

# Focus Exercises

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You may realize that you do not focus well and are easily distracted by everyday sounds, however, that will often not be enough to begin focusing well again. You need to deemphasize your automatic reaction to ambient noise. To do this, you should start with easy situations and progress to difficult exercises. The time necessary to re-habituate your ability to focus will depend on how much of a "hair trigger" reaction you currently have.

## First exercise:

Ask your partner to sit in front of you and read you one sentence at a time out of a magazine. It is important that you **cannot guess** the material. The sentences have to be unknown to you, perhaps out of a "fashion magazine" if your partner is a women, or a "tool magazine" if you partner is a male. Your exercise is to be able to repeat exactly what your partner read to you. Make sure there is no extraneous noise that may draw your attention while you are repeating the sentences. Once you repeat them correctly consistently, word for word, go onto the next exercise.

## Second exercise:

Turn on a radio to a level you would normally find annoying and do the same thing as in the first exercise. **Watch you partner's face and concentrate.** When you can repeat exactly what your partner is reading, then you are "focusing" more on them than you are on the radio. Congratulations. Be sure that you can continue repeating what is being read to you in an effortless fashion, once you can, go onto the next exercise.

## Third exercise:

Turn on the television and the radio, both to an annoying level, so there are two sources of distraction. Now, do the same exercise as in the previous case. **Remember to watch your partner's face and concentrate.** When you are repeating their sentences effortlessly, move onto the next exercise.

## Fourth exercise:

Go to a noisy restaurant (*e.g.*, Tim Hortons). Have your partner sit across from you reading unfamiliar sentences. **Watch their face and concentrate.** Repeat to them what is being said. Do this until it is effortless. Congratulations, you are almost there. Move onto the last and hardest exercise.

## Fifth exercise:

While wearing your hearing aid (if prescribed), go back and do the fourth exercise, but this time have your partner **cover their face so you cannot see their lips.** Repeat back what they are saying. This is tough, because you now simply have to concentrate with your ears, not your eyes. If you cannot focus and understand what is being said, go back to the fourth exercise to start over.