

# **Minute Motivators**

**(Worksheets)**

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## Brain Gym®

- Successful brain function requires efficient connections across the neural pathways of the brain.
- "Brain Gym® movements stimulate the flow of information along these networks, restoring our innate ability to learn and function with curiosity and joy."

### Midline Movements

- Activate the left and right brain
- Improve reading, writing, listening, and speaking skills
  - Cross Crawl
  - Lazy 8's

### Energy Exercises

- Keep the electromagnetic circuits of the brain/body flowing freely
- Reduce stress and improve organizational skills
  - Water
  - The Thinking Cap
  - Space buttons

### Lengthening Activities

- Activate front and back lobes of the brain
- Improve attention and comprehension
  - The Owl
  - Arm Activation

### References

- Paul E. Dennison, Ph.D. & Gail E. Dennison. *Brain Gym®*. Ventura, CA: Edu-Kinesthetics Pub., 1994.
- <http://www.braingym.com>

## Who am I?

Make a mini-collage of pictures that symbolize you. Use the crayons provided to illustrate your life passions and one professional goal for next year.

*Life passions:*

*Professional goal for next year:*

## Snowball

"Successful math students..."

Ideas for student snowballs:

- Successful math students...
- I don't understand...
- I wish you'd go over \_\_\_\_\_ again.
- This study technique really helped me prepare for this test...
- What is \_\_\_\_\_?
- I think you'll likely put a problem like this on the test...

## Brain-based Learning

Your brain:

- Brain cells are called **neurons**.
- You are born with at least 100 billion neurons.
- **Dendrites** (fibers) grow out of the neurons when you listen to, write about, talk about, or practice something.

Learning is natural:

- Neurons know how to grow dendrites, just like your stomach knows how to digest food.
- Learning = Growth of dendrites.
- When two dendrites grow close together, a contact point is formed (synapse).
- Dendrites grow only when you are actively doing something.
- Dendrites can only grow from prior knowledge.
- New skills must connect to, and grow off of, previously learned skills (pre-requisites are important)!

Practice builds connections:

- New dendrites take time to grow - lots of practice.
- Dendrites die off without immediate and regular practice.
- When you practice something, the dendrites grow thicker with a fatty coating of **myelin**.
- The thicker the dendrites, the faster the signals travel and the less chance for interference.

Make the most of practice time:

- Doing homework is essential to growing dendrites.
- You grow dendrites for exactly the same thing you are practicing (don't just watch, DO).
- You'll know you have practiced enough if you can teach it.
- Making mistakes and getting feedback so you can correct them, allows you to check the accuracy of the connections in your brain.
- Be sure to get feedback quickly so you don't practice the wrong thing and build a strong, but wrong, connection.

Emotions and neurons:

- **Adrenaline** (caused by anxiety) makes it hard for the neuron-transmitters to carry messages across the synapses in your brain (blinking out on a test).
- **Endorphins** (increased by exercise, laughter, learning new things) help make you feel calm and improve neuron connections.

Notes from Diana Hestwood's [How your Brain Learns and Remembers](http://www.teachingcollegemath.com/Brain_01.htm)

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## Interdependence

"Dependent people need others to get what they want. Independent people can get what they want through their own effort. **Interdependent** people combine their own efforts with the efforts of others to achieve their greatest success." (Stephen Covey)

List a few interdependent strategies that you use in order to succeed in this course. Discuss this with a partner to determine one additional strategy that you didn't think of independently.

## Emotional Intelligence

Interview the most positive person you know and find out that person's "secret". Write about your discoveries below.

## Personal Responsibility

Your task is to complete the Creator column below:

Victim Language	Creator Language
Victims believe that their behaviors, thoughts, feelings, and outcomes are caused by forces beyond their control, such as powerful others and luck. Victim language is characterized by blaming, complaining, and making excuses.	Creators believe that their behaviors, thoughts, feelings, and outcomes are the natural consequences of <i>their choices</i> . As the masters of their lives, they <b>create, promote, or allow</b> all of their outcomes and experiences. Creator language is characterized by accepting responsibility and then making a plan.
1. I can never find a parking space.	I'll leave early tomorrow to be sure I get a parking space and use the extra time to prepare for class.
2. I did not have time to prepare a creative assignment for today's class.	
3. It's not my fault that students fail my tests.	
4. This committee is such a waste of time.	
5. I just don't like to grade.	
6. I can't help it that my e-mails are misinterpreted.	
7. I keep lecturing, but they never seem to hear me.	
8. It's impossible to cater to every learning style.	
9. What collegiality?	
10. With all the committee work, I just don't have time to talk with students	

Revised from Skip Downing's On Course: Strategies for Creating Success in College and in Life

## Learning/Teaching Strategies

<p><b>V</b> <b>Visual</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Charts, graphs, diagrams, symbols, arrows, circles, outlines</li> <li>2. Colored chalk, markers</li> <li>3. 3-D models and manipulatives</li> <li>4. Computer and calculator simulations</li> <li>5. Numbering notes, steps, processes</li> <li>6. Use of visualization</li> </ol> <p><i>Note:</i> These strategies do not include the use of television, videos, and films. These media are primarily Aural and Kinesthetic because of their presentation of sound and reality.</p>
<p><b>A</b> <b>Aural</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Encourage students to verbalize their thought processes</li> <li>2. Allow aural learners to test in private rooms so they can talk it out</li> <li>3. Pair-share</li> <li>4. Sing content related songs or recite poems.</li> <li>5. Have students orally quiz each other</li> </ol>
<p><b>R</b> <b>Reading/ Writing</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Write personalized mnemonics, songs, and/or poems</li> <li>2. Use one-minute writings</li> <li>3. Implement journal writing</li> <li>4. Encourage process writing in addition to symbol manipulation</li> <li>5. Demonstrate problem solving with words <i>and</i> symbols</li> <li>6. Lecture notes and textbooks tend to cater to this learning preference.</li> </ol>
<p><b>K</b> <b>Kinesthetic</b></p> <p><b>Learning Styles Inventory</b></p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Construct paper models</li> <li>2. Use skits to demonstrate concepts</li> <li>3. Tap out rhythms to songs</li> <li>4. Use games to review</li> <li>5. Incorporate group projects</li> <li>6. Use manipulatives and 3-D models</li> <li>7. Make connections to reality through experience, example, practice, and simulation.</li> </ol> <p><a href="http://www.vark-learn.com">www.vark-learn.com</a></p>

## Classroom Etiquette

People sometimes respond to situations without considering the consequences of their actions. Identify inappropriate and appropriate actions for each of the given scenarios.

Scenario	Inappropriate Action(s)	Appropriate Action(s)
1. The instructor provides you with a syllabus and calendar for the quarter		
2. You arrive late to class or test		
3. You get back a test for which the grade is lower than you expected		
4. You miss class or lab		
5. The test is scheduled for day you have a doctor's appointment scheduled		
6. You have homework questions		
7. You have a review question the day of the test		
8. You are irritated by talking and/or behaviors of other students in class		
9. You turn in an assignment after the deadline		
10. You disagree with the instructor during lecture		
11. You have a cell phone (during lecture and/or test)		
12. You have a personal problem that is affecting your mood and/or ability to concentrate		
13. The tutoring lab instructor teaches material different than your instructor		
14. You took this course before and failed.		

## Time Management

One day, an expert in time management was speaking to a group of business students and, to drive home a point, used an illustration those students will never forget.

As he stood in front of the group of high-powered overachievers he said, "Okay, time for a quiz" and he pulled out a one-gallon, wide-mouth Mason jar and set it on the table in front of him. He also produced about a dozen fist-sized rocks and carefully placed them, one at a time, into the jar. When the jar was filled to the top and no more rocks would fit inside, he asked, "Is this jar full?"

Everyone in the class yelled, "Yes."

The time management expert replied, "Really?" He reached under the table and pulled out a bucket of gravel. He dumped some gravel in and shook the jar causing pieces of gravel to work themselves down into the spaces between the big rocks. He then asked the group once more, "Is the jar full?"

By this time the class was on to him. "Probably not," one of them answered. "Good!" he replied. He reached under the table and brought out a bucket of sand. He started dumping the sand in the jar and it went into all of the spaces left between the rocks and the gravel. Once more he asked the question, "Is this jar full?"

"No!" the class shouted. Once again he said, "Good." Then he grabbed a pitcher of water and began to pour it in until the jar was filled to the brim. Then he looked at the class and asked, "What is the point of this illustration?" One eager beaver raised his hand and said, "The point is, no matter how full your schedule is, if you try really hard you can always fit some more things in it!"

"No," the speaker replied, "that's not the point. The truth this illustration teaches us is if you don't put the big rocks in first, you'll never get them in at all. What are the 'big rocks' in your life, time with your loved ones, your faith, your education, your dreams, a worthy cause, teaching or mentoring others? Remember to put these BIG ROCKS in first or you'll never get them in at all.

So, tonight, or in the morning, when you are reflecting on this short story, ask yourself this question: What are the 'big rocks' in my life? Then, put those in your jar first.

Use the form below to schedule in your "Big Rocks" each week.

Polly Patterson, MacArthur State Technical College, AL <http://oncourseworkshop.com>

## **Risk**

Choose any scary goal.

Determine the smallest scary step you can take toward this goal.

How could you make backing out as hard as going forward?

What accepting and reinforcing self-talk will you need to hear when you feel afraid as you start to move forward?

Just Do It!!

Adapted from Martha Beck's The Joy Diet: 10 Daily Practices for a Happier Life, 2003 Crown Publishers, New York, N.Y. (p. 109).

## Affirmations

The choices we make in life are a reflection of our core beliefs - true or false, real or imagined. Affirmations are "I am \_\_\_\_\_" statements used to shift any negative perceptions of ourselves in order to make it possible to make wise choices and affirm that we are all capable, admirable, lovable, and fully worthy of the best life has to offer.

1. List 4 ways you would like your friends and family to describe you.  
Ex: Caring, smart, funny, dependable
  
2. List 4 ways you would like your department chair and colleagues to describe you.  
Ex: creative, knowledgeable, effective, leader, organized, energetic
  
3. As you read these descriptions, which of them do *not* feel like they describe you - *yet*?
  
4. Create an affirmation using a few of these "not yet" descriptions.  
Ex: I am a creative, knowledgeable math instructor who is organized and energetic.
  
5. Memorize this affirmation this week by saying it repeatedly. It helps the affirmation process if you tape it to a mirror so that you are actually saying it to yourself when you read it. Practice replacing negative thoughts with an affirmation to shift your mindset and the resulting actions.

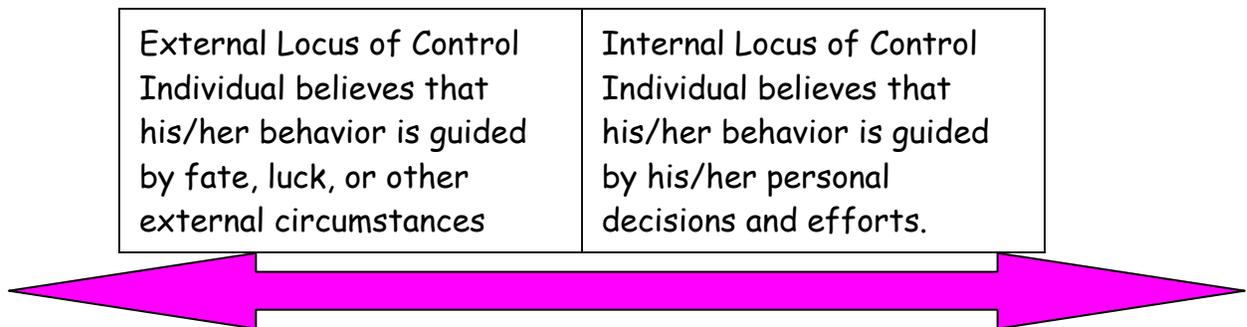
## Locus of Control

Answer the following True/False questions:

1. \_\_\_\_\_ I usually trash assignments/tests that have low grades.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ No matter what I do, I can not understand math.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Work and family keep me from having time to study.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Luck (good or bad) plays a big part in my test performance.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Some people just can't do math.

Did you answer more true (extrinsic) or false (intrinsic)?

Locus of control is conceptualized as referring to a continuum, ranging from *external* to *internal*:



***In general, it seems to be psychologically healthy to perceive that one has control over those things which one is capable of influencing.***

Describe a situation where an external locus of control is beneficial:

Describe a situation where an internal locus of control is beneficial:

How might this change how you approach this class?

## Test Taking Strategies

Use your experiences to brainstorm for a list of factors/practices that seem to impact test performance. Place each factor/practice in the appropriate category.

	Preparation practices	Psychological/ Physiological factors	Test taking practices
1.	Class attendance	Dehydration	Read over test before starting
2.		Anxiety	
3.			
4.			
5.			
6.			
7.			
8.			
9.			
10.			

## Pay It Forward

*Random acts of kindness really do make you feel happier and in control.*

"Last year, Stanford University psychologist Sonja Lyubomirsky decided to put the kindness-fulfillment connection to the test. She asked students to carry out five weekly "random acts of kindness" of their choice, anything from buying a Big Mac for a homeless person to helping a younger sibling with schoolwork.

Her results indicate the Scrooge effect is no myth. The students reported higher levels of happiness than a control group, with students who performed all five kind acts in one day reaping the biggest rewards by the end of the six-week study period. Previous studies have found that altruistic people tend to be happy, but Lyubomirsky's was the first to establish that good deeds are actually the direct cause of an increase in well-being.

Why is being generous such a mood-booster? While hard-and-fast answers are elusive, the main reason is that it gives people a strong sense they're doing something that matters. "There are a lot of positive social consequences to being kind—other people appreciate you, they're grateful and they might reciprocate," Lyubomirsky says. All of these responses, she adds, are likely to make your happiness cup run over. In another study, she found that people who felt most strongly that others appreciated their efforts reported the biggest boost."

Try one of these small acts to start your own kindness campaign:

- Thank your favorite instructor.
- Send an encouraging e-mail to a friend.
- Offer to help a classmate study.
- Call or visit an older family member.
- Pay for the gas at the pump behind you.
- Give an extra-large tip.
- Smile and say hello.

Svoboda, Elizabeth, <http://psychologytoday.com/articles>

## Metacognition

- Thinking about thinking results in more efficient and effective encoding of information.
- Metacognitive awareness compensates for low ability and insufficient knowledge.
- Practice cognitive processes by asking... when? why? what? how?
- Be an active, rather than a passive learner.

In this presentation you have been provided motivational activities with various goals. Use the list below to refresh your memory and create a quick "how to" list.

To address:	Then use:
Sleepy students	Brain Gyms ©
Student introductions	
Class participation	
Importance of DOING Homework	
Asking for help	
Staying positive	
Excuses, excuses	
Learning styles	<a href="http://www.vark-learn.com">www.vark-learn.com</a>
Inappropriate Behavior	
Time management	Big Rocks
Fear	
Negative thoughts	
Focus on grades	
Test preparation	
Promoting kindness	
Helping students think about their thinking	