

Week 3 | **Mental fitness in daily life****Coordination task, Juggling part 2**

Here we show and explain a new challenging body coordination exercise. →

<https://youtu.be/lbVYSdPgZvA>



1

**Body awareness and relaxation**

We invite you to take a kind of mental journey through your own body: mentally feel the various body regions. Take the feelings, perceptions and thoughts that arise during the journey as neutral as possible.

Then give your body small appreciations, for example by caressing / massaging the feet which carry you every day; or by lovingly looking at your hands in admiration and imagining what they have already achieved and what they continue to do every day; or by lovingly rubbing your hands and each finger individually with a finely scented hand cream, etc.



Why? This exercise promotes body awareness and is also called “body scan”. A higher body awareness leads to, on the one hand, more well-being and on the other hand protection against falls. In addition, doing something good for yourself also promotes self-acceptance and self-confidence.

2

**Creativity**

Think of a hobby or a leisure activity that you enjoy doing. Think about what the hobby involves, why you enjoy doing this activity, what is important to you about it, what fascinates you about it, what skills you use and develop further and what you enjoy about it, etc. Then try to paint your hobby.

3

**Familiar movements differently**

Try the following 2 exercises:

1. Cross your arms the other way around than usual, e.g., instead of the right arm, hold the left arm up, or vice versa.
2. Fold your hands as if to pray, but switch finger position by having the right index finger in front of the left one instead of having the left one in front of the right one, or vice versa.

4

The motto is variation:

Carry out usual activities with the non-dominant (unfamiliar) hand, e.g., brushing your teeth, stirring, playing ping-pong, etc. Try to perceive routine activities in everyday life and consciously do them differently. Even though at first it can be very unfamiliar and maybe even tedious - the brain thanks you!



Why? New movement patterns promote the formation of new synapses and neuronal activation. Furthermore, it promotes mindful movements and thereby motor security as well.



Memory strategy for memorizing names

5

Few people can memorize people's names directly and in the long term. With an effective strategy, even those who otherwise have difficulty with remembering names can do it.

Make pictorial links



Why? Use visual links to get creative and improve your memory performance.

In this short **video** we explain how you can remember names well using pictorial links:
<https://youtu.be/47nnqlhDd0A>



Remember: Your name symbols should be funny, bizarre, colorful, exaggerated and especially **“remember-worthy”!** (See this week’s main topic on the meaning of emotions).

Exercise:

Use this strategy to memorize names of new acquaintances / people from the TV or names of people you keep forgetting.

You will impress yourself and others with your memory of names 😊!



Reveling in memories together

6

Reminisce with someone today (also possible by phone). It can be a very small, beautiful shared memory that you think back on. Try to remember as many details of the experience as possible.



Why? Remembering beautiful events reactivates the positive emotions experienced. Thus, happiness hormones (e.g., serotonin, dopamine) as well as the «cuddle hormone» oxytocin are also increased during the memory of a beautiful experience with someone. The more vividly and extensively we remember it, the stronger the positive physical reaction. Gratefully looking back does us so much good.



Brain teaser: Over the bridge

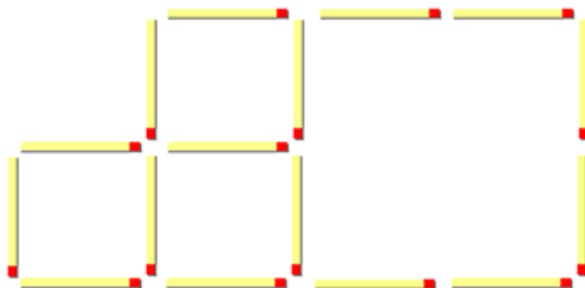
The Luck Family is going on a trip. They have misjudged the time and it is already dark. However, they still have to cross a river. There is only a narrow footbridge across the river, which is so narrow and unstable that with the best will in the world only two people can cross it at the same time.

They know how long it takes each person to cross the bridge. The daughter is already there and makes it in one minute, while her little brother needs two minutes. The parents are anxious and therefore take longer: the mother four minutes and the father even five.

To make matters worse, it is now so dark that you need a flashlight to see anything at all. Fortunately, the little brother has taken his flashlight with him. You can cross the footbridge with it, but you always have to bring the flashlight back.

Of course, the Luck Family wants to get across the bridge as quickly as possible. What is the minimum time it will take for them all to cross the bridge?

Solutions of the last brain teaser:



Laughter strengthens our body & mind

- What has 4 legs and can fly?

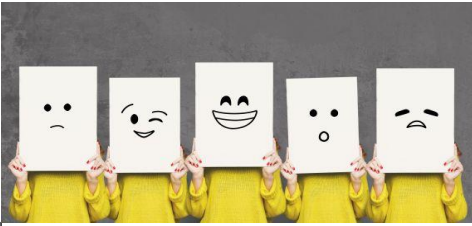
->Two birds

- Woman: «Do these pants make me fat?»

Man: «I do not know. I certainly would not eat them.»

- Shortest joke ever: ->Firewood rental





Main topic Week 3

Emotions help us remember

Personal forgetfulness can be frustrating. It is good if we have a few tricks so we can help to determine which information is remembered in the long term. We should especially increase the **personal significance** of information and create **mental links** with other information.

Activating emotions

Content becomes significant when it activates emotions. The reason for this is that the emotional center of our brain, the so-called limbic system, evaluates everything that happens through us and with us. Unconsciously, we ask ourselves the question: what makes listening, memorizing, practicing, etc. worthwhile?

When emotions are involved, we signal to the brain that the information learned is personally relevant and should therefore be better stored long-term.

It is important to know that the personal relevance of information becomes more important the older we get. Young brains are relatively open to all new knowledge, while older brains critically investigate the meaning of a task and store it very selectively.

How do we make something meaningful to the brain? For example, by learning Italian when we plan a trip to Ticino, or by memorizing the way to an appointment, then getting to the destination without a navigation system. We can consciously visualize and enjoy the benefits of new knowledge and the advantage it gives us. In this way, we increase the chance of success of our retention performance many times over.

Mental links

A second very effective strategy is making links. Shortcuts add sensory impressions to the information to be retained, such as pictures, stories, places, or sounds, and thus involve more different brain areas. The higher the number of linkages, the better the retention.

For example, I can imagine my to-do list (post office, call Urs, dispose of glass) as a funny story: "At the post office I meet Urs, who is wearing a bottle as a hat". In addition, I can make the appropriate movements and vividly imagine the scene.

What these two effective strategies meaningfulness and linkage have in common is, that it turns the **learning process into an experience**. This is because our brain wants to experience something in order to be able to store it sustainably in the long term. The next time you want to remember something, try to increase its emotional significance and create multiple links. You can use strategies like these to specifically combat forgetfulness, don't forget this.