

No. 1 in a series of articles



FIRST AND FOREMOST – YOU’RE NOT GETTING ALZHEIMER’S **By Jan Dacri, M.A.**

Be patient with your brain. Stop criticizing and judging it and talking to yourself (and others) about its shortcomings, its failures, its dismal future destiny.

When (not if, but when) a name, word, fact, or minor detail doesn’t pop immediately to the forefront of your mind . . . don’t jump to false conclusions.

Are you like most people who, every single time a moment or two passes between SEARCH & FIND mode without recovering the stored data in your brain, the common, habitual response occurs: self-judgment, then self-criticism, followed by fear, even panic regarding possible implications for the future? I can’t over-emphasize how common this is.

Do you blurt out statements such as “Oh, I just can’t remember things anymore”, “There I go again”; or “My brain just isn’t what it used to be”? Do you recognize one of these reactions as your own (or of someone close to you) “My memory is so terrible these days”, “My mind is so slow”? Recently I heard one that really takes the cake, “I’m going brain dead”. What could be worse to say to yourself? Have you totally given up on remembering names, actually believing it when you tell yourself “I can NEVER remember names”? Have you stopped learning anything new because you believe you’re getting too old, it’s too late?

I’ve lectured on the topic of “memory improvement” for nearly 30 years, and one thing I’ve observed again and again is this: the majority of people criticize their own minds horribly and frequently. I can only conclude, based on an understanding of how frequent repetition programs the brain, installing beliefs into our subconscious minds, that we have collectively reinforced the notion that our minds automatically get worse as we age. We anticipate it, we expect it; when we forget something, we say “See, I told you so, it’s happening to me just like I knew it would!”

Emphatically I say to you, STOP thinking this thought right now! Today, this minute, CHOOSE to begin to change your personal belief. You do not have to allow this un-true, culturally programmed, self-fulfilling prophesy to become what’s true for you. You CAN change your mind; you CAN reprogram what you think, how you respond to “mental events”.

We CAN improve as we live longer.

Plenty of research has shown that the brain can actually improve with age. “My brain?” you ask. Yes! It may take some work, but it’s entirely possible; and IT’S NOT TOO LATE. As the years are continuing on, what could be more worth the effort?

We each have our own remarkable mental computer to run the MindBody mechanism during the entire course of our life. This amazing device, the most advanced and complex computer created to date on the face of the planet, is infinitely capable of up-grades without purchasing additional hardware! By simply using existing software installed at birth more effectively, we can start now to increase and enhance the capacity of our hard drive and the speed of our mental processor.

It’s never too late to begin to reverse and undo detrimental programs. It’s time to STOP reinforcing negative expectations; STOP making these self-deprecating statements. Each day presents new opportunities to challenge the mind, strengthen it, complement it; encourage it. If you believe in the potential you have to continue to improve every day instead of accepting some inevitable mental demise, you’ll literally change your mind and alter your future. If you change your thinking, you’ll change your life. Think of what will happen if you don’t!

Sure, the years take their toll on us in many ways. But what really determines whether we will become one of those inspiring Seniors who are sharp and clear mentally and physically active and fit or one of those old people stiffly hunched over, ill, and constantly complaining about their aches and pains and medications, is the choice we make today about who we will become!

Your brain will believe whatever you tell it and do it’s best to make the picture you hold in mind, become what’s true.

“Senior Moments”

One of the worst culprits of all, that I’ve been hearing a lot these days is, “The old brain is having a ‘Senior Moment’”. I simply don’t approve of this phrase, this excuse for forgetting. It clearly implies that getting older AUTOMATICALLY equals poor memory performance. It’s as if we’ve concluded that having a bad memory necessarily comes with the territory of being a Senior Citizen. And when does this start? In our 50’s, 60’s, 70’s, 80’s, 90’s? C’mon. This is hogwash.

If we use it, we won’t lose it.

Don’t accept any other inauthentic self-sabotaging conclusion, or you’ll spend the rest of your life reinforcing the concept, etching it into your brain, convincing yourself that it’s true. You can cause it to become true – OR NOT!

Start exercising your mind right now. Your self-confidence will soar if you can remember 14 objects in a perfect sequence and say them out loud, forwards and backwards. Try doing it both ends to the middle to improve your concentration. Memorize a sequence of facts in a series and reinforce the pictures as you commit it to memory. Watch the speed of your mental processor increase. Notice how good this feels. Tell your mind how great it is and enjoy doing the exercise as much as you enjoy the results in improved brain power! (See Memory Exercises, Systems and Techniques.)

Then do the same for your body!

Conclusion:

Let's stop this old, unhealthy habit right now. When a name, word, fact, or other sought after information doesn't pop to the surface immediately, relax; don't pronounce any judgment on yourself or your brain; change your focus; simply continue on. It doesn't mean anything, unless you give it meaning by your own judgments.

Accept that you **MUST** begin to undo the damage already done and that you **CAN** insure against the future repercussions of etching acceptance of a failing memory into your subconscious mind. In order to begin to reverse the impact this may have already been having on your life, apply the suggestions in this workbook repeatedly and continuously from now on.

How to Change

First, **CATCH** yourself making these self-critical statements.

Keep Post-it Notes® with you at all times (and a pen). Write down the words you use, the statements you make to yourself (or to others).

Secondly, **CONGRATULATE** yourself for noticing; for being willing and open to changing, to reversing old, outworn mental programs.

Then, **COMMIT** yourself to consistent effort at self-improvement. Be willing to work at it.

BELIEVE it is possible to keep getting better.

REPLACE negative self-critical statements with positive self-complementary ones.

TAKE EXCELLENT CARE of your body and all of its parts. Feed it with the best possible nutrition. Be active, gently and consistently, constantly stretching and breathing. Drink plenty of clean, clear water. Allow your stomach to become completely empty in between meals. Amp your heart rate up to a faster pace from time to time to keep the ticker ticking regularly and insure its longevity. If you haven't done this in a long time, or you've never done it before, start slowly and very carefully. But start immediately. Take a brisk walk today, if you can. Walk around indoors, stepping in place, or go outside under blue skies and sunshine. Or get thee to a health club. Use the weight resistance machines (carefully, with light weight and breathing with repetitions). Anyone, any age above 15, can join. As you do it, you'll find that you just keep getting better at it. This is how it works.

Remember to **BREATHE** deeply often.

STAY RELAXED AND CALM and clear-headed. Rest and do whatever it takes to release the accumulation of tension in the body and mind. Get completely relaxed before you fall to sleep for the night causing your sleep to be increasingly regenerative.

Start each new day by waking up to the first thoughts in your mind being some of the following questions (I learned this technique from Tony Robbins):

"What's great about my life right now?" (Allow your mind to search for some answers to this question.)

"What am I happy about in my life right now?" (Some of the answers will be the same.)

“What am I excited about?” (Enjoy the feeling that comes with the picture.)

“What am I thankful for?” (Let this feeling awaken your heart and mind for the day.)

“Who do I love?” (See an image of each person clearly. Allow yourself to see the people who are no longer alive whom you have loved in your life, and keep loving them.)

“Who loves me?”

“What great things are about to happen in my life now?” (Let your brain dig into its stored recesses to come up with possibilities.)

“What will I accomplish with the use of my mind today?” (How does that make you feel?)

“What beauty will I see? What joy will I feel?” (Look around you all day through to answer this question for yourself; and see what you come up with first thing in the morning tomorrow.)

WRITE THESE QUESTIONS ON A POST-IT NOTE®

Write (some or all of) these questions on a Post-it Note® and place it on the book you keep beside your bed, just in case you'd like to have some ready-made questions available when you first wake up. Make up your own, you get the idea, I'm sure. Or print out this page, if you wish.

Allow yourself a few moments before jumping out of bed to start your body and mind racing through the day, to lie still, remain relaxed, think quietly about the answers to some of these questions.

Think in pictures. Notice that the words you say to yourself paint pictures in your mind.

For a moment each morning, and at other times through the day, visualize yourself having a great brain and a healthy body for the next 10, 20, 30 + years. How would you like to look, feel, think when you arrive at the next upcoming decade? We can live to 120, at this point in time, you know. Can you see yourself healthy, wealthy, and wise? Imagine HOW WISE you could be by then?

See you there! Let's keep in touch.

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