



SIES School of Learning and Leadership Development (SIESSLLD)

TRAINING NOTE (007/2025-26)

on

Developing Focus / Discipline Among Students

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Backdrop:

Essential for success in life is the attribute of being focused and disciplined. The word “focus” here means ability to concentrate on desired goals in life. The goal can be success in education or professional or personal life. If one does not have focus, one is likely to lose concentration, deviate from the chosen objectives, and fall astray. This happens with many young people; they either lack focus or get deviated easily by being distracted by outside disturbances. This focus comes by controlling the mind that develops the spirits of discipline. The two terms “focus” and “discipline” are, therefore, interlinked. The more “focused” one is, better outcome possibility is “being disciplined;” this normally signifies higher probability of success. The classical example can be remaining focused during writing an important final examination, not getting distracted and keeping mind focused / controlled / disciplined (without excess stress). This normally results in better performance.

One of the ultimate objectives of inculcation of twin attitude of “focus” and “discipline” is that it teaches students to understand responsible behaviour and self-control. And this makes them better citizens in the long run.

In the above context, every student should try to develop the twin faculties of focus and discipline. Seniors including parents and teachers at schools / colleges have a key role to play in this regard.

Instances of Focus and Discipline for a Student:

Focus on:

1. Goals of life, both short-term as well as long-term (professional and personal)
2. Benchmarking with some of the best parameters in distinct aspects of life and trying to achieve the same. This might be in studies or jobs or personal life happiness.
3. Studies when demanded and fun when one needs a break
4. Doing something good for family members and people in society
5. Inculcating virtues & ethical values and discarding the undesired ones.

Discipline in:

1. Maintaining healthy lifestyle
2. Punctuality in attending classes and other important activities
3. Upholding societal values and norms

4. Doing “right things” at “right time”

Strategies to Develop Focus / Discipline:

The most important strategy to remain focused is to consciously make a “concerted effort” for the same. “Training the mind” is the best way forward, so says the adage. Maintaining healthy lifestyle may help as a sound mind usually resides in a healthy body. Self-discipline is the key to improve focus as well as sense of discipline. A young person should be in a position to distinguish between things “desired” and those “undesired and differentiate between “important” and “not so important.” It might help him / her to get rid of the distractions. One of the best ways to learn focus / discipline is to allow / remain engaged in some activities one likes. We have often seen that children and young people tend to work for hours with focus & concentration, if they like something; say for example, LEGOs for many children or sports including swimming for some youngsters. These types of physical and mental activities facilitate developing focus among students from an early age. Telling stories of bravery acts by army veterans or quoting instances of discipline of successful people helps inculcating the concept of discipline in minds of students. Focus / discipline is primarily a self-propelled concept and have to be primarily developed by students themselves.

Role of Academic Institutions:

Though focus and discipline are primarily self-driven concepts, the institutions have also a role to play to develop them. There should be concerted efforts in this regard. Some of the strategies the institutions can follow include the following:

Discipline Policy: The institutions should have a strict policy in terms of discipline. It is sometimes observed that some of the teachers become too much accommodative and go on delaying the last date of submission of projects or assignments. Barring unforeseen circumstances, such delays should not be allowed, and the last date must be adhered to. If any late submissions are allowed, it should be with some penal provisions. Similarly, the prompt submissions should always be “encouraged / incentivised”. This will entail development of “positive stroke” towards inculcation of discipline.

Arranging Activities / Games: Focus and discipline cannot be learnt in the classroom. These have to be experienced and inducted within. Here comes the role of the academic institutions; they should constantly

arrange for activities / projects that help in development of the “dual concept” of focus and discipline. Institutions may also think in terms of arranging mental activities like meditation (mindfulness activities), etc. that help development of focus and thereby “academic / professional concentration”. Institutions may experiment with the idea of starting the “morning sessions” with a 5-minute meditation. This would remind the concept of focus each day and will have a long-term impact.

Constant Practice: Focus and discipline is a “life skill” and therefore, comes with regular practice. Let us look at the life / routine of Army Jawans; they have rigorous practice each day to keep them physically and mentally agile. Same is true for students. Institutions must evolve an ambience where the twin values of focus and discipline are a part of life. The axiom is to create a discipline-oriented culture in the institute.

Moving Ahead:

As stated earlier, the twin attitudes of focus and discipline are crucial for success. Though external interventions may be of help at initial stages, students must develop these attitudes themselves. It is a continuous process; they should try to make focus and discipline as a part of life. This can be the only way how the students can learn the twin values of focus and discipline and grow in life.
