

To Focus Through Distraction, Make Your Distractions Bigger

Meditation has taught me a few things:

1. Meditation is really hard.
2. My mind can go to some weird dream-like places in waking hours.
3. I meditate best when I am powerfully distracted

Number 3 has been a surprising finding.

The reason I re-started regular meditation was my realization that the stresses of work were causing me to lose my center and fly off the handle from time to time. I meditate to remain calm through the ups and downs of the workday.

When I meditate on days I'm confronting these stresses, my meditation sessions are much more focused and less clouded with wandering thoughts. Ironically, it's much easier to focus through a meditation session and center myself when I'm confronted by a very big distraction like work stress. The distraction provides the impetus/motivation for me to desire to focus on something better than the distraction.

When I feel like I have my workday pretty well handled, or when I don't feel the stresses of work, meditation becomes actually more difficult. My mind rebels.

This experience gives the lie to the idea that focus is the result of a lack of external distractions. In fact, a lack of external distractions can make focus harder.

Having a rival or enemy helps you to become better. Similarly, having a large enough distraction will help you to become more focused on bringing distractions to heel through practices like meditation - but also through prioritization, action, or delegation.

If you want to be more focused, become more distracted.