

8 Ways to Focus With ADD

Excerpted from ADDitude Magazine (www.ADDitudemag.com)

1. Narrow your line of sight

While at your desk, keep only what you're working on in front of you. Get everything else out of your line of sight.

2. Give yourself a message

If you need to buckle down and work on a research paper for a few hours, write a note and post it within view: "This is not the time to clean my room. I can do that tomorrow." "This is only the first draft. It does not need perfect sentence structure and wording."

3. Withhold criticism

Don't critique the job you're doing until you've completed it. That way, you can avoid getting waylaid by perfectionism or frustration at how much you have left to do.

4. Make a list

If a swarm of concerns is keeping you from attending to the task at hand, take five minutes to write down what you have to do. Once these tasks are on paper and you no longer have to worry about remembering everything, you'll find it easier to focus.

5. Ask for a friendly reminder

Confide in a friend who sits near you in class or in business meetings. Ask him or her to tap you lightly on the shoulder if you appear to be zoning out.

6. Get regular exercise

It's the best way to promote long-term focus. Exercise sends more oxygen to the brain, and stimulates the release of nutrients, hormones, neurotransmitters, and other agents that optimize brain function.

7. Know your limits

When you simply can't listen anymore and find yourself drifting, be frank. Tell the person you're talking to, "I'm sorry. Can we stop for a minute? My meds are gone and I can't pay attention."

8. Set a goal

If you have a goal that's aligned with who you are and what you're excited about, you'll move mountains to stay on task and get the job done.