INSTRUCTION FOR ONEPOINTEDNESS; MEDITATION~EXPANSION & CONTRACTION  
discussion by Crimsata

For more information on the theory behind OnePointedness please refer to this discussion:  
Ekaggata or Rāja yoga ~ OnePointedness (mental factor: concentration)

The Following exercises are excerpted from the 13th chapter of Dhyana Vahini. Attached to  
this discussion is a pdf & microsoft version of the chapter if one would like to read in more  
detail.

Chapter XIII: Developing Onepointedness

1. Cultivate good habits before concentration  
Form (rupa) is fundamental for concentration and meditation. Even in the absence of the form  
in front of you, you should have the capacity to visualise it. This is not so difficult for those  
whose concentration is correct. But some practise concentration without first cultivating good  
habits and right conduct. That is a sign of incomplete knowledge. Concentration must have  
the pure qualities (sathwagunas) as the basis. The mind has to be purified by proper  
treatment of the character through good habits. Concentration has to follow this purification  
process, not precede it. All effort for concentration without cleansing the mind is a sheer  
waste of time. Many great men have ruined their careers by aspiring early for concentration,  
without the discipline of good habits.

2. Force the mind to be onepointed  
In short, the chief purpose of concentration and meditation is to minimise the travels of the  
mind and force it to stay in one place. Holding it on that fixed stage, one should continue the  
spiritual practice for a long time. Then there is no limit to the peace and joy that one can have.  
For example, when you meditate on a table, your thoughts dwell on the wood, the size and  
measurements, the style, the mode of manufacture, etc. No other thought pertaining to  
anything else should be allowed. If the thought hovers round a cot, the idea of a table  
becomes hazy, and the cot is also imagined incompletely. Both get confused. The state of  
mind must be singlepointed. So too, when the Lord’s form is meditated upon, the mind must  
dwell upon the form of each part and its beauty and splendour, and these ideas must be  
coordinated and combined into the complete picture.

While doing meditation the mind should not be allowed to wander away from the target.  
Whenever it flies off at a tangent, it must be led back to the form meditated upon. Finally, if  
you so desire, all things can be subsumed in that form itself. Nevertheless, only one form has  
to be meditated upon in the beginning. You should not change daily from one to another.  
Again, during the spiritual practice, you should not indulge in thoughts about things you do not  
like, that cause pain, or that shake your faith. If any such peep in, learn gradually to welcome  
them as beneficial and seek to grasp the good in them, instead of the bad.
3. Control the senses as well as the mind

The senses can do nothing by themselves. They are not independent. If the mind is brought under control, the senses can also be controlled. Some people undergo mere asceticism of the senses in order to control the mind! They are ignorant of the real discipline that is necessary.

The real discipline is the destruction of desire.

“Those who aspire to have mastery over the senses must have full faith in ME.”
~Krishna to Arjuna

The senses are always extrovert in nature; they are greedy for external contacts. Therefore, they drag the ignorant perpetually towards external objects. So the spiritual aspirant, endowed with discrimination and renunciation, must place obstacles in their outward path and suppress their outbursts, just as the charioteer, wielding the whip and the reins, does to the raging steeds. Uncontrolled senses cause great harm. People in their grip cannot engage themselves in meditation, even for a single second.
ONE POINTEDNESS; HOW?

1. Find yourself a large piece of paper; or card if you will.
2. Trace a circle; with a visible dot, in the center.
3. Find yourself a comfortable Asana, or posture. Sitting crosslegged; or in an armchair as you will.
4. Concentrate, entirely on the central dot. Quell the thoughts, that will inevitably arise; even leading you down avenues of imagination until you realise; as "Hey! I was doing something, ??? Oh, right, meditation on a clear mind.
5. The harder you try; the more the mind will rebel, like a horse that will not accept the bit, and reins: set yourself a time limit; 5 minutes seems easy, right? Try it!
   ● Okay; you who want to achieve, will persevere. Carry on!

OnePointedness~Expansion & Contraction

1. When you feel you have a grip on this; relax, do stare intently upon The Dot; but now, Without removing your gaze from the point; expand your field of vision to take in the surrounding space in the circle. Really; stare at The Dottake in the surrounding circle without shifting your gaze from the central Dot.
2. Now, draw a larger, second circle, around the first circle. Concentrate on a thought free Dot; 3. now expand your field of vision, to take in the area of the first circle; now WITHOUT shifting your gaze from the central point The Dot. take in the area of the second circle as well.
4. Finally; staring intently upon the central Dot, without shifting your gaze; take in the area of the first circle;
5. and the second circle;
6. now take in the vision of the entire room around you; as far as possible. This is called 'Expansion' Concentration on the Dot, is called 'Contraction'.

You have been flexing mental muscles you didn't know were there!

And Hey now---
you can see what your friends are doing, albeit in a slightly fuzzy way you will have a lot of fun with this; you will have earned it!