

A French tutor kept losing students to their own distraction. His fix became a product

WROCLAW, DOLNOSLASKIE, POLAND, August 13, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Faced with teenagers who showed up to online lessons mentally somewhere else, DOPAM.'s founder started every class with 15 minutes of staring at a wall. It worked well enough that he built a tool around it.

August 12, 2026 - For most of human history, the day was full of dead time - waiting, walking, standing in line - with nothing to do but think. Since roughly 2010, when smartphones met social media, that time has all but vanished. The same period has coincided with a sharp rise in reported distress among young people: according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the share of teenage girls reporting persistent sadness or hopelessness climbed from about 35 percent in 2011 to 57 percent in 2021. Whether screens are the direct cause is still genuinely debated, and no one has proven it. But for people who work with teenagers every day, the change in attention has been hard to miss - including in a place as ordinary as a one-on-one language lesson.

That is where DOPAM. started. Its founder is a French tutor who teaches teenagers online. Over several years, he watched a growing share of his students arrive for lessons unable to settle - physically present, mentally elsewhere, minds racing from one thing to the next. Teaching them anything, he found, had become close to pointless in the first part of a lesson, because the attention simply wasn't there to teach to.

So, with parents' agreement, he tried something deliberately strange. For the first 15 minutes of each session, the student turned their chair away from the camera and sat still, looking at the blank wall in front of them. Nothing else. He stayed on the call to make sure it actually happened. Only then did the lesson begin.

The change, he says, was visible almost from the first lesson in the new format. After the 15 minutes of stillness, students didn't just settle and become more focused - they arrived at the lesson hungry for it. They asked more questions, chased tangents, wanted to know things, as if the quarter of an hour of nothing had left them starved for input and the lesson was the first real thing to feed on. It was not a controlled study - it was one tutor's own observation across his own students - but it was consistent enough that he stopped treating it as an experiment and started treating it as the way lessons began.

The obvious limitation was that it only worked while he was watching. That is what pushed him to build a digital version. DOPAM. gives a person a calm, low-stimulation screen for a set length of time and asks them to simply watch it. At random moments a faint digit appears on screen and a quiet tap sounds in their headphones; at the end, they report what they saw and heard. Because the signals are deliberately hard to catch, the only way to answer correctly is to have genuinely paid attention for the full duration - which means the exercise can be verified without anyone sitting on the call.

For a parent, teacher, or tutor, that verification is the point. They can send a link and receive a short report confirming the session was completed properly - a way to know a child actually did the focusing exercise before a lesson or study session, rather than just clicking through it. The tool now reaches beyond the founder's own lessons. Alongside a handful of his regular students, several dozen parents currently use DOPAM. to keep track of whether their children are doing their concentration exercises regularly.

The founder is careful about what he claims. The product's name is an admitted provocation - you cannot literally "cut" dopamine - and DOPAM. is not marketed as a medical or psychological treatment. "I didn't set out to build anything. I was just trying to teach French to kids who couldn't sit still long enough to learn it," said Bartosz, founder of DOPAM. "Turning them to face a wall for a quarter of an hour sounds ridiculous, and I felt ridiculous asking. But the lesson that came after was a different lesson. What I couldn't do was be there for every kid, every day, watching to make sure they really did it. That's the only reason this became software - I needed a way to know it actually happened."

DOPAM. is available now at dop.am. Sessions can be run privately, or set up and monitored by another person; the supervised reporting feature requires a paid subscription.

About DOPAM.

DOPAM. is a web-based focus and attention tool built around a single idea: giving people a short, structured stretch of low-stimulation time, and verifying that they actually spent it. It grew out of one French tutor's classroom practice (his language work continues at francu.ski) and is designed both for individuals resetting their own attention and for parents, teachers, and mentors who want to encourage that habit in someone else. DOPAM. is a focus tool, not a medical or psychological treatment.

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