

10 Ways to Ignite Your Thinking Daily!

Einstein once said, "The world we have made as a result of the level of thinking we have done thus far creates problems we cannot solve at the same level of thinking at which we created them." To create new levels of thinking we need to learn how to boost our brainpower and develop new habits on a daily basis. For every additional year of education, people reduce their risk of Alzheimer's symptoms by 20%. If you want to avoid brain atrophy, you've got to exercise your mind on a regular basis. The mechanism by which the brain is able to learn, remember and think is the synapse, the connection that allows one brain cell to communicate with another.

1) Visualize! When Einstein thought through a problem, he always found it necessary to formulate his subject in as many different ways as possible, including using diagrams. He visualized solutions, and believed that words and numbers as such did not play a significant role in his thinking process.

2) Play a little Mozart - IQ tests were administered to 36 college students after they listened first to a sonata, then a relaxation tape and finally nothing. Following their encounters with Mozart, students scored nearly 10 points higher -the boost in brain power only lasted 15 minutes but researchers hypothesize that earlier and longer exposure as children could have more prolonged effects.

Gordon Shaw, a University of California, Irvine, physics professor involved in a study of the effects of music on the brain, believes that the structure of Mozart's music may trigger a series of neural firings in much the same way that a vibrating piano string causes neighboring strings to vibrate.

3) Experience - firsthand or secondhand (such as reading, listening or seeing) firsthand experience is superior. A Chinese proverb states: I hear: I forget. I see: I remember I do: I understand. One of the principles of Toyota's success is their team is encourage to go and see (the Japanese term is "genchi genbutsu").

4) Personal contacts - associate with creative people. Children - play the association game - look at something with a child - ask what does this look like to you. As adults we tend to hang around with the same people all of the time at work and in our social life. The next time you go to a function, networking event or even walk through the office, meet someone new and talk to them. You never know what you will discover – something in common, a new idea...the possibilities are endless.

5) Question Your Assumptions - List everything about your situation that you know to be true — no matter how small or insignificant. Now question each assumption. "Is that really so? Does it *have* to be that way? How could it be done some other way?" (see **20 questions** in this e-book)

6) Participate in Hobbies – hobbies can engage your brain in a different way from your daily routine.

7) Brain Joggers – practice solving puzzles like sudoku, crossword puzzles, anagrams (word puzzles), pictograms.

8) Brain bank – keep your ideas in a folder, or a jar, or box and refer to them when you are stuck or your are looking for some creative input. This is just like having money in a saving account.

9) Focus on Your Passions Researchers followed a group of 1,500 people over a period of 20 years. At the outset of the study, the group was divided into- Group A 83% of the sample, who were embarking on a career chosen for the prospects of now in, order to do what they wanted later, and Group B, the other 17% of the sample, who had chosen their career path for the reverse reason, they were going to pursue what they wanted to do now and worry about the money later.

The data showed some startling revelations – At the end of the 20 years, 101 of the 1,500 had become millionaires. Of the millionaires, all but one-100 out of 101-were from Group B, the group that had chosen to pursue what they loved!

The key ingredient in most successful projects loves what you do. Having a goal or a plan is not enough. Academic preparation is not enough. When you love what you are doing you become more motivated, have more energy, feel more creative and daring, and you end up doing it better.

10) Look at problems in many different ways, and find new perspectives that no one else has taken - Leonardo da Vinci believed that, to gain knowledge about the form of a problem, you begin by learning how to restructure it in many different ways. He felt that the first way he looked at a problem was too biased. Often, the problem itself is reconstructed and becomes a new one.

Bonus idea!!!

11. Catalytic Combinations: form relationships and make connections between disassociated subjects - Combine, and recombine, ideas, images, and thoughts into different combinations no matter how incongruent or unusual. Use 2 columns of words, use a phone book or a dictionary and flip through pages at random to see what sparks a new idea. Samuel Morse invented relay stations for telegraphic signals when observing relay stations for horses.