

## Reduced study concentration

Concentration is defined as “strongly focused attention on a single object or activity”. Many students admit to being easily distracted and struggling to concentrate, for example when revising for an examination or working to a deadline. Things like Facebook, email, watching TV, or friends who want to meet up – all of these disrupt your concentration (if only temporarily), distracting you from your studies.

Often concentration is seen as something that you either have or do not have and cannot therefore control. Another common misconception is the idea that you cannot summon up the energy to concentrate. The reality is that you have more control over your own concentration than you may think. For example, you can control where you work, your sleeping patterns and the approach you take to your studies.

Problems with concentration may also be symptoms of something else, such as ADHD, depression, trauma, etc.

### QuickScan

- Are you often preoccupied with other things while you are studying?
- Are you easily distracted by noises around you or thoughts of other things, for example?
- Are you often seized by a feeling of a lack of energy to start focusing on your homework?
- Do you often feel, after a day of studying, that you have actually made little progress?
- Are you often discouraged by the amount of material you still need to work through?
- In the lead-up to an exam, do you often feel that you have devoted a lot of time to learning but actually have little grasp of the subject matter?

### Approach

#### What can you do yourself?

Take time to think about what the reasons could be for your inability to concentrate and come up with concrete plans for dealing with it.

#### What can we do for you?

Cognitive and behavioural therapy can help you gain greater control of your concentration. It is also possible that concentration problems are a symptom of an underlying problem, and we can help you to find out what is really going on. We offer both short-term individual consultation and courses (e.g. Mindfulness). Visit <http://psychologists.tudelft.nl>.

#### More information

- <http://www.headspace.com>
- The Organized Mind - Thinking Straight in the Age of Information Overload (Daniel Levitin), ISBN13: 9780525954187