car off in your driveway after getting home from work, or while you're eating lunch, to stop and just pay attention. Notice your breathing or what's going on around you without thinking about anything particular. Besides relaxing you, it helps you learn how to focus better.



It's called "mindfulness" and it can help you dramatically in your ability to focus throughout the day. Much recent research has shown that even three minutes of being mindful a day can improve your brain's "wiring" and make you a better focuser. Here's a great book to help you start being more mindful: *Wherever You Go There You Are* by Jon Cabit-Zinn. Want to help your children focus better? Then get *Sitting Still Like a Frog: Mindfulness Exercises for Kids (and Their Parents)* by Elin Snell.

6) When Upset: Notice Your Breath — We all get angry and upset at times. However, there is something you can do about it. Simply stop and notice your breath. It's as simple as that. You'll be surprised how much it will calm you down and help you handle the situation. In the laboratory, scientists can actually see the energy that is creating your negative emotion go down when you do this simple technique.

Pay attention to the "in and out" of your breath.

