
The BBC agrees - doodling can help memory recall

Posted by Dave Court - 2009/02/28 12:19

Having been on Ann and Stellas training I know that they encourage attendees to doodle as a way of aiding concentration whilst learning. So I was interested to see this <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/7912671.stm> item on the BBC online news yesterday. :)

It is ironic when I recall that at school (ok, before anyone says anything it was many many moons ago!) I used to get rapped on the knuckles (or worse) for doodling and "not paying attention"! :ohmy:

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Re:The BBC agrees - doodling can help memory recall

Posted by vanessarandle - 2009/03/01 12:30

As someone who 'doodles' in a professional capacity I found this article particularly interesting. I've found that some people feel the need for a 'convincer' to give themselves permission to draw as doodling, or drawing, particularly in a business context is not always seen as having value. So, any snippets of data or research that supports the benefits of working in a more visual way is always welcomed by me. Thanks for posting this Dave.

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Re:The BBC agrees - doodling can help memory recall

Posted by stella - 2009/03/03 14:12

Hi

I found this article really useful and it then led me on to another on the Beeb website about a short nap improving memory too. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/health/7254555.stm>

When we do our train the trainer workshop we run an active post lunch session on day 1 but on day 2 we encourage everyone to take a short 'day dream', which technically we call a visualisation, but it amounts to giving people permission to zone out, zizz, snooze or whatever they want. A number of people have reported increased alertness in the afternoon that follows and they almost all enjoy the opportunity to really relax. So next time I'll make sure it's 6 minutes long (get the stop watch out Ann!).

Regards,
Stella Collins

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Re:The BBC agrees - doodling can help memory recall

Posted by Dave Court - 2009/03/08 18:00

Thanks for your comments.

Vanessa - love your avatar! Looking at it reminds me of your fantastic session at a Brain Friendly Learning Group meeting last year.

Stella - thanks for the info about napping helping. Any advice about how to persuade the company that you work for that it's a good idea?

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Re:The BBC agrees - doodling can help memory recall

Posted by ann - 2009/03/08 18:12

Vanessa - glad Dave's link was useful and thanks for the plug Dave. As a change from Mind Maps, Stella & I are thinking of giving participants an A4 black & white 'journey' picture, at the start of their 3-day journey to becoming a Brain Friendly Trainer. The idea being that they could colour in or doodle along the way. Is this something we (and others of course!) could commission you to do? - Ann.

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Re:The BBC agrees - doodling can help memory recall

Posted by vanessarandle - 2009/03/27 09:10

Ann - I've designed and used a number of visual 'placemats' for events I've held. I agree, they're a great way to encourage people to engage with the idea that doodling and 'colouring in' is actually productive! I'd be delighted to talk with anyone who might be interested about designing a placemat, or something similar to support a piece of work.

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Re:The BBC agrees - doodling can help memory recall

Posted by hazelmills - 2009/04/16 11:05

I also saw this article and tried it during an IT session. Rather than doodling I gave them a mandala to colour in. Probably not a good choice!

The mandalas were quite detailed and I found the participants more interested in finding a different colour pen than the content of the course! One of them who had struggled to keep his concentration in the previous two sessions did say how much he enjoyed that one but wasn't sure he had actually learnt anything.

I'm going to try it again with simple outlines (eyes, trees, clouds) that are only half completed to encourage doodling and colouring.

Obviously this where subject matter placemats come into play. I'd be interested how Vanessa decides what to put on them.

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Re:The BBC agrees - doodling can help memory recall

Posted by vanessarandle - 2009/04/17 09:18

Hi Hazel - I'd certainly be using simple subject/session specific graphics on any placemat; you're absolutely spot on with that thought. I'd include some key words or short phrases that participants can shade in or embellish in whatever way takes their fancy. Whilst the conscious mind concentrates on shading in, the unconscious mind is making meaning of the words and how they relate to the session. I'd also make the placemats an integral part of the session from time to time by providing short bursts of intrapersonal time where participants are encouraged to review their own learning and do some thinking about how they will use it. To help with this, create some space on the placemat where participants are invited to write/draw/express their views, ideas or actions as well as shade in shapes and words. Perhaps invite participants to openly discuss their placemats at the end of the session as a visual and verbal way of evaluating the session. Display them around the room and invite people to 'walk the walls' and summarise what the session's been about from the placemats. I think I should stop now!! I hope this is helpful. It's great to hear you're trying out this way of working.

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Re:The BBC agrees - doodling can help memory recall

Posted by hazelmills - 2009/04/17 10:05

Hi Vanessa

Thanks for your reply. I'm pleased that my thought process is heading in the right direction!

As for colouring in words, I've explored Wordle which Stella refers to in another posting. This is a great tool for creating the words. file size too big to load

I had not thought on making the placemats a proactive part of the session which will be better in a situation where the computer keyboard takes up most of the desk space.

Thanks again.

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Re:The BBC agrees - doodling can help memory recall

Posted by stella - 2009/04/22 16:42

Hi Vanessa and Hazel,

I started to reply to this the other night and my system went down. NOW I'm pleased my response wasn't posted as Vanessa's is much more intelligent.

I've thought about using Wordles in a similar way to word searches so that people have to identify key words of what they've learnt. I think the wordles can be done in black and white so you could certainly use them as something for people to doodle on.

Happy doodling.

Stella

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Re:The BBC agrees - doodling can help memory recall

Posted by B1B*Stella - 2009/10/26 17:47

Hi all,

More info about why visual learning is so important.

An interesting talk on Ted.com about what's happening in the brain when we use visual images - this could be useful to you if you want to justify why you've asked someone to draw something, why you're suggesting your team drops 'death by bulletpoint', or if you'd like to get someone like Vanessa Randle to come and do some graphical facilitation.

http://www.ted.com/talks/lang/eng/tom_wujec_on_3_ways_the_brain_creates_meaning.html

go and have a look and listen!

regards,

Stella

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