

Quick List of how to maximize your learning- The Basics

Sleep

- Research has shown that getting 7.5-9 hours of sleep is one of the strongest factors associated with effective learning. If this is a struggle for you, take a look at some of the sleep hygiene related resources on the website, or contact use to setup an appointment to talk about ways to implement positive sleeping practices.

Exercise

- Exercise is an incredibly important part of learning. As creatures that evolved through movement, we are evolutionary geared to need time being up and active. Generally, getting 30 minutes of moderate exercise a day is beneficial.
- To maximize learning, get your exercise prior to episodes of studying. Exercising releases a natural protein in the brain that acts as a “fertilizer” for the development of new neural pathways and makes learning easier.

Eating/Drinking (Water)

- Much like a machine, we need a source of fuel to keep our bodies and minds going. Make sure to continue to eat and drink recommended amounts of both to sustain the physical and mental toll that it takes to maintain focus and attention.
- Limit caffeine/alcohol throughout the day. While smaller doses of caffeine have found to be helpful in directing attention, too much can cause a crash.

Notes

- Take notes on the materials that you study.
- Do NOT copy information word for word. Put new material in your own words. This has been found to be a more effective method of retaining and later recalling the information.

Respect Mental Limits (Breaks/Distributed Learning)

- We all have limits, respect them in order to maximize your potential. What that means...
- Take breaks throughout your time working. The longer you ask the brain to attend to a single challenging project, the more taxing it will become, and the harder it will be to maintain.
- Distribute learning across periods of time instead of cramming. There is greater value to studying a topic 1 hour a day over 10 days as opposed to 10 hours the day before a test.
- Break studying into chunks, and use external alarms as reminders for breaks or reminders to resume work after a break.
- Reward yourself for positive steps taken towards your goals.