



## **Student Strategies for Managing Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder**

### ***Environmental***

1. What is the best time of day to study this particular subject?
  - a. Place your most difficult subjects during the times when your focus is the highest (for many students, this period of time is early morning).
  - b. Alternatively, if you are having trouble getting started at all- begin with an easy task to get your momentum going.
2. Is your space free from distractions?
  - a. Your bedroom or living room may not always be the best place to study. Perhaps going to campus before class or staying after and studying in the library or a quiet room might be more effective for some subjects.
  - b. Consider noise canceling headphones or white noise to help minimize distractions.
  - c. Remove additional distractions such as phones and TV if they aren't helping you focus. If background noise is helpful, consider instrumental music or a TV show in which you are relatively disinterested.
3. Is the temperature in the room comfortable?
  - a. Consider layering clothes when dressing.
  - b. Have a blanket or throw available in your study space.

### ***Psychological***

1. Have you tried mindfulness?
  - a. Take 5 minutes when you are feeling stressed and overwhelmed to breathe in for 4 seconds, hold for 4 seconds, and breathe out for 6 seconds. Then get back to work!
  - b. Apps like Calm and Headspace may be helpful in cultivating your mindful practice.
  - c. Practice affirmations:
    - i. "I am smart and capable of learning new things."
    - ii. "I am focused."
    - iii. "I am motivated to study today."

2. Are you chunking your study sessions?
    - a. The mere thought of knowing you need to study 5 Power Points can paralyze your efforts! Consider breaking tasks into bite sized pieces to mitigate feeling overwhelmed. See the next page for more information about chunking time and taking breaks.
    - b. Use the Pomodoro Method of studying
      - i. Study for 25 minutes and take a 5-minute break. After 4 consecutive chunks, take a longer break of 10-20 minutes. Repeat.
      - ii. These breaks should be free of anything academic. Go for a walk, get a snack, get up and out of the room you're in, call your family members on the phone.
      - iii. 25 minutes on/5 off is not universally effective. Use trial and error to figure out your individualized strategy. Overall, however, you should not study for more than 2 hours without some sort of break.
- \*\*Pro Tip:** The amount of time you can focus may vary for each subject and by time of day! Be flexible.\*\*

### **Academic**

1. Have you created a study plan for 1-2 weeks ahead?
  - a. Build in breaks and flexibility in your schedule in case you procrastinate.
  - b. Students with ADHD tend to operate better with structure and routine.
2. Do you know about 'Structured Procrastination'?
  - a. Create a list of "to dos" in priority order.
  - b. If you find yourself procrastinating on one item, look at your list and choose another item to do.
3. Do you have a reward system?
  - a. Many students with ADHD struggle with an internal reward system, so create an external reward system for yourself.
  - b. Treat yourself when you complete a goal.

- c. Is that not working? Start small – For example, if you can't seem to read a whole chapter in one sitting try rewarding yourself with a piece of candy for each page you complete. Then work your way up.
4. Do you need to create consequences?
  - a. For example, "If I don't get XYZ done, I can't go out to dinner with my friends tonight." Some students work better with consequences than rewards and vice versa. Others need both! Get creative!
5. Have you created To-Do Lists for each week and each day?
  - a. Cross off items as you complete them.
  - b. Your daily to do list should be short with a maximum of 4-6 items.
  - c. Creating a 'dump' list may also be helpful to hold those to-do items that are important but not necessarily impending.

### **Websites**

- [Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder \(CHADD\).](#)
- [Attitude Magazine.](#)
- [ADHD Adulthood.](#)

### **Salus Resources**

- Referral sources & Psychoeducational Evaluation information: [CPPD](#)

### **Podcasts**

#### [ADHD Experts](#)

- Episode 436 - How to Combat Procrastination in the New Year
- Episode 359- Six Super Skills to Build Executive Functioning in Adults with ADHD
- Episode 171 - 7 Ways to Be More Productive and Crush it at Work



### [Taking Control: The ADHD Podcast](#)

- Episode 2412 - Imposter Syndrome, Rejection Sensitivity, and Your ADHD with Mallory Band
- Episode 2310 - Why are Some Tasks so Hard with ADHD?
- Episodes 374-378 - Organizing with ADHD (Episodes 1-5)

### [Practical ADHD Strategies](#)

- Episode 3 - Procrastination Strategies for Adults with ADHD
- Episode 1- Office Organization & ADHD