**Improving Your Memory**

"Memory is like the weather; lots of people complain about it, but very few do anything about it." And **YOU Are Doing Something!**

*Note: In the Documents on my computer, I have changed the title of this presentation from "Improving Your Memory" to "Memory Improvement". Can you guess why?

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**How You Can Make Your Brain Function As It Did Years Ago**

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**Pie Chart of How Senior Citizens Spend Their Time**

- **Sleeping**
- **Eating**
- **Working**
- **Looking for things I had just a minute ago**

Probably a lapse in Automatic Memory. Use a "Poka-Yoke"

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**Do you have days like this?**

**Now... Am I going upstairs for something or have I just come down?**

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In this class we will be using helpers for 4 kinds of memory:

- **Long-Term Memory** = Memories you have had for a long time, meaning at least a few minutes up to many years. These may be hard to recall, and we suggest you use **Prompts** to help.

- **Short-Term Memory** = Memories you have had for only a few minutes, and have not yet been transferred to LTM. **Poke** help.

- **Names and Faces** = Memories of names of people whom you recognize their faces but have difficulty remembering names. This is a special type of STM which is often difficult to transfer to LTM, perhaps because the names are not related to the faces. However, if you meet a famous or very interesting person, does the memory usually get transferred?

In other words, **you probably can remember names IF YOU CARE ENOUGH ABOUT THE PERSON, OR IF YOU REALLY WORK AT IT!** Pictures also help here.
Automatic Memories are Memories that usually happen automatically. Often physical memories, such as:

- riding a bicycle,
- driving a car,
- closing a door or turning off a light,
- turning off the oven (a Poke-Yoke is often used here),
- spatial memory (such as where the clock is),
- car keys, watch, gloves, wallet or purse, etc.

Example: Remembering to take a book back to the library.

In addition to these 4 kinds of memory problems, we cover 5 more topics that can improve your memory:

1. Mnemonic Devices to help your memory
   
   Example: 30 days hath September, ....
   
   A, B, C, D, ....

   i before e, except after c, ....

   Spring forward, Fall back

2. Plan other ways to improve memory:
   
   - Diet and Supplements [Fat, Fruit/Vegetables]
   - Mental Exercise and Physical Exercise [Memory Walks?]
   - Meditation and Prayer

3. And two more memory helpers: Chunking & Linking
   
   Chunking: Coupless easier to remember than Singles
   
   Link Shopping Lists (Bread, Butter, Ham, Cheese, Milk, Eggs)

We Work on 4 Common Memory Problems

1. Long-Term Memory Recall

   Who was that guy I went to the prom with?

2. Short-Term Memory Retention and Recall

   (last few minutes)

   When did he say I was to take these?

   Can't remember where someone went, what I'm doing here, etc.

   Hard to recall Names, Places, Words

3. "Automatic Memory" Lapse

   (closing a door, turn off oven)

   Where did I leave my keys and my wallet?

4. Names and Faces

   What was the name of that new customer I just met?

Synopsis: Improving Your Memory

1. Recall from Long-Term Memory: Prompts - "FLIP PART"

2. Short-Term Memory Retention and Recall

   Page (One + Gun, Two + Shoe, etc.)


4. Names & Faces: Repetition, Pictures

5. Mnemonic Devices: Poems, Sayings, etc.

   (Spring ahead, Fall back)

6. General Helps:

   - Diet: "What's good for the heart is good for the brain"
   - Supplements: Antioxidants - Vitamins C and E; 812
   - Physical Exercise: Regular, not too strenuous, such as 30 weeks or of 45 min
   - Mental Exercise: Puzzles, Memorizations, Math & Logic Problems, Swimming, Cooking, Bridge
   - Meditation: Breathe in for 7 sec, out for 7 sec, Rep. 7x, Prayer, if it works for you.

7. Chunking and Linking:

   Chunk upsets you wish to remember, link friends or those with similar interests.

In this course, we start with a way of helping your memory, that you probably are already using:

Mistake-Proofing or "Poke-Yoke"

To prevent lapses in Automatic Memory, such as remembering to turn off the oven, or take something when you go out. Often we use a "Poke-Yoke" or Mistake-Proofing device such as a timer or alarm, or putting things by the door.

"Poke-Yoke" is Japanese for "Mistake-Proof".

Go to Mistake-Proofing
These are ways you can solve memory problems:

1. Prompts — for Long-Term Memory Recall (FLIP PART)
   Pink for the Past

2. Pega — for Short-Term Retention & Recall (1=Gun, 2=Gun...)
   Orange for Originale

3. Poka-Yokes — for Automatic Memory Lapses (Sticky Notes)
   Yellow for Yokes

4. Pictures — for Names & Faces ("Mar the piano if you learn")
   Green for Gregarious

5. Mnemonics — for easy reminders (HOMES)
   Blue is how you feel if you forget them

0. Miscellaneous — for general topics (diet, exercise, tips, etc.)
   White is for general, uncolorful topics

5. Mnemonic Devices
   (Saying, Phrase, Songs to help you remember certain information)
   Examples:
   1. Suppose it is the autumn season and it's time to change the clocks.
      Do we go one hour forward or back?
      "Spring forward, fall back."
   2. Your daughter sends you a birthday gift and you want to acknowledge
      it. Do you send her a note? I have no idea. your gift
      "I before E, except after C, or when pronounced A as in neighbor and weigh"
   3. Your grandchild wants to know what the letter after q in the alphabet
   4. What is the meaning of this mnemonic device, which is an ACRONYM?
      HOMES
   5. What is the meaning of this mnemonic device, which is an ACROSTIC?
      My Very Excellent Mother Just Served Us Nine Pizzas (or Nachos)

3. Reminders for your Automatic Memory
   such as where you put your keys, glasses, wallet or purse,
   watch, phone, etc...

   These Reminders are called "Poka-Yokes"
   or "Mistake-Proofing Devices"

   Example: I had dinner with a friend and she took home about
   half of her dinner in a carry-out box. Then we stopped by
   my condo to watch a show I had recorded on my DVR. While she
   was there, I went to the fridge and discovered the carry-out box,
   along with her keys on top of it, right there in the fridge.

   What was her purpose?
   Is there any way to improve on this Poka-Yoke?

4. Example for Names & Faces
   This lady is a volunteer pianist at Bethesda North
   Hospital and she also plays for churches and nursing
   homes. She sometimes asks lunch at the volunteer's
   table, so I had met her at least a couple of times, but
   could not remember her name.

   Her name tag showed that her name was
   MARLON. and now I wanted to create a picture with
   her that would remind me of her name.

   Any suggestions?

   OK, my mental picture was of her leaning on
   the piano, which has a very shiny, polished surface,
   but her leaning on a ring is causing a scratch to mar
   the appearance of the piano.

   How does that picture suggest her name?

   and, by the way, her last name is Brekan.

   Any suggestions about how to remember her name?

   Moderator: Dr. Neal P. Joffries (PhD in Engineering)
   513-791-2647, joffries.neal@gmail.com
   Learned about and used "Method of Loci" in High School, using
   ten houses on my street as pegs to hang items to remember.
   Had excellent memory in high school and college,
   but sometimes slow to recall information on exams.
   So, some research on memory (in the 80's) turned up the
   "Fishhook Anagolgy", which shows the importance of
   Association in recall.

   Today, I sometimes have long-term recall difficulty, automatic
   memory lapses and often problems with names.
   Recently got interested again and took some courses:
   Remembering Names & Faces by Jerry Lucas
   Optimizing Brain Fitness (DVD) by Dr. Richard Restack
   Remember II (DVD) by Greg Gleason
   Have improved my memory in last few years by teaching and
   updating this course. Still have problems but know what to do
In this course, we will carry out several major activities that can help to improve your memory:

1. Recall from Long-Term Memory (items lodged in your brain for years) by using Prompts. (Example: Discussing with Friends)

   Example: My got born and I were trying to come up with the name of the black singer who was Jewish and had only one eye. I suggested that he was known for singing "Candyman" (offer info)
   He said, "Yeah, and he hung around with the "Rat Pack" (more info)
   I said, "Right, guys like Frank Sinatra, Dean Martin..." (practicing remembering related material...to get my brain moving)
   He said, "Yes, and there it is... Sammy Davis, Jr.

Prompts: Candyman...Rat Pack...Frank Sinatra...Dean Martin
So this example used the Prompts: Friends and Associations

Other Prompts that are often useful are a Prominent Letter or Sound, a Picture-mental or physical, a Record such as a diary, the Internet such as Google, or bitting Time give you the answer.

Most of the Prompts themselves can be recalled by using the acronym:

"FLIP PART"

Friends - especially if they might have the same memory
Letters - first or important letters like B, F, K, M, R, Q, X, Z
Internet - Google knows almost all general information
Pictures - mental (Clark Gable in Gone With the Wind)
or hard copy pictures (such as from a yearbook)
Prayer works sometimes
Associations - these are the "fish hooks"
Records - diary, personal calendar
Time - usually works, but not right away

Why is "FLIP PART" an appropriate acronym?
Because you want to flip the information into your brain and this is the part of recall that can make it happen.

Do you ever have these conversations?

We were watching a TV show when an ad comes on for another show with a lady cop, and my friend says, "She's the daughter of Jayne Mansfield and that Hungarian weight lifter."

Ah-ah, the Game is On! Now we have to try to remember the husband's name, and the daughter's name, and more about how Jayne Mansfield died.
I remember that the died in an automobile crash, along with her agent or lawyer or someone like that. That happened in 57.

My friend says the kids were asleep in the back seat and were unharnessed although the adults were killed instantly.
So we still can't remember the husband's or daughter's name, but start thinking about another body-builder who was successful in Hollywood. I remember he had a long last name and the first name was something like Adam or Adolf. Finally I see his last name on a movie screen in my mind.

And then his first name comes easily.....Arnold. OK, that's fine but we still don't know the other body-builder or the daughter, but so far we have used Friends, Letter (A for Anod) and Association (marriages and body-builders).

Now I'm still working on his name, and all this time my friend is working on the daughter's name. And here's a picture of Jayne Mansfield and her body-builder husband, which is similar to a picture of them. I have in my mind.

And now a picture of the husband comes into my mind. And then, very quickly, comes his name, dispayed by his arm:

Mickey Hager...p...ty
OK, so we have finally remembered his name, more or less.
But now the daughter's name has the same last name, although it is not quite clear to us it is true that we could go to Google at this point and find out everything we want, but we have made good progress and want to finish the job.
So I suggest the daughter's first name is Marilee or something like that. It's true. I'm Mariska or that's pretty close. We have used F.L.A and P to get most of the information we want. Then we finally go to Google to find that the exact names are Mariska Hargitay and Mickey Hargitay.

Why do we spend so much time on the details of this Long-Term Recall process?

1. In the books I've read and the seminars I've been to this process is only briefly mentioned. These associations we are trying to follow by using prompts are sometimes also called tracks or lines. The prompts that we use to try and follow these lines or lines of association are often overlooked as many references on the subject of memory.

2. Long-Term Recall is a growing problem for all senior citizens, and in fact many seniors simply give up trying to remember things like dates, places and names because it can become frustrating. But if you can have some success, especially by using prompts, it gives you confidence that you can sometimes solve these irritating memory problems.

3. Successful long-term recall can be fun and rewarding!
Recent (Oct '19) Example of using Prompts for Long-Term Recall:

The car dealer says I need two new tires and he will put them on for $351. This seems a high price to me, so I decide to wait. Then, while I'm lying in bed the next morning, I'm trying to remember the name of the tire store that I've been to several times before and they always had lower tire prices. It's something like Dick Jernstrom but that's not it.

Let's try a dominant letter as a Prompt. I seem to remember some "D's". So I try Dick Jernstrom. No, that's not it. Maybe Summerall? That sounds pretty close.

Yes, there it is! It's Bob Summerall, no, not quite. Maybe Rob Summerall.

Yes, yes, that's close enough. I look it up in the yellow pages and it's Bob Summerall.

So I call them and their price for two equivalent tires is about $160.

So, by using the Prompts for Letter and Record (yellow pages), I've been able to recall some long-term memory and saved more than half the cost of two new tires.

Improving Your Memory - Synopsis

1. Recall from Long-Term Memory:
   - Prompts (FLIP PAGES)

2. Short-Term Memory Retention and Recall:
   - Pages (One=One, Two=Two, etc.)

3. "Automatic Memory Lasts!"
   - Pooka-Yokes (Letter in front of door)

4. Names & Faces:
   - Pictures, Repetition

5. Mnemonic Devices:
   - Rhymes, Sayings, etc. (Spring ahead; fall back)

6. General Hints:
   - List: "What's good for the heart is good for the brain"

Supplements: Antioxidants such as Vitamins C and E, also B12

Physical Exercise: Regular, not too strenuous, such as 3X weekly walk of 45 min

Mental Exercise: Puzzles, Memorizations, Math and Logic Problems, Planning a schedule, Cooking

Meditation: Breathing Exercise - in for 7 sec., out for 7 sec., Repeat 3X

Initial Test of Your Short-Term Memory:

Can you remember these words?

- Plank
- Banker
- Sauce
- Umbrella
- Abdomen
- Reptile
- Lobster
- Orchestra
- Forehead
- Jury

Study these words for one minute.

Then, in about 30 minutes or more, we will ask you to write them down.

Remembering a Name from a TV Show

She's one of the leading characters, and they often call her by her second or family name. I can't recall it, but I do remember not a letter but a sound, which is "Chic". I'm thinking it's something like "Chicago" or "Cleveland" or "Saxon", but those are not right.

I could ask a neighbor who watches it, or I could go to Google or even go to the web site for the show, but I'm waiting to see the next episode. I don't want to just leave it as an open question for my subconscious mind.

The next day, I just suddenly pops into my mind, out of the blue... Her name is Dawson.

Now, if I really want to remember it, it's time for a picture. So, I think of... Gabby, wearing her big flowing red dress and fire helmet (up in a past piece, Alaska), walking alone next to a creek. The creek has a sign next to it saying, "Dawson Creek".

So what worked here was the Prompt we sometimes fall back on: Picture.

Another Example:

My daughter was trying to remember the name of the British actor (a long, complicated name), who was in a movie a few years ago about trying to crack the code for the Nazi operations in WWII. She said he may have won an Academy Award.

(She is using Friend and Association)

I say yes I remember and saw the movie. It was titled with a word that meant puzzle. And then I remember the word, "Enigma". (More Association although I later find out that Enigma was the name of the decoding machine and the movie was actually called "The Imitation Game").

But she says that sounds about right and his first name may have a B. I suggest it's a fancy name like Bancroft and she says that's not it but it's close. And the last name is something like "Cumbersbatch".

So we try different B- and C- names and she finally settles on Benedict Cumberbatch. Later we find it's actually Benedict Cumberbatch.

So here the Prompts were: Friend, Association and Letter.

Benedict Cumberbatch

It is a rather long, complicated name, so a picture might help you remember it.
So if you really want to remember his name, a picture will probably help.
Perhaps a picture of the traitor, Benedict Arnold, being hanged, while wearing a tuxedo, complete with cummerbund.

Can you write down that list of words now?
P.S. Only you, not your neighbor!

References:

Most Useful Workbooks:
- Harnish, Marilu, Total Memory Makeover, Gallery Books, NY, 2012
- Resak, Prof. Richard, "Optimizing Brain Fitness" DVD, The Great Courses, Chantilly, VA, 2011
- Gleason, Greg, "Remember It!" DVD, greggleason@bellsouth.net, 2010
- Lucas, Jerry, Names & Faces Made Easy, Lucas Educational Systems, Dallas, TX, 2001

An Example of Association: The Helen Keller Story

I was watching an SUV, with an older couple inside, driving around in my condo complex when they stopped and asked me if I lived here. Then asked about the complex and about how it was doing. They then explained as the woman did, that they had actually built the complex originally. I said yes, I almost remember them, although that was way back in '92, 24 years earlier. And then, not sure I remember their names, asked her name was "Helen".

She said no, but said she understood, I thought that, because her last name was "Keller". I said, "Ah, and is your first name "Walter"?

She said yes, and then I remember, that his husband's name was Ken. Then I remember that they had moved away to Florida shortly after we bought our condo in '92, and she said that they had indeed moved to Florida after finishing the condo complex. She went on to tell about their difficulties in obtaining funding for the project back in those days, and now are people just waiting to invest in a project like this.

Do you know any brief but I was happy to discover that the association of her and her husband's names with Helen Keller was still in memory for over 26 years.

Another Example of Recal from Long-Term Memory

We were out at dinner, my neighbors, Jan and Dave, with me when Dave started talking about how many months it took for their local K-Mart to close down, especially when compared with their automobile repair service, which closed very quickly, perhaps in days or weeks.

He said that he was the local K-Mart and that he was a leased company owned by a large national company. It was a well-known fact that the local K-Mart was going to close soon after the automobile repair service closed.

I said that the name of the guy, just raise your hand, don't spoil the game of trying to remember me for the rest of the class. Thank you.

So now we were both in the process of trying to recall long-term memory, and we started using the prompts of Friend and Association.

I said that maybe it was Bobby Frazier. He said no but that's close.

I asked if they were related, to his father. His father, he was still out on the track. I said that it was a guy who may have been a race car driver and was better known as a successful owner, with some very successful drivers working for him. He said that's not it.

Then we both went back to our dinners and let time do the work.

And then, just a couple of minutes, he suddenly said the name.

"Roger Penske". Horay, we got it!
So we used Friend, Association, Letter or Sound, (for initials) and Time.