

Memory

Your ability to remember is affected by things like *fatigue, stress and your ability to pay attention*. If you are having difficulty with focusing, it is not surprising that your memory isn't as good. Try to address these things first: get rest, find ways to reduce your stress and limit distractions.

It is effortful to memorize things, especially things to do in the future (prospective memory). Set yourself up for success and make things easier by relying on external tools and strategies:

- *Write it down.* Checklists, sticky notes and calendars are helpful to remind you of something later on. Don't try to hold it all in your head. Our brains work better with reminders and cues.
- *Alerts & reminders.* Use your smart phone to set alerts and reminders about upcoming events or appointments. Don't swipe them away until it's done.
- *A place for everything.* Things you need for a task should be kept together, and put back in the same place each time. i.e. keep things you need for going out for a walk together so you don't run around looking for it or forget, try to keep your phone in the same spot in each room.
- *Be prepared.* When attending appointments or meetings, have a list of talking points written out. Leave room to take notes and write down next steps. At the end of a conversation, summarize the key points for both yourself and the person you are speaking with.
- *Talking to yourself is encouraged!* For example, when locking the door at the end of the day, say out loud "I'm locking the door." This should help with remembering later on.
- *Routines.* Do things in the same way as much as you can so it becomes more automatic. When trying to remember to do something, link it with another task/activity that you already do. (like keeping pills next to your toothbrush)

