

Example of a «Brain Coach» Exercise Worksheet | **braincoach@home**

Memory: Memorize names

Few people can memorize people's names quickly and for a long time. However, effective strategies can also be done by those who otherwise have great difficulty remembering names.



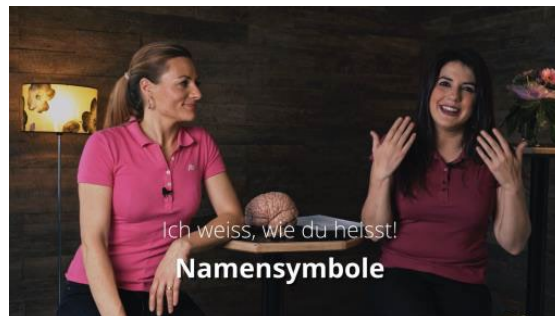
A. Say the name repeatedly

Say the name of someone new to you several times to help you memorize it from the start. Then, braid the person's name into ongoing conversations, e.g., «That is a great idea, Mr. Binggeli». Also, say important people's names out loud at home so that the names are available when you meet them again later.

B. Visual strategies

Visual strategies enable you to be creative and improve your memory. In this short video, we explain how you can easily remember names with visual connections:

<https://youtu.be/47nnqlhDd0A>



Remember: Symbols that are funny, bizarre, colored, exaggerated, and vivid are note-worthy for the memory!

Exercise:

Use the strategy to memorize names of new acquaintances of people from the TV, names of people that you keep forgetting or you can practice with the names below.

You will impress yourself and others with your name memory.



Karoline
Grüneichen



Richard
Hauser



Ferdinand
Dubois



Jessica
McLean



Gerhard
Mürger



Antoinette
Poisson



Liselotte
Blatter



Hans
Schmid



Violetta
Ciminelli



Ludwig
Hasenmann

Coordination

Try these coordination exercises:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RRYh5Tore88>



Coordinative training involves activating the cerebellum, a region of the brain responsible for controlling motor skills and motor learning. In addition, coordination exercises are associated with activations in the visual-spatial network of older adults. Thus, practice influences various cognitive functions - including divided attention, working memory, and verbal learning.

Mindfulness: Mindful breathing

Our breathing is automatic. We breathe faster and shallower when we are tense, excited, anxious, or nervous. We breathe more slowly and deeply when we are relaxed, comfortable, or asleep. Breathing does not need to be controlled by our consciousness. That is why we hardly pay attention to our breathing rhythm. You can also consciously control your breathing. Conscious breathing is mindful breathing, and you can practice it anywhere and anytime, even unnoticed, so that nobody notices it.



Breathing exercise: Feel your breath

1. Close your eyes.
2. Put one hand on your stomach.
3. Breathe deeply into your stomach through your nose and be aware of this breathing.
4. As you breathe in, imagine that you are sucking in a soothing scent, which then flows through your entire body.
5. Exhale through the mouth. As you exhale, picture yourself blowing out a candle.

Now, count as you inhale and exhale. This will facilitate rhythmic breathing. For example, inhale for four seconds and exhale for five seconds.



Research shows that after practicing mindful breathing and other mindfulness exercises, the grey matter in your brain's amygdala – a region known for its role in fear and stress – can become smaller. Also, the hippocampus which helps your memory and learning, can become thicker. That is, mindfulness can reduce stress and increase learning.

Creativity: Unusual questions

Take 10 minutes to think about unusual answers to these unusual questions:

- Assuming you could be invisible for a day, what problems could that cause?
- If there were two types of people in this world, which types would they be and which would they be?
- What is invisible, but you wish people could see it?



Creative thinking can increase problem solving and resilience, as well as the ability to find new ways when being confronted with an obstacle. Also, creative acts can help focus the mind, and has even been compared to meditation due to its calming effects on the brain and body. Even just gardening or sewing releases dopamine, a natural anti-depressant.



Community: Hug, please!

Humans are social beings and need contact with others to stay healthy. The social isolation triggered by the corona pandemic, in particular, shows us once again how crucial interpersonal relationships are.



When we encounter other people, our brain releases oxytocin. Oxytocin is also called the «cuddle hormone». It activates our reward system and increases our well-being. In addition, it also regulates blood pressure and the level of cortisol (stress hormone). Oxytocin thus also supports the processing of stress factors and helps us to relax. This also increases our self-confidence and trust in others.

There are many different ways to stimulate the release of oxytocin:

- Touch (cuddling, hugging, massage)
- Eye contact
- Look at or stroke animals
- Virtual social interactions
- Meditation / gratitude
- Doing things you love (favorite food, a favorite song, etc.)
- Bring joy to others

Goal: This week, consciously try to stimulate your oxytocin secretion regularly, e.g., by deliberately looking people you meet in the eyes or making somebody happy by calling him, writing a letter, or offering someone a compliment.



Lifestyle: Movement in everyday life

Try to exercise for at least 30 minutes a day and attempt to integrate the movements in your everyday life:

Get into the habit of moving around during everyday activities. For example, circle your hips while cooking. Or march on the spot while phoning.

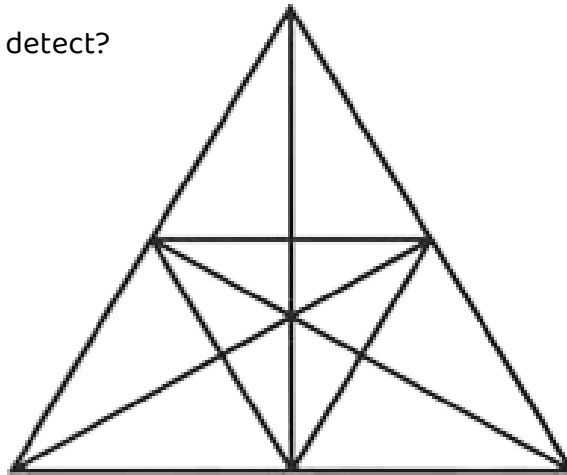
At the beginning maybe this appears weird to you, but in time it becomes a profitable habit - because you have spread such regular exercise throughout your day.



Moving increases the blood circulation and with it the oxygen level in the body and the brain. This translates to elevated mood and increased cognitive functioning.

**Brain teaser**

How many triangles do you detect?



Have you already laughed heartily today? :)

