Student Success Skills for Polar Bears  

**Tips to Focus your Attention when Studying**

1. **Meditate regularly.** Meditation trains your brain to stay at attention for longer periods of time. Practice **focused attention mediation** for 10 minutes a day or try out one of the many apps such as *Stop, Breath & Think*.

2. **Take breaks.** Apply the [Pomodoro Technique](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pomodoro_Technique), which is based on time intervals that promote bursts of intense productivity, followed by brief rest periods.

3. **Exercise to get the jitters out.** Make sure you have gotten your physical energy out before you start studying or exercise during breaks, which will increase your focus.

4. **Limit distractions.** Turn off your phone and close websites or use apps to block distracting website or applications such as *Freedom* or *SelfControl*, which often have built in timers to reinforce the pomodoro technique.

5. **Drink plenty of water and eat healthy food.** Prepare drinks and food before you start studying so that you will be less likely to get up and lose focus.
   - Stay hydrated!
   - Drink black tea instead of coffee.
   - Eat power snacks and *brain food*.

6. **Consider your energy level.** Schedule your most challenging study sessions when you anticipate feeling most energized and focused. Do the hardest thing first.

7. **Increase your alertness.** Studies show that listening to classical music helps you pay attention. So does chewing gum and taking notes by hand.

8. **Give yourself permission to zone out.** Allow your mind to wander and schedule a convenient time for daydreaming (e.g. while doing dishes).

9. **Get a good night’s sleep.** Make sure you have slept at least eight hours. Fatigue makes it really hard to concentrate when studying.

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Want to meet with an Academic Coach?  
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