



CONCENTRATION AND MEMORY SKILLS

When days are long and lectures are not exciting, concentration can become difficult. Fortunately, concentration, the ability to remain focused, is a skill that can be improved. After managing to concentrate on the subject matter, being able to memorize what you have learned becomes important. Below are steps that can help you in improving both your concentration and memory skills.

Concentration During Class

- Sit near the front of the class.
- Posture yourself attentively by sitting up straight and avoiding slumping.
- Ask questions when appropriate and when you need clarification.
- Take notes.

Concentration While Studying

- Leave or rearrange a distracting environment.
- Go to a library or other quiet place.
- Vary your study activities.
- Keep music turned down low if you choose to play music.
- Turn off your cell phone.
- Eat a high protein snack if you feel hungry and do light exercise if you begin to feel tired.
- Take regular, scheduled breaks.
- Break the material up into smaller pieces.
- Give yourself rewards and incentives for completing tasks.
- Stop interrupting thoughts. If day dreaming is a problem, stop studying, write down the interrupting thoughts, and then return to your studies.
- Develop a plan of action for dealing with personal problems that may be distracting.
- Work to be able to spend 45 minutes out of each hour concentrating on your studying.

Would you like to learn more?

Concentration and Memory Skills are important tools for success as a student. If you would like to meet with a Counselor and explore these topics further, call 704-330-6433 and ask to schedule an appointment.

Memory

- Begin with a positive attitude about what you are learning. It is much easier to concentrate on things and memorize ideas related to topics about which you are enthusiastic.
- Try to relate the material to something that makes sense to you.
- Read the text book BEFORE class. This will make note taking easier and reinforce the material.
- Listen for key points during the instructor's lesson.
- Pay attention to topics on which the instructor spends a lot of time or repeats over again.
- Organize ideas and facts into meaningful categories.

Memory Tips

- **Flash cards.** Recite aloud the information that is written on the cards. Carry the cards with you and flip through them between classes or whenever you have a free moment.
- **Chunking.** Remember things in groups. For example, if you have a list of twelve things to remember, break it down into three groups of four.
- **Association.** Try linking new material to something you already know.
- **Acronyms.** Take the first letter of a group of words to form a new word. For example, to remember the five Great Lakes, use the acronym HOMES (Huron, Ontario, Michigan, Erie, and Superior.)
- **<http://www.studygs.net/memory.htm>** Try this web site for more memory tips.