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Tips and tricks to work your memory *

You notice changes related to your ability to think or remember? Rest assured, this is all part of normal aging. Aging sometimes brings certain frustrations. Here are some **tips and tricks** to adopt in your daily life to better manage these irritants.

Take your time: have someone repeat information you did not fully grasped or immediately write down information that you think is important.

Be attentive: as we get older, we are more easily distracted. It therefore becomes necessary to provide an extra effort and to repeat to ourselves regularly: "I must be attentive!". Remember, attention is the gateway to memory.

Make associations: combine new information with what you already know. Ex: your new neighbor's name is Steve, just like your nephew. Simply linking these two pieces of information will help you remember your neighbor's name more easily.

Train your memory: to retain new information, a simple trick is to remember it several times and at longer intervals. Ex: To learn a new phone number, write it down, then try to repeat it immediately in your memory and check your answer. Repeat this exercise a few seconds later, then a few minutes later and so on.

Search from landmarks: you don't know where you stored your scissors? Try to remember under what circumstances you used them the last time. Was it to sew or to open a package? Reconstructing the context can help you remember an information. The same strategy applies when it comes to remembering, in more detail, information you've read or heard.

Use memory aids: memory aids are tools that make life easier because they contribute to better manage everyday life. Choose one that's right for your lifestyle.

- Write down on a notepad near the phone a call to make or items to buy, etc. Notes on the calendar are also very useful.
- Choose only one place to store your keys, glasses, wallet and other items you often use. Try as much as possible not to change that place.

Remember that it's wrong to say that you're losing your intellectual capacity as you get older. Some become only a little more temperamental. Accepting that they're not perfect is already a good start. Better still, getting a better idea of your difficulties (Am I more distracted? Slower? What are my oversights?) will allow you to use effective tricks to better manage them.

Adopt a good attitude and trust yourself!

* Article inspired by « Faites travailler vos méninges » a publication of the University Institute of Geriatrics of Montreal (IUGM).

<http://numerique.banq.qc.ca/patrimoine/details/52327/1972470>