Urban

Focus and Self-Care Strategies During Virtual Urban

When you're having difficulty focusing, ask yourself:
- Am I currently meeting my **basic human needs** for food, hydration, and sleep?
- Would it help for me to **take a break** and return to this? What could I do during the break that would help **refresh my mind**?
- When was the last time I **moved my body**?
- Is there **something specific** distracting me? Is there a way to remove that distraction?

Spend time every day doing a screen-free activity that you truly enjoy.
- Some current Urban student examples: baking, skateboarding, playing the guitar, drawing, friendship bracelets, bike riding, playing with a pet, dancing to a '90s playlist, redesigning bedroom walls.

Refresh your brain between classes. Take real breaks to get real work done.
- Always close the computer and leave the room.
- Move your body: push-ups, walk outside, stretch, punching bag,
- Eat a tasty lunch/snack. See Urban Cookbook for ideas.

Create a consistent morning routine.
- Wake up at least 30 minutes before class starts.
- Eat breakfast.
- Put on real clothes (not pajamas).
- Take a hot/cold shower.
- Bring a hot/cold drink to your first class.

Adjust/change your work space at home.
- Clear everything off the table/desk except what you're working on
- Try a new room/chair/table, if possible

Get organized.
- Create a new window and open tabs for each week sheet there for easy reference.
- Write Zoom links and office hours for each class on a Sticky note
- Clean your computer desktop quickly by creating a new folder and dumping files there.

Minimize tech distractions.
- Turn off "self view" in Zoom by choosing the 3 dots and selecting "hide self view."
- Turn phone off completely and put it in another room.
- Turn off notifications (Settings > Privacy and Security > Site Settings > Notifications)
- Change Schoology notifications to reduce volume of emails
- Use Self-Control anti-distraction software

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- Close all unneeded tabs/windows. If you want to keep them open, create a second desktop just for school. Use that second desktop during all classes.
- Increase font size
- Adjust your screen settings to reduce eye strain - see [Geoff's video](#) for details.

Health

- Go to bed by _____ o'clock.
- Eat a bigger/different breakfast
- Eat a bigger/different lunch
- Drink water
- Eat more snacks throughout the day
- Exercise before/after school

Time management

- Read entire week sheet on Monday, noting major upcoming projects.
- Complete/start assignments the day they are assigned.
- Make a checklist of things to do each night and cross them off when complete
- On the weekend: consider what time/day will be easier to focus. Plan to do your hardest assignments then.
- Break assignments into half-hour chunks and take a 5 min break after each chunk

During class:

- Take notes, even when not necessary.
- During teacher presentations, take a screenshot of any slide/concept you didn't understand. Ask them during/after class or during office hours.
- Stand up and/or use a fidget toy.
- Test out new ways of participating. See ideas below.

STATE A NEW OPINION
- I think/believe that ...
- In my opinion ...
- From my perspective ...
- Based on ..., it seems that
- After reading ..., I conclude that

AGREE, DISAGREE, OR ADD ON
- I agree with you because …
- That answer makes sense because …
- I respectfully disagree with you because …
- I have a different point of view ...
- I would like to add on ...
- To expand on what …. said, ...
- This reminds me of …
- To piggyback on what …. said

ASK FOR CLARIFICATION
- What do you mean by ...?
- Why do you think that?
- Will you explain that again?
- I have a question about ...
- I don't quite understand. Can you explain it little bit more?

PARAPHRASE OR RESTATE YOUR OPINION
- So what you are saying is that ...
- In other words, you think …
- I noticed that ...
- If I understand you correctly, your opinion is that ...