Working Memory: Ability to hold information in mind for a short time while performing some operation upon it.

– Nancy Mather & Richard Woodcock

Memory difficulties are not always a sign of a learning disability. They can be associated with other conditions and disabilities:

• Lack of sleep
• Trying to do too many things
• Depression
• Other health problems

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MEMORY

Trouble remembering what you just read?
Need to ask people to repeat things?
Hate taking notes in classes?
Could be a Memory Deficit.
Perhaps you need memory exercises.

QUICK QUIZ
Answer YES or NO.
1. I can’t remember a phone number without looking back several times.
2. After reading a paragraph, I must re-read it to comprehend its meaning.
3. When taking notes in classes, I miss important facts or concepts.
4. I often forget people’s names.
5. I don’t trust my memory with important information.

YOUR SCORE:
If you answered YES to:
1. 0 – 1  ITEMS  Your Memory Is Excellent. Keep it up!
2 – 3  Challenged. You may need help.
4 – 5  Very Weak. Get help now.

HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR MEMORY

• Use Associations – Pair new facts with familiar information. (Person named Carol, think “she sings carols”)
• “Brain Dump” – Write things down. On tests, write facts at top. Tape record ideas as you write essays.
• Repeat – then repeat again.
• Picture it – A picture is worth 1000 words. Put names from history on a date chart.
• Test backwards – If you can spell something backwards, you know it well enough to use it forward.
• Build confidence – Say to yourself “that’s easy to remember because…”, then state your association or image.
• Use colors – categorize information by color (or highlighter).

A great memory does not make a philosopher, any more than a dictionary can be called a grammar.

– John Henry Newman (1801–1890)

OTHER TIPS

Study in groups – Choose a few classmates for a study group. Sharing the memory of others can help build yours, too.

Study in short, frequent sessions – Start each study session with a review of the previous information you learned.

Memory is fleeting, but knowledge lasts forever – Don’t just memorize facts; learn them. Later you can use your powers of reason to get the correct answer even if you forget some details.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

If you are concerned about your memory and want to know if it is related to a learning disability, contact Disabled Student Programs & Services in order to see if they can refer you to Learning Disability Testing.

If general tips and techniques don’t improve your memory, ask a healthcare professional.

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