

ੴ ਸਤਿਗੁਰ ਪ੍ਰਸਾਦਿ॥

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ਅੰਤਰੁ ਮੈਲਾ ਬਾਹਰੁ ਨਿਤ ਧੋਵੈ॥ ਸਾਚੀ ਦਰਗਹਿ ਅਪਨੀ ਪਤਿ ਖੋਵੈ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੧੧੫੧) ਇਸ ਪੰਗਤੀ ਤੇ ੧੦ ਲਾਈਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਲਿਖੋ।

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ਪਰ ਤ੍ਰਿਅ ਰੂਪੁ ਨ ਪੋਖੈ ਨੇਤ੍ਰੁ॥ ਸਾਧ ਕੀ ਟਹਲ ਸੰਤਸੰਗਿ ਹੇਤ॥ (ਪੰਨਾ ੯੨੧) ਇਸ ਪੰਗਤੀ ਤੇ ੧੦ ਲਾਈਨਾਂ ਵਿੱਚ ਆਪਣੇ ਵਿਚਾਰ ਲਿਖੋ।

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ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀ ਦਾ ਨਾਂ ਤੇ ਹਸਤਾਖਰ

ਨੋਟ: ਇਸ ਪੰਨੇ ਤੇ ਵਿਦਿਆਰਥੀ ਆਪਣਾ ਨਾਂ ਲਿਖ ਕੇ ਹਸਤਾਖਰ ਜਰੂਰ ਕਰਨ।

TIPS TO IMPROVE CONCENTRATION (ਇਕਾਗਰਤਾ)

Concentration has been defined as "the ability to direct one's thinking in whatever direction one would intend".

We all have the ability to concentrate some of the time. But at other times our thoughts are scattered, and our minds race from one thing to another. To deal with such times, we need to learn and practice concentration skills and strategies. To concentrate, we have to learn a skill.

Our ability to concentrate depends on the following points:

1. Commitment

We need to make a personal commitment to put in the effort needed to do the task in the way which we realistically plan to do it. If we just play at it in a half-hearted manner then it is much more difficult to take the task and ourselves seriously.

2. Enthusiasm

If we are interested in the task and enjoy doing it, then we find it easy to motivate ourselves to start. Once started, our feelings of involvement in the activity keep us going - we want to do it.

3. Skill

Knowing how to do something gives confidence that our efforts will be successful, so we don't have to deal with anxiety about will this work or not. Anxiety tends to impair concentration.

4. Our emotional & physical state

When we are in good physical condition - i.e. feeling rested, relaxed and comfortable - and our emotions are calm and benevolent, then we tend to be positive about things. This in turn raises self-esteem, which makes us more able to concentrate.

5. Our psychological state

For example, if we are in an obsessional or distracted state our thoughts are pre-occupied, leaving little mental space to think about anything else.

6. Our Environment

It is much more difficult to concentrate if our surroundings keep intruding on our awareness, perhaps because it is noisy, too hot or too cold, the furniture is uncomfortable or the people around us are stressing out.

Expanding your concentration span

People sometimes refer to a concentration span: this is the time we can concentrate on a specific task before our thoughts wander.

The main barriers to concentrating are boredom, anxiety and day-dreaming. Thus in improving our concentration skills we need to counteract these barriers. If you want to improve your concentration, start by practicing them. They will be followed by further strategies which will allow you to build onto the basic skills.

The following three skills are basic to concentration:

1. STOP!!!

This sounds very simple, but it works. When you notice your thoughts wandering, say to yourself STOP and then gently bring your attention back to where you want it to be. Each time it wanders bring it back. To begin with, this could be several times a minute. But each time, say STOP and then re-focus. Don't waste energy trying to keep thoughts out of your mind (forbidden thoughts attract like a magnet!), just put the effort into STOP and re-focus.

2. Attending

This is about maintaining concentration and not giving in to distractions. It could be described as a sort of tunnel-vision, or as being focused: you keep your concentration on what is in front of you. If you are distracted, use the STOP technique to regain concentration.

3. Worry time

Set aside one or more specific periods in the day when you are allowed to worry. It can help to set them just before something that you know you will do, to ensure that you stop worrying on time - e.g. before a favourite TV programme, or a meal-time. Whenever an anxiety or distracting thought enters your mind during the day, banish it until your next worry time, and re-focus on to what you are supposed to be doing.

You may notice, particularly if you keep a list, that certain things keep reappearing: this is a fairly clear indication that you need to do something about them.

4. Active Learning

Everyone has their own distinct learning style. Some learn by reading and then asking themselves questions, others learn by making condensed notes and memorizing them, others learn by the associations they make to the material, and yet others retain a pictorial image of the material. Once you know you're learning style, organize the material to suit it: if you don't, learning will be more of a struggle than it need be and your concentration will suffer.

Combating specific problems with concentration

1. When you have been concentrating well but your brain now feels saturated.

Take a short break and then recharge your mental batteries by reviewing what you have done so far, considering whether it might help to switch to a new topic now. If you feel too tired to restart after a short break, review what you have done and where it fits into the overall task.

2. How to concentrate on a topic which you hate or which bores you.

Actively search in the material for aspects of the subject that can be turned into useful information (and might even be interesting!): you could do this by focusing on finding five central, important ideas to think about and write test questions to summarize your learning after each study session. If all else fails, see it as a personal challenge - don't let it beat you.

3. Day-dreaming

Use the STOP! technique and Attending to counteract it. Maybe make being allowed to daydream a reward after a period of concentration.

4. Negative thinking

Loss of concentration can lead to negative thoughts about yourself. Deal with them as with other distractions, and banish them into your Worry Time, when you can check out their reality.

5. Being vague

If you are not quite sure what you are supposed to be doing or why you are doing it then it will be difficult to maintain concentration. You could try to define the task in terms of its content and purpose, and then to make a realistic estimate of how much time and effort will be required to do it.

6. Feeling overwhelmed

Sometimes what we have to do is just too much for us to get our head around. In such circumstances, look for ways of breaking the task up into smaller discreet parts that feel manageable. Then treat them as individual tasks, summoning up your concentration for each of them separately.

7. Self-doubt

Intellectual activity takes place mainly in the brain and is thus not shared without making a special effort. If we don't discuss what we are doing with others it is very easy to wonder whether what we are doing is OK. This can lead us to feel ineffective and fragile, which in turn can become self-doubt. You need to reduce or banish your doubts if they are not to interfere with concentration.