

MARCH | ISSUE NO.8

NEWSLETTER GO2GRAD TUTORS

TO ENHANCE | TO ENRICH | TO EMPOWER
AND DEVELOPING A SUPER MEMORY

Meet Katrina Wesencraft

How to
stay motivated
AND FOCUSED

The Secret To Learning
AND DEVELOPING A SUPER MEMORY

GET READY TO
LATEST 626 PROGRAM
A TAILORED
EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

TOP 5 SOCIAL MEDIA
INFLUENCERS TO FOLLOW
FOR ACADEMIC INSPIRATION
MISSION STATEMENT:
THE PERSONAL MOTTO THAT DEFINES
YOU AS A PERSON AND YOUR PURPOSE

Setting Up
Your
Internal
GPS



04

SETTING UP YOUR INTERNAL GPS FOR
SUCCESS

08

WHEN THE EAGLE REFUSES TO LAND:
MEET NASA AMES WRITER KATRINA
WESENCRAFT

11

HOW TO STOP PROCRASTINATING
AND REMAIN FOCUSED AT HOME

13

TOP FIVE SOCIAL MEDIA
INFLUENCERS TO FOLLOW FOR
ACADEMIC INSPIRATION

15

THE SECRET TO LEARNING AND A
SUPER MEMORY

CONTENTS



YOUTH ACTION NOW

Youth Action Now (YAN) is a group of diverse and dynamic young individuals taking action in our communities. They support young people's actions and collective leadership by creating opportunities for learning and skills building, connecting young people to build networks and boost confidence, linking young leaders to resources and expertise, and more. We wanted to give a big shout-out to them for supporting our Elevate program and believing in G2G's mission.



SETTING UP YOUR INTERNAL GPS FOR SUCCESS

WRITTEN BY AHMAD GALUTA

Imagine this: you're wandering in a new city and you're looking for location "X". So you pull out your smartphone, search for "X", and fortunately, your built-in GPS will guide you to your destination. What if you didn't have a GPS or a map? You might ask people around you, take a cab (and pay \$\$), or keep wandering around until you find your destination by luck. A GPS will always give you the most direct route of reaching "X". Without a GPS, any other way of reaching "X" is less effective or more costly. And if you're relying on luck, you may never reach "X".

What if location "X" represents your goals? How do you get there? Did you set up your internal GPS for guiding you to reach your goals?

What internal GPS do you have that will guide you to reaching your goals?

That is the purpose of a personal mission statement (PMS) and is one of the most powerful tools you can use to achieve your goals. Your PMS represents your internal GPS that is meant to guide you to your destination. Sometimes, we may get distracted by another location "Y" instead of our destined "X". Your PMS is meant to serve as a reminder to stay on track to meet your goals. Just like the GPS "re-routes" and sets you back on the right track.

Today, we will teach you: (1) how to write your PMS and (2) how to use it.



WRITING YOUR PMS

A PMS is a 1-2 sentence (max) personal motto that defines you as a person and your purpose. There is no right or wrong way of writing a PMS, but we present to you some guidelines for writing an effective one.

A good PMS should include elements of the following:

- Your competencies, skills, core strengths (what you like to do and what you're good at)
- Your personality traits and values (how you operate and what you want to create)
- Your goals, dreams, and passions (why you want to excel)

To write your own PMS, follow these 5 steps then have a look at the templates and examples we provided below.

1. Identify the value you want to create.

How do you want to contribute to the world? What's important to you? Pick a dream big enough to power your inner fusion reactor for life.

Check the list of values at the bottom of this step and develop your own shortlist of values that you believe identify who you are and what your priorities are. Narrow your list to five values, then identify the most important to you.

2. Choose who you want to create it for.

Who will you help? Yourself? Everyone? Children? Women? Pick recipients of your talents to sharpen your focus.

3. Point out the core skills you'll use to create it.

What's your superpower? Mine is explaining complex things clearly. Yours might be teaching, compassion, creating, or design.

4. Identify your goals

Spend some time thinking about your priorities in life and any other goals you have for yourself. This could include the short-term (a few months) and the long-term (5, 10, 20 years from now). Then, use the S.M.A.R.T goal framework to write your goals down. Check out our other blog about writing SMART goals for students for tips.

5. Cut the specifics. Save details for your goals list.

Want to run a restaurant? Go to the moon? Make a million dollars? Save specifics like that for your personal goals.

OK! Based on these five steps and a better understanding of yourself, begin writing your personal mission statement!



Have a look at these **templates** for inspiration:

- "To use [your core strengths and skills] to [create a certain value] for [someone, a group, or something I care about] with [XYZ details]."
- "To [what you want to achieve, do or become] so that [reasons why it is important]. I will do this by [specific behaviors or actions you can use to get there]."
- "I value (choose 1-3 values important to you) because [reasons why these values are important to you]. Accordingly, I will [what you can do to live by these values]."
- "To live each day with [choose one to three values or principles] so that [what living by these values will give you]. I will do this by [specific behaviors you will use to live by these values]."
- "To appreciate and enjoy [things you want to appreciate and enjoy more] by [what you can do to appreciate/enjoy these things]."
- "To treasure above all else [most important things to you] by [what you can do to live your priorities]."

Examples of PMSs from well-known figures and corporations

- "To be a teacher. And to be known for inspiring my students to be more than they thought they could be." — Oprah Winfrey
- "To have fun in [my] journey through life and learn from [my] mistakes." — Sir Richard Branson, founder of the Virgin Group
- "To use my gifts of intelligence, charisma, and serial optimism to cultivate the self-worth and net-worth of women around the world." — Amanda Steinberg, founder of DailyWorth
- "To inspire hope, and contribute to health and well-being by providing the best care to every patient through integrated clinical practice, education and research." — Mayo Clinic
- "Seeking to put God's love into action, Habitat for Humanity brings people together to build homes, communities, and hope." — Habitat for Humanity



USING YOUR PMS

Once you write your PMS, start using it! **The key is to make sure you see it often.** So frame it and put a copy in your office, have it on your phone, or have a sticky note on your laptop desktop. You want to surround yourself with your own positive attitude.

Not only should you live according to your PMS, but it's also important others know about it as well. You want people to know you're going to live up to what you wrote, so **spread the news!** Accountability from those closest to you will help you stick by your PMS.

SUMMARY:

Your PMS is your internal GPS that will help you to direct your behavior and take specific actions for achieving your goals. It represents a fundamental aspect of your purpose and provides clarity on how to direct your life. Investing a little time writing your PMS paves the way for greater focus, motivation, and ultimately, success.

How to write a **personal mission statement**:

- Review personal mission statement examples for inspiration.
- Identify the **value** you'll create and **who** (yourself/others) you'll create it for.
- Center your mission around your **core strengths**.
- Keep your statement **short** and **focused**.

Don't expect to get it perfect from the start. Write whatever comes to your mind in 10 minutes and move on. You can (and should) revisit your PMS later to draft a better one.



WHEN THE EAGLE REFUSES TO LAND:

MEET NASA AMES WRITER KATRINA WESENCRAFT



BY ROZY ABO MAZID

After a 300-million-mile journey to Mars, NASA's latest Rover, Perseverance, sent out a tweet saying "Perseverance will get you anywhere." True to this statement, the act of persevering can get you anywhere as long as you're willing to try, and backing this statement up is Katrina Wesencraft, a science writer and a NASA Ames intern. I was very excited to sit down with Katrina to discuss her academic journey and how she scored her dream internship with NASA.

Before diving into all things space, I asked Katrina to **tell me a little bit about herself and what she does for a living,**

"I'm a Ph.D. student studying at the University of Strathclyde in Glasgow, Scotland. My doctoral degree focuses on Optical Medical Imaging with Healthcare Innovation and Entrepreneurship. I've been living in Glasgow for 10 years now but I'm not from here, I'm from a very small city in Scotland.

As to what I do, Ph.D. funding in the UK is kind of interesting as you have to go through this thing called a center of doctoral training or a doctoral training program. So you either get a master's degree included or some kind of extra training. I did extra training in business at the University of Edinburgh Business School and I learned about accounting and how to start your own business. Part of my program was a 3-month internship where we get to go - or would have got to go somewhere if it hadn't been for the pandemic - and just spend three months doing whatever it is we want to do. It didn't have to be related to our Ph.D. I want to be a writer in the scientific field, and I managed to score an internship with NASA. I'm currently completing my last month with them. After I finish this internship, I will have to go back to my lab and finish off what's left of my Ph.D. "

After Katrina and I discussed the many complications that come with getting Ph.D. funding in the UK, I asked her **why she chose to intern at NASA specifically,**

"LONG STORY SHORT, I FOUND THAT IF YOU DON'T GIVE UP EASILY AND CONTINUE TRYING TO FIGHT FOR WHAT YOU WANT, EVENTUALLY, YOU'LL GET IT"

"I mean who wouldn't want to work for NASA, it's NASA after all! I still can't believe that this is real and that I'm actually working for them! So I wanted to do a science writing or journalism internship because I worked at theGIST, Glasgow's student-run science magazine, for almost five years, and by the time I started my Ph.D. I was the editor-in-chief of the magazine. I fell in love with writing, so I wanted to do something around that. When the time came to look for an internship, I applied to so many places and I didn't get all of them, but that didn't matter because a few weeks later NASA called saying that they thought I was the perfect fit for their program! The downside was I wasn't a U.S. citizen and they told me that I would have to figure out a way to be able to work for them on my own. So, after that, I contacted a lot of people, and I got passed down from one person to another and finally landed on someone from the European Space Agency who connected me with a Science Writer at NASA Ames in Silicon Valley who eventually was able to guide me through the whole process of getting to work for them. Long story short, I found that if you don't give up easily and continue trying to fight for what you want, eventually, people will see how badly you want it and will end up helping you."

I couldn't agree more with Katrina's message and I applaud her for taking matters into her own hands. Speaking of taking matters into your own hands, the theme of the month was turning words into actions and achieve goals and I asked Katrina **if she considered working for NASA to be one of the goals she set out to achieve,**

"Honestly, it was something that I never imagined I could do! The way it happened was also insane and I wasn't looking for it, someone just happened to share with me a post about a NASA Summer internship program and it didn't say anything about being a U.S. citizen, so I went for it. In my mind, I thought what's the worst that can happen. When the issue with my nationality came up, I really just ignored the voice in the back of my head that said don't annoy people by reaching out. What helped was that when I got the call, they informed me that I was a great candidate and to me, that was worth reaching out and never giving up until I got what I wanted."



After hearing how Katrina ended up getting her internship, I do believe that life has a funny way of working things out! Her story is inspiring, and I asked her to **share what she learned from it?**

"I think it's really important to keep in mind that the worst thing a person can say is no, that's the worst that can happen and you can survive that. I also learned that persistence is key and that perseverance will get you a long way!"

Being that Katrina is an intern and a Ph.D. student, I asked her **what she uses to keep track of her busy schedule and personal goals,**

"I think what works best for me is the app called Trello which is a project management app where you can make digital post-it notes, checklists, and different kinds of things. I use that for tracking when I'm working on a project, my Ph.D. research, or writing up an article. I also really need a planner because I need to see what my whole month looks like most of the time."

To wrap up our session, I thought someone who has been through such an incredible journey like Katrina would **have a few wise words to share with our readers,**

"The most valuable lesson I can share with you is to not overthink the whole "networking" part of your academic and personal career. Focus on putting yourself out there. Just being an active member of your community will do just fine. I got a lot of opportunities by putting myself out there and engaging with my professors and people in my field, and I don't see it as networking but more like being present and showing up. Be brave as well and always hope for the best!"

Katrina will continue to document her academic journey on her Instagram account, **@Kat.Writes.Science**. I want to thank Katrina for being such a loving and energetic interviewee as well as for her time as I was thoroughly inspired by her journey. I wish her all the best in her future endeavors and can't wait to see what she overcomes next!





HOW TO STOP PROCRASTINATING AND REMAIN FOCUSED AT HOME

BY AHMAD GALUTA

SET YOUR INTENTION AND GOALS

If you find yourself unmotivated to pay attention in class, solve homework, or study for a test, it may help to contemplate the reasons why you're doing those in the first place. Sure, you can say that "I have to go to school" or "I have to take this class", but what are their outcomes? You can boost your motivation simply by reminding yourself about the benefits of what you're doing.

This is why writing down your goals and making them visible is so important. It reminds us of why we're willing to face challenges and do things that we don't necessarily enjoy in the moment. It allows us to see past our challenges and onto our desired outcomes!

Our recommendation:

- Write your goals (e.g. using the S.M.A.R.T. framework) and plaster them everywhere you can; in your room, on your phone, or on your laptop.
- Before you get started on any task, set your intention by remembering your goals.
- Instead of saying "I have to go to school", "I have to take this class", or any other iteration, try saying "I get to go to school" or "I get to take this class".

MAKE A PLAN AND BE STRATEGIC ABOUT IT

Writing down your commitments can give you a greater sense of clarity and focus since you know exactly what you need to work on to achieve your goals. It also reduces stress tremendously by relieving the mental load of having to remember all your commitments.

Our recommendation:

- Try setting up a weekly schedule that includes all your commitments for that week. Alternatively, set up a daily schedule and to-do list, although this is less effective than a weekly schedule.
- Be strategic about when you plan certain tasks. For instance, if you find reading your psychology notes to be tiring, then don't plan to read psychology during the evening. Rather, plan to face it earlier during the day when you are more alert.

SET THE MOOD FOR PRODUCTIVITY

One of the greatest influences on our behavior and mental ability is our environment. So if you'd like to improve your focus and lessen procrastination, modify your surroundings to influence you in a way that benefits you the most. When it comes to maximizing productivity, you'll want to create an environment that minimizes distraction while promoting focus and a sense of urgency.

Our recommendation:

- Create or find a space with minimal distraction. If you get distracted by your phone, set it on silent or airplane mode and put it away. If you have trouble doing that, ask a family member to hold you accountable. Similarly, get rid of any sources of distraction in your designated study space.
- Instill some sense of urgency. Set a designated time for working on your task and set a timer! We act most urgently when we're faced with deadlines so imposing one on yourself is a simple brain hack that can get you in the most productive state.
- It's best that you're not super comfortable. Sit in a chair and sit upright. If you're lying down, rest assured (pun intended) that your mind will be dozing off in no time.

TAKE BREAKS & REWARD YOURSELF

While setting intentions and goals is useful for long-term motivation, it also helps to feel rewarded sooner rather than later. This is a natural feature of your brain so cater to it!

Our recommendation:

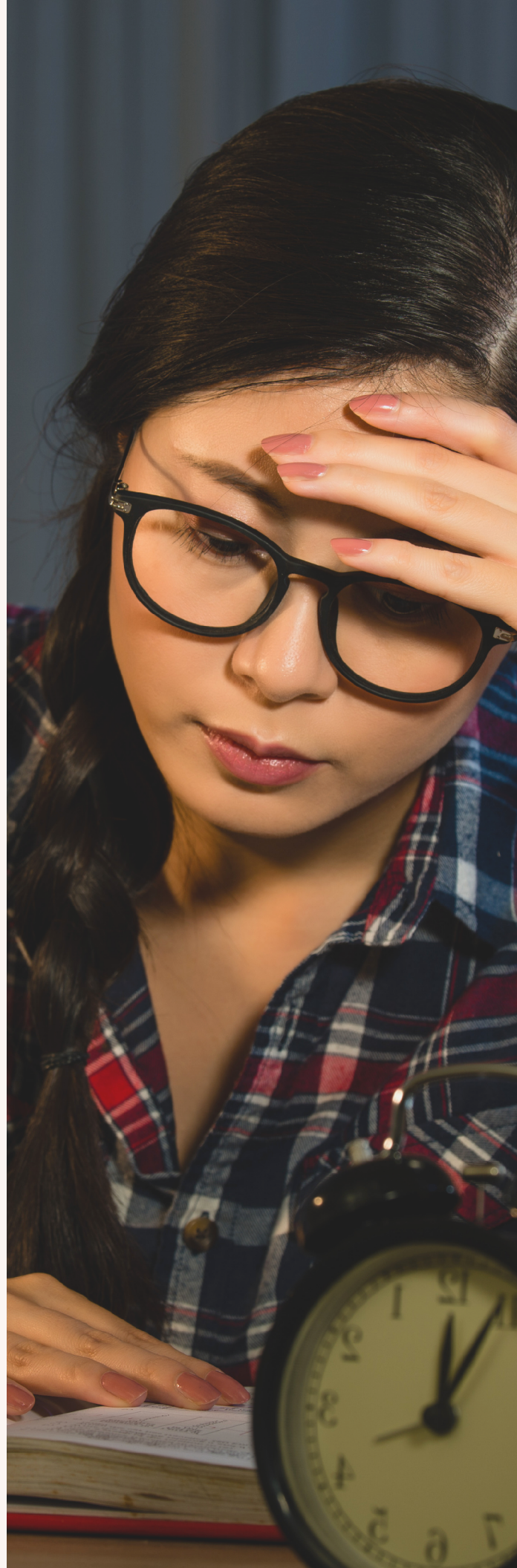
- Take a short break every 30-60 minutes to stretch, drink some water, play with your dog, etc. This will help to revitalize your mind and refuel your attention span.
- You can also reward yourself during your breaks or when you're finished so that you have something to look forward to!

TAKE CARE OF YOUR BRAIN

Motivation and focus are both features of your brain. So if you'd like to boost your motivation and focus, it's crucial that you take proper care of your brain. We discuss proper brain care in our [three-part blog series](#) "Hacking Your Brain for Student Wellness & Well-being", which is partly described below.

Our recommendation:

- Oxygenize your brain! During your breaks, take some time to move around and get the blood flowing through your body and brain. The more you sit still, the less oxygen your brain receives and the less focused and motivated you will be.
- Sleep well and enough. It's crucial that you sleep enough every night to keep your brain functioning at its best. After all, you spend one-third of your life sleeping so it must be important!
- Hydrate and feed your brain. Your brain is operating 24/7 and uses up to 20% of your body's sugar to make energy. That's why your brain loves whole-grain and (healthy) fatty food because they provide long-lasting energy to keep the brain going!



TOP 5 SOCIAL MEDIA INFLUENCERS TO FOLLOW FOR ACADEMIC INSPIRATION



BY ROZY ABO MAZID

Being a visual person means that you try to surround yourself with things that move you and remind you of the reason you're doing what you're doing. Luckily for us, we live in the age of digital documentation. The great thing about digital documentation is that it has the power to move not only the creator but the followers as well. One person can click on an Instagram story and see how another person is cleaning out their closet, and suddenly they're inspired to do the same. That's the power behind digital documentation, just by seeing someone do something you are suddenly motivated to try it yourself. People want to be moved, they want to feel like they are not the only person who has to do a certain task, and then they rely on videos or Instagram posts to be the push they need to finally do it. The process of setting and achieving goals is also documented on social media by many influencers and it can inspire many students to keep working on their goals and avoid procrastination. To help those who rely on visual aid to get motivated and inspired to achieve their goals, we have listed below our top five social media influencers that we follow for motivation and inspiration.

@CUPSANDTHOUGHTS

on Instagram, also known as Perth from Australia, is an environmental engineering student completing her undergraduate degree. Perth's Instagram documents her workspace and daily academic accomplishments. She focuses on aesthetics and productivity. If you are someone who gravitates towards aesthetically pleasing Instagram accounts, then we highly recommend Perth's.



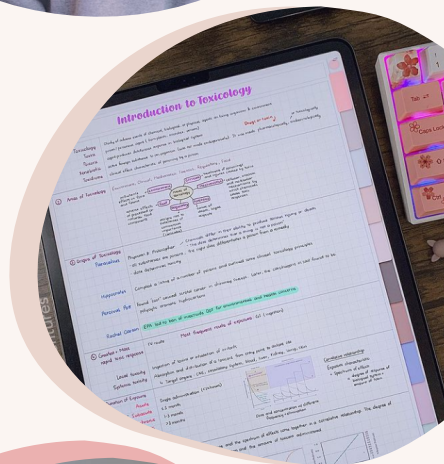
@KAYLNNICHOLSON

on Youtube is a social media influencer, podcaster, and author. Kayln lives in Toronto and she is actually not a student. However, Kayln specializes in motivation, and her endless routine videos on YouTube target all viewers regardless of their current state. Kayln has several videos on her channel that students can benefit from such as how to budget, how to set monthly and weekly plans, how to get out of a rut, how to handle a bad day, etc. She even has a YouTube series called Adulting 101 that may come in handy for the fresh undergraduates who are trying to navigate this new territory.



@TRANGSADVENTURES

on Instagram and YouTube is also known as Trang Bui. Trang is a third-year undergraduate student studying pharmacy. Trang is known for her digital note-taking on Instagram and her "day in the life" videos on YouTube. If you are a medical student then you might relate to her journey and her posts as they cater more to the medical fields. Her Instagram is more vibrant than the influencers listed above, and if that is your preference then you will definitely want to check out her account.



@ALIABDAAL

on YouTube and Instagram is a graduate student at Cambridge University studying medicine and he is also working as a junior doctor in the UK's National Health Service (NHS). Ali's videos consist of a few daily vlogs, study tips and tricks, and tech reviews. He also runs a small business called 6med, that helps students apply to medical school.



@CAITLINMARIEDASILVA

on Instagram is also known as Caitlin from Canada. Caitlin is a graduate student completing her degree at the University of Toronto. Her Instagram account motivates the viewers to pull out a bullet journal and start jotting down a hefty to-do list. She is pretty much a pro in bullet journaling and her Instagram account reflects the elements of a theme known as light academia.



THE SECRET TO LEARNING AND A SUPER MEMORY

BY AHMAD GALUTA

Have you ever studied hard the night before a test only to forget what you learned right after? Do you forget stuff that you learned in your previous years? Do you find yourself cramming to study for tests or meet deadlines?

If your answer to either of those was yes, then you're amongst the masses. But this is not a good sign. At a fundamental level, it means you are not learning, and information is only being stored in your short-term memory. As a student, it's literally your job to learn so we should always strive to learn better.

Today, we are going to tell you about the **TWO FUNDAMENTAL VALUES** for developing a super brain and how to implement these values into your life. Following this guide, you might notice the following benefits:

- Improved learning including long-term memory
- No more late-night/last-minute studying for tests
- Getting top grades

- Improved understanding of class material
- Improved confidence and motivation
- Remembering everything you learned during a test
- Remembering everything you learned years after!
- Developing strong study skills that you carry into university.

They do not teach you this in school and they will not teach you this elsewhere. This is a one-of-a-kind strategy that was developed and tested for over 10 years by a neuroscientist who knows a thing or two about the brain. Implementing this strategy will differentiate you from the average and allow you to reach your fullest potential in school.

So here it is.....

The key to developing a super brain and achieving "deep learning" is the same for developing your muscles: **consistency** and **challenge**.

"But what do you mean exactly by consistency?" - It means you have to study regularly. Period.





Warning: studying only before tests does NOT work!! Imagine you're going on a beach vacation next week, so you decide to take better care of your diet and exercise every day for the whole week to get in shape. You can already tell this won't work. You might see a slight improvement in your weight or fitness, but you'll return back to your normal physique, probably before the vacation ends.

It's the same when preparing for tests and improving your knowledge. It can NOT be a "1-week give-it-my-all" situation. It has to be a lifestyle. You have to study regularly, just like an athlete practices on a weekly or daily basis. Only then, will your brain store information at a fundamental level.

"And what do you mean by challenging my brain?" - it means to learn something new!

Which you're already doing! But it helps to recognize that learning something new is equivalent to a heavy-weight lifter setting a new record. Every time you learn something new, you challenge your brain and you "set a new record"! If you feel that some of your classes are challenging, rest assured that is normal. It means you're on the path to becoming stronger.

How to apply consistency and challenge in your life
If you set up a weekly schedule, then you've already done 80% of the work so far! In our [Elevate Program](#), we teach you how to set your weekly schedule which is important before moving onto the first step below.

Step 1: Include "studying" as a priority.
For students enrolled in our [Elevate Program](#), you will have access to our custom "Goal Planner" and "Weekly Planner" where you can write your priorities and tasks.

Step 2: In your weekly schedule, dedicate time **daily** to review what you learned in class that same day.

This does not have to be exhaustive. 15-30 minutes per class should be enough. Something as simple as reading over your class notes, textbook, PowerPoint slides is enough. If you have homework assigned to you, do that instead. The point here is to get your brain to recognize that this information is important and will be used again in the future. Otherwise, your brain will interpret the information as unimportant and you will soon forget most of what you learned that day.

For students enrolled in our [Elevate Program](#), you would have been taught how to set your weekly schedule.



Step 3: Schedule time weekly to review the past week's worth of class material.

This step is crucial because every day of the week, you are learning something new. This means you'll remember less of what you've learned on Monday than you did on Friday. The weekend is a perfect time to catch up and make sure that you cement everything you've learned that week. If you have a test in the next (or upcoming weeks), consider this as preparation for it.

Step 4: Schedule time monthly to review the past month's worth of class material.

This serves the same purpose as studying each weekend, but it helps to remember everything you've learned that month. You will usually be tested on a monthly basis so let this be the opportunity you take to review weeks worth of material.

Do not be intimidated! If you followed steps 2 and 3, then step 4 becomes infinitely easier simply because you've already "challenged" your brain with the same information.

Summary:

The key to mastering your education and developing a super brain lies within consistency and challenge. We've taught you our secret strategy for how you can implement studying into your schedule and make it a lifestyle. Basically, if you review the same concept from class 3 times (by following steps 2-4), you will walk into your exam remembering everything you learned. You will also remember what you've learned the year after and onwards. This is the difference between an "A+ student" and everyone else.

Now it's your turn!

Set up your weekly schedule and incorporate some time daily, weekly, and monthly to study for your classes.

If you'd like further instruction on how to apply this method, [get in touch with us](#), or check out our [Elevate Program](#). We provide additional instruction and resources including live one-to-one guidance with an academic expert.

A background image showing a group of diverse students in a classroom. In the foreground, a young man with dark hair, wearing a blue hoodie, is smiling and looking towards the right. Behind him, a young woman with long blonde hair is also smiling. In the background, another young man with dark hair is looking down. The overall atmosphere is bright and positive.

**A SPECIAL THANKS
TO OUR AMAZING
WRITERS**

Ahmad Galuta

Rozy Abo Mazid

**FOLLOW US AS WE
TAKE THE
EDUCATIONAL
WORLD BY STORM**



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