

What is Focus?

<https://brenebrown.com/podcast/finding-focus-and-owning-your-attention>

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Attention – Our brain’s capacity to prioritize some information over other information.



You cannot multi-task, you can task switch

When we think we’re doing multiple things at once, instead we engage in a task, and then we disengage in the task, we move into the other task, and then we disengage, and then we move it again, so we’re doing task switches over and over again. This is exhaustive. The more we switch the more depleted we become.

Creativity

in the generative is like a floodlight. and why do we watch formulaic shows. Mind-wandering - off task thoughts during an ongoing task or activity. Watching those shows helps to fill that bandwidth. Spontaneous thought, which is this thought pump that the brain just pumps out. We’ve got thoughts happening all the time, like you were saying earlier with, you can’t clear your mind, it’s not the nature of the mind, but spontaneous thought that is done not in the context of a task we’re trying to do, and it’s pulling us away, just happening.

Our attention is compromised when any of these items are present: Stress, Threat, and Negative Mood

When we don’t give our brains a chance to rest and recover our attention gets derogated.

The most effective tool is Meditation.

The more you do it per day the more effective it is at getting more recovery. 12 minutes or more a day.

- Focus
- Notice
- Redirect
- Orient to our present moment experience in an observational way without getting dysregulated

3 Core Subcategories

1

Focus

prioritizing something as more important than other things. It is how we get better results. Think of a flashlight and wherever you shine the light you focus on that stuff.

It can be internal or external focus
Focus is finite, it has boundaries

2

Alert System

when you widen your attention because of an alert, like flashing lights ahead while driving. You widen your attention to take more information in. The detail of the information is low quality because it is so much information.

Very much in the present moment.

3

Executive Control

this is where you prioritize based on goals. Multi-tasking (task switching) kills the executive focus center.

In order to retain a memory, you have to be paying attention to the thing you are trying or want to remember.

Fighting Mental Pain

Okay. Past standard view, “To feel less pain, distract yourself from it.” The peak mind pivot, “To feel less pain, practice focusing on it, non-elaboratively. Don’t make up a story about it, simply observe it and notice how it changes over time.”

And what I decided to do in my practice is I made that feeling the focus of my attention.

I felt it, I felt it, I honored it. I looked at it without flinching, I just experienced it. In some sense, bathed in it, I was fully in the flood light of my pain. But I wasn’t reacting to it, I wasn’t elaborating, I wasn’t trying to justify, I wasn’t fighting it, I was being with it, and then it moved on, and I moved on

Meta-awareness is awareness of the contents and processes that are occurring in our mind moment by moment. And when we do that, we all of a sudden become more, what I would call situationally aware. Oftentimes when we’re thinking, we are trapped in the thinking. And thinking is almost neutral, but I’m thinking, think of being in a ruminative loop, there’s something that occurred and you are just...