

Module 5 Educational Theory and Practise

Unit 5.5 Personal Development

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Introduction

About this unit

Welcome to Unit 5.5 on Personal Development.

This unit introduces the concept of personal development in technical and vocational learning. It seeks to help the teacher trainee to reflect upon his or her own self and behaviours and to understand him or herself. It identifies the factors that contribute to or inhibit personal development, strategies for personal development, and the ways that a teacher can influence self-development of students.

The discussions on these factors, strategies and ways are illustrated by examples and case studies. They are also accompanied by self-assessment exercises to help you assess your progress.

How to use this book

As you can see from the table of contents, the learning points in this book have been organised into sections and subsections. Each section contains the objective(s) of the section, learning points, discussions, exercises or activities and feedback on activities.

The activities included in this book will not play a part in your assessment for this unit. Rather, they are designed to help you in self-assessment of your progress.

Go through the sections. Follow the instructions carefully and do the activities.

Your tutor will also specify the assignment included in this book and explain what you will have to do.

The assignment aims to assess your achievement of the learning outcomes. There is only one major assignment for Unit 5.5, so, **this is the task that determines your competence in this unit.**

How you will be assessed

For your assessment, you will be required to present ONE major assignment. You will conduct and present a self-study. You are also expected to complete the activities and exercises in each section of the Unit. As you complete the exercises, keep a personal portfolio on your progress, as this will provide the information for your final assessment. You may need to revise your entries from time to time. By the end of the unit, your mission statement may have changed as a result of what you have learnt about yourself.

Like many learners, you may scan through this Unit by looking at the assignments first. Your tutor will assist you to understand the requirements and marking criteria for the major assignment. Feel free to ask your tutor for any clarifications that you need.

Finding your way

As you work through the text you'll see symbols in the left-hand margin of some pages. These “icons” guide you through the content.



Read



Important- take note!



Activity



Assessment task



Competency

The curricula of this training program for Technical and Vocational teachers is competency based. The competency for this unit has been expressed in terms of a number of learning outcomes and assessment criteria.

The learning outcomes show what you are expected to achieve on completion of the unit. And the assessment criteria specify what you should be able to do to demonstrate that you have gained necessary knowledge, skills and attitudes to achieve the learning outcomes.

Learning outcomes

After going through this Unit and completing all suggested activities, you will be able to:

- identify factors that contribute to or inhibit personal development
- demonstrate behaviours reflecting positive self concept
- utilise strategies for coping with life and enhancing self development
- utilise strategies for building and maintaining a healthy life style
- recognise the role educators may have in influencing their trainees' personal development
- conduct self-evaluation and make changes or adjustment in the light of new insights

Assessment criteria

- Conduct a self-study to evaluate personal strengths and weaknesses and devise strategies for improvement
- Explain factors that contribute to personal development
- Describe other factors that inhibit self development
- Summarise strategies that can produce changes in one's self-concept or self esteem.
- Identify stressors in your life. Explain how you will manage these stressors.
- Explain ways in which teachers can influence the personal development of students.

Section 1



Factors of Personal Development

This section of the Unit 5.5 provides an overview of personal development. On completion of section you will be able to:

- describe what personal development is
- distinguish between personal development, professional development and career development
- do self analysis in order to identify personal strengths and weaknesses
- identify areas in your life that you may wish to change or adjust
- summarise factors than can produce changes in self-concept

1.1 What is personal development?

Development is an intensely personal activity. However, no development can take place in isolation. There are myriad factors that influence personal development.

On one hand, there are personal factors, such as physical age, psychological growth, personal skills and habits influencing self development. On the other hand, there are also social, cultural and situational influences that affect personal development.

But what do we understand by "personal development"?

Like the variety of influences on personal development, the concept of development can also be interpreted in a number of ways and at various levels.

The *concept* of development is most often equated with change. Some authors view this change as an orderly progression, while others find the change to be minimally 'pre-programmed'.

Again, the *goal* of personal development is also controversial. Educationists like Maslow (1970) and Loevinger (1976) think that the goal of personal development is toward 'self-actualisation' or toward "a fully integrated sense of ego".

Others, like Riegel (1976) and Tennant (1988) view development as more dialectic in nature. They think development does not have any specific end other than continued growth and change in response to the ever-changing dimensions of our lives.

The psychological tradition of personal development encompasses a number of diverse concepts, such as ego development, general personality development, moral development, and spiritual development. The common theme of these diverse concepts focuses on the “individual's internal process of development”, which is tied to chronological time.

But how we move on this path of development and what the end of personal development is are open to question. Some authors, like Maslow (1970) and Kohlberg (1973), think adults are fully developed when they become “highly autonomous” human beings, people who are able to respond to life as distinct human entities. But others believe that we must rely not only on ourselves, but also on others in order to function effectively.

That means it is difficult to measure personal development, since it is difficult to define the concept. However, for the purpose of this unit, we can develop a working definition of personal development by synthesising different views. We can say that personal development is an ongoing process of being capable of taking responsibility of self and others, a process in which individuals progress through continuous development of ego, growth of emotion and faith, development of general personality and intellectual faculty, and attainment of social skills and wisdom tied with physical aging and life pattern.



Activity

How would you define Personal Development? Discuss your definition with your tutor



1.2 Personal development, professional development and career development

As an educator in the field of technical and vocational education, your professional, as well as career, development is closely related with your personal development.

In fact, your personal development encourages you to find a career suitable for you to grow professionally and for you to reach your full potential.

But your career also influences your professional development and that ultimately has an effect on your personal development.

Like personal development, careers and professionalism also develop in a predictable, common sequence of events. Researchers have found that at various stages of personal development, people face common issues and pressures, which they attempt to resolve in their lives. These stages affect, and are affected by, the career and professional activities and choices the individual has made.

Your career is an active part of your life and it influences your learning, growth of personality and professionalism. Career and professional development are also an ongoing process by which individual's progress through a series of stages, each of which is characterised by a unique set of issues, themes, and tasks.

That means your personal development and learning will enhance your professional and career development and your professional and career development will facilitate your personal development, as both are ongoing processes.

1.3 Understanding Self

Personal development is an ongoing inward progression in which everyone is involved. It occurs as a result of continuous experiences from childhood until death. For many people, success starts with a gradual process of self discovery accompanied by personal growth leading to self-actualisation. Self-discovery can be described as an exploration and understanding of our values, needs, interest, personal characteristics, self-perception, motivations, limitations and all the factors that define the unique self. It is a positive, non-judgmental analysis of oneself, which opens up understanding, self-awareness, creativity, and the realization of one's full potential. Self-discovery is indeed the greatest catalyst for success.

Discover Yourself – Factors that influence perception of self

The Self

A human infant is not born with a self, but rather a self emerges as a result of social interactions. The self can be regarded as the sum total of all those characteristics or attributes that an individual can legitimately call his/her own. These characteristics identify one individual from another. This character summary includes a personal system of ideas, feelings, values and commitments.

Self Concept

How do our beliefs about ourselves influence our thoughts and actions? How accurately do we know ourselves? Who am I? As a unique and complex beings creature you have many ways to complete the sentence “I am...”

Your answers may have included the following components:

- Interpersonal attributes – for example: I am a student
- Physical aspects - for example: I am attractive
- Internalised beliefs- for example: I’m opposed to abortion
- Self-awareness – for example: I am a good person
- Social differentiation – for example: I’m from a poor family
- Self determination: for example; I am a Christian
- Interest and activities – for example: I enjoy going to plays
- Ascribed characteristics- for example: I am a man

Taken together, your answers define your self-concept. The self - concept refers to an individual’s belief about him or herself. It is the sum total of a person’s thoughts and feelings that defines the self as an object (Franzoi, 1996). As such, it consists of those attributes perceived as being characteristic of oneself, the social relationships, values and beliefs, consciously accepted as one’s own, and the understanding of one’s past and present relationship with the environment.

Self Esteem

An individual’s self esteem expresses how that individual feels about him or herself. It is a person’s evaluation of his or her self-concept. Developmental psychologists believe that a sense of emotional well-being or distress, largely determined by early childhood experiences, forms the basis for the way adults later evaluate themselves.

People with high self-esteem tend to be optimistic, set high goals for themselves, and cope successfully with negative life events, whereas those with low self-esteem tend to be pessimistic and are underachievers who do not handle adversity very well.

Read the following poem and reflect on the questions that follow.

WHEN I WAS JUST A LITTLE GIRL

(Carlson, 1988)

*When I was just a little girl,
I wasn't allowed to be
the little girl I really was
who felt and thought like me*

*The hurt and scare remained inside;
I dared not let them out.
I heard them say so many things
and I began to doubt.*

*To know in my heart that they were wrong
To silence me, ignore me,
And continue to do those terrible things
that were so scary to me.*

*They called it love and also their right
"for God" -----a thing to share,
with a man of cloth in a long black robe
And still I remain in their care.*

*I began to think I must be mad
To be treated this way –but then—
They say it was love and I waited and waited
And it happened all over again.*

*They distorted my views and my own self-worth
With their lies and their lives and their acts; I felt very confused
And afraid to be me
And accepted their reasons as facts.*

*As I grew up, things stayed the same
And I searched for some love and care,
But didn't know how and began to give out
Much more than I should ever have dared.*

*I was hurt once again by a man that I knew
That I should have been able to trust;
I was blamed, sent away to the place that I feared
And dealt with in ways that weren't just.
I continued to search and need love from someone
And be held in a way that was safe,
But I gave and I gave without getting much back
Till I felt there was no way to escape.*

*Again came the hurt, but much fiercer this time
When I married a man that was ill
Who beat me and forced me to do many things
Completely against my will.
I wanted to die, but he kept me alive
To be used, hurt, discarded and shamed.
I suffered, I cried, I fought him, gave in –
Still I was the one that was blamed.*

*Again I thought that this was what love was about,
That the giver I always must be,
But it hurt me so much I don't easily trust;
I want to be loved for just me.*

*By then the need to be held was so strong
That I didn't care who it might be,
I gave when they wanted, whatever they needed,*

*There were times I was scared and confused and sad,
Yet the need to be loved, held and caressed
Continued in me till I thought I would die,
I really was doing my best.*

*Now I know I was wrong then and am glad I am safe,
That these things won't happen again.
I am grown now and know that I'm much better now
Than ever I've been.*

*I'm beginning to trust and have faith in myself,
To share secrets I've had for so long,
And I'm doing it with the friends I have made
Who have made me feel I belong.*

*The wounds are so deep and the hurt so real
That it scares me sometimes to think back
But I've found that I am strong and able to go
And remember those things from my past.*

*It just wasn't fair ---those things in my past---
Yet life needn't be like that, I guess,
So I continued to look back and share where I've been
In a way that I feel is best
Because
When I was just a little girl,
I wasn't allowed to be
The little girl I really was
Who felt and thought like me.*

I feel so sad for the little girl, now a grown woman, who is processing the pain she experienced as a child.

What are your feelings as you read the poem? Can you identify with her struggle to be herself? What would you write to the title “When I was a little Child?”



Self-Esteem Questionnaire

Complete the following Questionnaire

Following is a self-esteem scale. Read each item below and then indicate how well each statement describes you using the following response scale:

0 = extremely uncharacteristic (not at all like me)

1 = uncharacteristic (somewhat unlike me)

2 = neither characteristic or uncharacteristic

3 = characteristic (somewhat like me)

4 = extremely characteristic (very much like me)

- ____ 1. Overall, I am satisfied with my self.
- ____ 2. At times I think I am no good at all. *
- ____ 3. I feel that I have a number of good qualities.
- ____ 4. I am able to do things as well as well as most other people
- ____ 5. I feel I do not have much to be proud of. *
- ____ 6. I certainly feel useless at times. *
- ____ 7. I feel that I am a person of worth, at least on an equal plan with others.
- ____ 8. I wish I could have more respect for myself. *
- ____ 9. All in all, I am inclined to feel that I am a failure. *
- ____ 10. I take a positive attitude towards myself.

Directions for Scoring

Half of the self-esteem items are reversed-scored; that is, for these items a lower rating actually indicates a higher level of self-esteem. Before summing all ten items to find out your self-esteem score, recode those with asterisks (*) so that 0=4, 1=3, 2=2, 3=1, and 4=0. Your total self-esteem score can range from 0 to 40, with a higher score indicating a higher level of self-esteem. Scores greater than 20 indicate generally positive attitudes towards the self, while those below 20 indicates generally negative self-attitudes.

[From R. Rosenberg, *Conceiving the Self*, 1979]

Self-esteem has a strong impact on every part of our lives. We do better in our work, studies, and personal relationships when we have high self-esteem. And we are more likely to go after and obtain what we want out of life when we have a strong sense of ourselves and our own worth.

There's a further bonus to evaluating yourself highly. When we have self-esteem, others are likely to think well of us also. Although self-esteem has its beginning early in our lives, we don't seem to be born with it.

How to improve your Self-Esteem

- Identify what will make you feel better about yourself.
- Consider ways you could make those things happen.
- Identify something you like about yourself each day.
- Associate with people who are supportive and caring to you.
- Change your pattern of relating to people who constantly undermine you. Let them know that you won't tolerate that negativism anymore.
- Tell people directly what you want and what you need, rather than hoping they'll pick up non-verbal signals.
- Give yourself a compliment each day. Try to have a few enjoyable moments for yourself each day.

Acknowledge the problems low self-esteem produces – guilt, over-sensitivity to criticism, embarrassment, shyness, clowning, arrogance, blaming others, feeling blamed, self-negation, insincerity, addictions, marriage and family problems.

Believe that loving yourself is acceptable: self love is not selfishness; self worth is not self worship; self affirmation is not self conceit; self awareness is not self absorption; humility is not humiliation; putting off one's sinful self is not putting down oneself; self denial is not self degradation; unworthiness is not worthlessness.

Recognise how valuable you are.

- Validate your self – be your own best.
- Make realistic demands on your self.
- Give yourself to the service of others.

If none of these works, consider talking to a professional counsellor. Asking for help is strength, not a weakness.

Your Strengths and Weaknesses

Follow the advice of Socrates: know thyself; know your strengths and weaknesses.

Your strengths and weak points define you as an individual. No one is perfect and no one is good at everything. You will need to keep the whole picture in mind as you search for a sense of self.

People tend to deal with their weak points in two ways:

- They ignore them
- They dwell them causing a poor self-image

Neither is wise. The second is much more prevalent than the first and usually shows up as negative self-talk. If you have ever been down on yourself, focusing on everything you think is wrong in your life you know how that dulls your desire to try. Don't be your worst critic; support your self with positive self-talk. Such as: "I have a far way to go but I am getting there", "I can learn a lot from this mistake and it will improve next time" Talk yourself up –it will allow you to take risks that will help you to grow. You can even write your positive statements on post-it notes and put them where you will see them.

Rather than focusing on your weak points just acknowledge they exist and work to improve what you can. Use your weaknesses to your advantage.



Summary

- Personal development is an ongoing process of being capable of taking responsibility of self and others, in which individuals progress through continuous development of ego, growth of emotion and faith, development of general personality and intellectual faculty, and attainment of social skills and wisdom tied with physical aging and life pattern.
- Personal development, professional development and career development are interrelated. Each one influencing the others.
- Self emerges as a result of social interactions. We are not born with it. Each person's self-concept is acquired through interaction with others. Self-concept is not a fixed entity. Self-concept changes with age and in response to situational changes
- The evaluation of oneself is known as self-esteem. In general, high self esteem is preferable to low self esteem, and self esteem can increase in response to positive experiences and to therapy
- Certain personal and social skill factors can contribute to or inhibit one's self-development.
- Life involves a series of decisions. The more you know about your self, the more quickly and easily you can make informed choices, which can enhance your personal growth and development.



Activity 1

Determine your abilities

Don't say that you have no abilities because if you didn't, you would not be in this programme. Talk to people who know you well if you feel that you are not a good judge of yourself. Abilities can be anything from writing and computers skills, being well organised, getting along with others, playing a sport - anything at all. At the end of each of the questions, condense your answer into one word that characterises your ability. For example if you stay on schedule, you might say you are prompt, if you work well with children you might say you are caring.

1. What do you seem to be able to do well naturally?

A word that describes you: _____

2. What have you worked hard and (continue to work hard on) to be able to do well?

A word that describes you: _____

3. What do other people tell you are your natural abilities?

A word that describes you: _____

4. What do other people praise you for doing well?

A word that describes you: _____



Activity 2

Where do you need improvement?

Because people tend to criticise more often than they praise (both others and themselves), you might be more aware of your shortcomings than your talents. As you consider these shortcomings, decide which you want to change and which are too difficult or not important enough to change. Be realistic. You don't want to expend too much energy on areas where you don't need very much improvement, but neither do you want to ignore problem areas.

1. List several activities that are difficult for you?
2. From this list, which ones do you want or need to improve?
3. Which of these activities are not important to your personal goals at present?
4. Choose one of the areas you want to improve. List the steps you will take to begin to improve in this area.

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Section 2



Factors which contribute to Self Development

As you have read in the previous section, there are many personal factors influencing one's development. Development is directly influenced by its relevance to values clarification, motivation, goals and life styles.

On completion of this section, you will be able to:

- Respond personally to values dilemmas
- Clarify your values as they relate to work, family and leisure time
- Discuss how goal setting can contribute to self development
- Analyse how healthy life styles can enhance personal development

2.1 Values

Values are enduring beliefs about important life goals that transcend specific situation (Rokeach, 1973). Values are our perceptions of what is worthwhile and important – for example, human life, loyalty, honesty, justice, freedom, truth, modesty, responsibility, dependability, self-discipline, hard work, independence, religion, education, love of others, generosity, and self-reliance.

What values are most valuable to you? _____

Each individual needs his/her own value core to maintain self-respect and self-government. He/she needs to develop his/her own moral, sexual and economic values to maintain physical and mental health. Having values makes life easier, less stressful, and helps the individual to be sure of what he/she believes. Each person needs his/her own value core of consistency, dependability and reliability, to help his/her make decisions in life.

Individuals need to develop their own values because of the diversity of values and the lessening and declining of consensus regarding values. Values enhance social and professional success and personal fulfilment because values provide consistency, certainty, integrity, encouragement, singleness of purpose, and strength. They protect the

individual from exploitation or being prone to be influenced by others. Appropriate personal values are essential to personal happiness, sound mental, social and emotional health. Values determine attitudes and are established markers for conduct.

Value Dilemmas



Respond to the following dilemmas in ways that reflect your own values. Response such as “I would...”, “I believe...”, “If I were Johnny”, as opposed to “he (she) should ...” or “Johnny should...”, encourage deeper participation in the action phase of the valuing process.

Sharon, a 16 year old, has just been hired as a sales girl in a record store in her neighbourhood. She had been trying to get a job for several months in order to add to the income at home. Her mother has been struggling financially since Sharon’s father died.

The store’s owner stresses over and over again how important it is for Sharon to keep her eyes open for shoplifters. He keeps a meticulous count of the inventory and cash register receipts. In fact, Sharon had a chance at the job because the owner had fired her predecessors for insufficient vigilance.

During the second week on the job, Sharon’s best friend Lucy comes into the store. Sharon watches as Lucy slips two records under her coat. Lucy then approaches Sharon at the cash register in order to pay for yet another record. Sharon whispers to Lucy that she ought to return the records. Lucy’s response is a wink and a snicker.

Questions:

Should Sharon tell the owner and risk a friendship as well as sure arrest for Lucy? Explain why or why not.

Should Sharon charge Lucy for the one visible record and risk the same thing happening again, as well as risking an eventual loss of her job? Why?

Ask a colleague or friend to read and respond to this. Compare your views with them.

**Personal Values Rating Exercise:****What do you consider most important?**

Consider the words listed below. Assign a number from 1 to 18 to each word or statement, with 1 being the most important to you and 18 the least important. You may add values that you consider important but are not listed here; however, you cannot assign the same number to more than one statement.

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| ____ Family | ____ Physical Appearance |
| ____ Freedom | ____ Love |
| ____ Creativity | ____ Power |
| ____ Emotional Well-being | ____ Pleasure |
| ____ Health | ____ Recognition by others |
| ____ Honesty | ____ Faith Sense |
| ____ Talent | ____ Humour |
| ____ Spirituality | ____ Wealth |
| ____ Justice | ____ Knowledge |

What are your observations? Can you explain your rating of each statement? Are you surprised by the results? Did you add any other words or statements? How did they influence your rating?

There are no right or wrong answers here. The point of this exercise is force you to recognise that you value certain things more than others and to help you to realise how your values are connected to your behaviour. For example, if you highly value knowledge and wealth, you might be more interested in reading and learning about financial matters. You might, consequently, pursue a career in this area or be very active in the stock market. On the other hand, a person placing a high value on knowledge and spirituality might emphasise religious or church activities.



Values Clarification

Values change over time in response to changing life experiences. Recognising these changes and understanding how they affect one's actions and behaviours are the goals of the values clarification process. Values clarification will not tell you what your values should be, it simply provides the means to discover what your values are.

For the purpose of values clarification, Raths, Harmin and Simon identified seven criteria that must be met if a value is to be considered a full value. These criteria can be divided into three categories: choosing, prizing and acting. To be a full value, the value must be chosen freely from a list of alternatives, only after thoughtful consideration has been given to the consequences of each alternative. The value must be cherished and made known to other people. The value must also be translated into behaviours that are consistent with the chosen value and integrated into the life style.

Elements of a full value

- Choosing: freely from alternatives after thoughtful consideration of the consequences of each alternative
- Prizing: cherishing, being happy with the choice willing to affirm the choice publicly
- Acting: doing something with the choice doing something repeatedly, in a consistent manner.

The following series of questions and case studies are designed to help you examine your thoughts and feelings about various aspects of genetic counselling and prenatal diagnosis. These questions are adapted from the text, "*Values Clarification in Nursing*," 2nd Edition, by Steele and Harmon.



Activity 3

Indicate your degree of agreement or disagreement with the following statements by placing the number that most closely indicates your value next to each statement.

1. Strongly Agree 2. Agree 3. Ambivalent 4. Disagree
5. Strongly Disagree

_____ Abortion decisions are the responsibility of the pregnant woman and her physician.

_____ Genetic screening should be offered to all at-risk people.

_____ Amniocentesis should be required as part of prenatal care.

_____ Artificial insemination should be available to anyone who seeks it.

_____ A person who has a genetically transmitted disease should be encouraged to have amniocentesis.

_____ Infants born with severe defects should be allowed to die through the natural course of the disease.

_____ Individuals who carry abnormal genes should not have children.

_____ Women who find out they are carrying a foetus with a serious birth defect or genetic condition should be required to terminate the pregnancy.

_____ Couples who knowingly choose to have a child with a birth defect should be financially responsible for all of the child's health care and educational needs.

There are no right or wrong answers. Ask your colleague to complete the same set of questions – discuss your various viewpoints.

Read the following case studies and answer the questions.

There are no right or wrong responses to the questions. Rather, this exercise is designed to help you identify your values and examine the relative importance of these values in your personal life.

CASE STUDIES

1. Mr. Smith's father had Huntington disease. He was diagnosed at age 40 after losing his job and leaving his family. Mr. Smith is 28 years old and through presymptomatic testing knows that he carries the gene coding for this disorder. He has come in to talk about his future family plans. What would you choose to do if you were in his shoes? If he makes a different choice from the choice you have made, how do you think this might affect your interactions with him?

2. A young couple with three children learn that their unborn child has cystic fibrosis. Do you think that your professional relationship with this couple would change if they chose to terminate the pregnancy? How would you feel towards this couple if they chose to have this child and insisted on doing everything possible to keep the baby alive?

3. A young couple has two children with sickle cell anemia. They are not using any form of birth control, as they would like to have more children. Would their choice affect your feelings towards this couple or your ability to work with them or their children?



2.2 Attitudes

Attitudes are ways of perceiving reality. They are a person's tendency to evaluate a person, event, or situation in a certain way and behave according to that evaluation. Our attitudes depend on our value system which helps in the evaluation process. Your attitude affects everything you do.

A positive attitude can open your mind to learning experiences and inspire you to take action. On the other hand, a negative attitude can hinder learning, stifle initiative and create stress. If you adopt the attitude that this course is a waste of time, chances are that you will not learn much. If, however, you adopt a positive attitude toward the course, it might teach you something important. No one can be positive all the time as there will be periods of doubt. Temporary periods of doubt won't affect you seriously, but negative attitudes that persist from day to day can destroy life.

Effects of Attitudes

Negative Attitudes	Positive Attitudes
Psychological Responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Loss of memory and reasoning powers • Anxiety • Irritability • Depression 	Psychological Responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good mental activity • Self-confidence • Affection and sympathy towards others • Cultivation of unselfishness • Good temperament
Faulty Behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low productive levels • Troubled relations with others • Indecision • Verbal and/or physical aggression • Use of alcohol or other drugs 	Adequate Behaviour <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Optimum production levels • Positive relations with others • Tolerance • Moderation • Self-control

Adapted from *Less Stress*. Julian Melgosa- InterAmerican Publishing Association.



2.3 Goal setting

Personal success in life comes from being able to set and achieve realistic positive goals. Through generations, goal setting has been essential to the success of students, statesmen, writers, artists, scientists, professionals, and achievers of all kinds. Our communities and societies, our literature and history are brimming with examples of individuals whose personal goals led to positive benefits for their families, neighbours, and for the larger society. They tackled a problem they wanted to solve, pursued a passion burning inside, or invested themselves in a purpose they believed in. These individuals responded in positive ways to personal goals.

Why are goals important? How much do you set and accomplish goals?

A Goal is like having a map. It helps you locate the direction in which you want to head so that you know where you should be focusing your time and energy. Setting realistic goals is very important for personal development. From the scope of your whole life to the smallest day- to-day activities, goals will help you see your purpose more clearly. If a goal is not written down, it is a wish. Occasionally wishes come true but not as often as a goal.

Finding out your purpose: What is your Mission in Life?

Determining a general purpose is the first step in goal- setting because it gives you a framework in which you can identify your goals. One helpful way to determine your purpose is to write a personal mission statement. Stephen Covey, author of the bestseller, *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*, defines a mission statement as ***“a philosophy that outlines what you want to be (character), what you want to do (contributions and achievements) and on the values by which you live”***. (Covey 1990, p. 106)

He further states that because each individual is unique, a personal mission statement will reflect that uniqueness, both in content and form. The following is an example of a mission statement.

“To use my talent and abilities to help people of all ages, stages, backgrounds, and economic levels achieve their human potential through fully developing their minds and their talents. To balance work with people in my life, understanding that my family and friends are a priority above all else.”

Charles Crawford

What is your mission statement? You will have an opportunity to write your own mission statement in Exercise 2.2, but begin to consider your purpose. The efforts you make to think through your mission will could enable you to take charge of your life rather than allowing circumstances and events to control you. Much of your success in life will come from determining what you want and taking the initiative to make it happen. Covey believes that stating your mission will help to empower you with strength in the midst of change.

Categories of Goals

1. **Personal.** This category encompasses your character, personality, physical appearance, and conduct. Do you want to be a kind person? Develop a lean, athletic physique? Gain confidence and knowledge? Become less angry? Any missing pieces in your ideal self-portrait can indicate personal goal areas for you.
2. **Family.** Goals involving family, actual or projected, belong here. Do you want to stay single? Do you want to marry and have one or more children? If you already started to build a family, do you want it to grow? Do you want to address problems with parents, improve your relationship with your spouse, or change the way you relate to your family? Do you live near relatives or farther away? Set goals that can help build your ideal family.
3. **School/Career.** Anything you want to do or be in school or in the work force belongs in this category. What kind of subjects or career field do you prefer? In school, consider the classes, living environment, instructors, teaching styles, class schedule, and available degrees or certificates. At work, consider the environment, hours, co-workers, salary, transportation, and company size and style that might be associated with your ideal job. What about moving up? When do you want to graduate, and with what kinds of honours or achievement? Do you want to become a manager, a supervisor, an independent contractor or a business owner? How much responsibility do you want? Identify goals that can help you earn your ideal education and launch your dream career.
4. **Financial.** How much money do you need to meet your obligations, maintain your chosen lifestyle, and save for the future? Do you need to borrow for school or a major purchase, such as a car? Do you already have heavy monthly bills that you need to reduce? Compare your current financial picture to how comfortable you eventually want to be, and set goals that will help you bridge the gap.

5. ***Lifestyle.*** What will be your attitude to health, fitness etc.? Where do you want to live (city, suburbs, country) and in what kind of space (apartment, condominium, townhouse, single-or multi-family house, mobile home)? With whom do you want to live (extended/immediate family, roommates, friends, no one)? Do you want conveniences like private parking, laundry, dishwasher, or proximity to a health club? Do you want cable TV, books, a stereo? How do you like to dress and decorate? What do you like to do in your leisure time? Consider goals that allow you to live the way you want to live.

After all this thought, the most difficult task remains: getting started. Taking action is the toughest step, but as you follow what you have set out to do, you will start to see the hard work pay off.

But how do you set goals? Following are suggested steps for success in goal setting:

1. **DESIRE** to achieve the goal. The desire must be intense.
2. **WRITE** your goal down. Once it goes into writing, it becomes important and starts etching into your subconscious.
3. **DEADLINE** your goal. Analyse where you are now in relation to the goal and then measure how long you will reasonably need to complete the goal.
4. **IDENTIFY** the obstacles that you may need to overcome and the help you will require.
5. Make a **PLAN**. List all your activities and rate them in order of priority.
6. Get a clear **MENTAL PICTURE** of the goal already accomplished. Make the mental image crystal clear in the mind's eye. Play that picture over and over in your mind's eye.
7. Back your plan with **PERSISTENCE** and resolve never, never, never to give up even when you have difficulties.



2.4 Habits

A habit is anything that you become accustomed to doing in a certain way, on a regular basis or at certain times. You might have a habit of biting your nails, eating sweets for snack, leaving your wet towel on the bed, talking for hours on the phone, or studying late at night. Your habits reveal a lot about you.

Bad habits can earn this title because they can prevent you from reaching important goals. Some bad habits such as chronic lateness cause obvious problems. Other habits, such as watching movies three times a week, can affect you in more subtle ways. You may learn the hard way that you needed those hours you spent watching movies for studying or family obligations.

People maintain bad habits because they offer rewards. Many rewards brought on by habits are enjoyable even if later effects aren't so great. Eating pastries every morning might cause you to gain weight, but the reward is that they taste delicious. Going out to eat may take precious dollars out of your budget, but it's so much easier than shopping for food, cooking, and washing dishes. What bad habit of yours has a pleasant effect?

You often have to wait longer and work harder to see a reward for good habits. That makes them harder to maintain. If you were to cut out fattening foods, you wouldn't lose weight in two days. If you were to reduce your nights out to gain more study time, you wouldn't see better grades by the end of the week. When you're striving to maintain good habits, you have to recognise that the rewards are not immediate.

Think over your habits. Are there some you would like to break or to change? Here is one step-by- step way to do it.

1. Recognise the habit as troublesome
2. Decide to change
3. Start today
4. Change one habit at a time
5. Reward yourself for positive steps taken
6. Don't get discouraged



2.5 Healthy life styles

Your life style is directly related with your personal development. The way you organise yourself and manage time influences your learning opportunities and personal development.

In fact healthy life style covers everything you do in your everyday life. It may include your personality traits, the way you think, your food habit, your work practise, family time, leisure and so on. You should aim to achieve wellness. Wellness means more than the absence of disease. It means having the energy to enjoy life to the full. It means looking to the future with confidence and enthusiasm. It means being a master of your health-and your life. The ultimate determinant of how healthy you will be is the life style you pursue. The ultimate responsibility for your health lies with you.

In evaluating your lifestyle you will need to examine the following questions carefully

- Do I have the appropriate weight?
- Am I engaged in daily physical exercise?
- Do I have a balanced diet?
- Is my self-concept positive?

Stay well: here's how

Eat a healthful diet; that is, one that:

- includes a variety of foods from all the food groups
- includes foods with adequate starch and fibre
- is rich in iron
- is low in fats and fatty foods
- is low in salt

Drink plenty of fluids

6 to 8 glasses of water and low calorie beverages daily should be good. Our bodies are between 60 and 70 percent water. We need water to lubricate our organs, to renew body fluids, to eliminate toxic substances and to maintain proper concentration levels in the body. Water is not only necessary for maintaining good health, but it helps to control stress.

Stay physically active

Recent scientific research indicates that exercise may play an important role for functioning optimally both mentally and physically. Evidence has accumulated demonstrating the effectiveness of exercise in maintaining a healthy body and mind.

Benefits include:

- Increased energy
- Less physical complaints
- Stronger bones
- More restful sleep
- Increased cardiovascular
- More attractive body
- Possible lowering of blood pressure
- More enjoyable active leisure time
- Greater mental efficiency
- Improved ability to handle stress
- Sense of well being
- More vitality and zest for life
- Reduction of mild anxiety and depression

Since the evidence shows that high academic performance is more likely to occur when you are physically fit, it is advisable that you consider incorporating some form of exercise into your daily schedule. Spend at least 30 minutes a day doing activities that get the heart pumping!

Don't drink alcohol

Alcohol is a dangerous drug. It is damaging to health and increases stress levels. Alcohol is directly responsible for thousand of deaths each year through cirrhosis of the liver and other disease and indirectly through automobile accidents, accidents at work and suicide.

Don't smoke

Nicotine is a toxic substance, which, if taken in its pure form, would cause instant death. A person who smokes regularly is introducing nicotine into his blood stream through the respiratory path. Nicotine is responsible for a variety of cardiovascular, gastrointestinal and

respiratory diseases. In addition, a direct correlation has been found between smoking and lung cancer. This fatal connection is due to the carcinogenic nature of the tars contained in cigarette smoke.

Get adequate sleep

Limit stress (See section on stress)

Why stay well?

- You will look and feel better
- You will have more energy to do the things you want to do
- You will have a better outlook on life
- You will enjoy being around people or being alone
- You will be able to handle your emotions better
- You will feel more confident



Summary

1. Values are perceptions of what is worthwhile. It is important that individuals develop a value system as it helps to guide our lifestyle and helps in decision- making. Each individual needs his or her own value system.
2. Setting realistic goals and being motivated to achieve them enhance personal development.
3. Effective time management gives meaning to your life, enabling you to map out your goals so that you will allow each day to take you to your larger purpose.
4. As you manage change goals, priorities and scheduling, avoiding procrastination and other time traps, you will realise the rewards you have earned by taking responsibility for how you live your life.
5. Healthy life style has an impact on learning. One can enhance learning by organising oneself and managing time.
6. It is important that you value your health. This is the state of complete, physical mental and social well being and not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.



Activity 4

Your personal mission statement

Using the example in the unit as a guide, and considering what you want out of the different areas of your life, create your own personal mission statement. You can write it in paragraph form, in a list of long-term goals. Take as much time as you need; make sure that what you end up with covers everything you want your life to be, in general terms. Write a draft on a separate sheet of paper and give yourself a chance to revise it a few times before you write the final version here.

Establishing and tracking long-term goals

In each of the five categories of goal types, name one of your most important long-term goals. Imagine that you start working towards each goal tomorrow, map out the course of your activity. Indicate the steps that will comprise your pursuit of each of those goals in the next year, the next six months, the next month, the next week, and tomorrow.

What about your attitude?

Consider a situation about which you had a negative attitude. What was the situation? Was your attitude a reaction to the situation or completely unrelated? What was the impact of your negative attitude? Did it prevent you from enjoying yourself? Did it harm you or anyone else in any way? If you had the situation to live over, what would you do differently?

You might like to share your answers with your tutor or a close friend.



You have the power to change your habits. List three problematic habits and the effects of each.

Habit	How it prevents you from reaching your goals
1.	
2.	
3.	

Out of these three, choose the habit you most want to change. Write it here.

What helpful habit do you want to develop in its place? For example, if your problem habit were a failure to express yourself when you are angry, a replacement habit might be to calmly talk about situations that upset you as soon as they arise. If you have a habit of cramming for tests at the last minute you could replace it with a regular study schedule that allows you to cover your material bit by bit over a long period.

One way to help yourself abandon your old habit is to think about how your new habit will improve your life. List two benefits of your new habit.

1. _____
2. _____

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Section 3



Factors that can enhance Personal Development

Section 2 dealt with some factors that contribute to your personal development. Other than those factors, you also need to examine the life coping skills that will enable you to be more effective in dealing with situations in your environment. For example: assertiveness, time management, interpersonal relationships and stress management.

On completion of this section, you will be able to--

- use specific techniques/strategies for developing assertiveness
- manage time more efficiently
- recognise signs of stress in yourself and be able to deal effectively with them

3.1 Assertiveness

Do you often find that others coerce you into thinking their way? Is it difficult for you to express your positive or negative feelings openly and honestly? Do you sometimes lose control and become angry with others who don't warrant it?

A “yes” answer to any of the above questions may be an expression of a common problem known as “lack of assertiveness.”

What is Assertiveness?

Assertiveness is the ability to express yourself and your rights without violating the rights of others. It is appropriately direct, open, and honest communication, which is self-enhancing and expressive. Acting assertively will allow you to feel self-confident and will generally gain you the respect of your peers and friends. It can increase your chances for honest relationships, and help you feel better about yourself and your self-control in everyday situations. This in turn, will improve your decision-making ability and possibly your chances of getting what you really want from life.

“Assertiveness basically means the ability to express your thoughts and feelings in a way that clearly states your needs and keeps the lines of communication open with the other.” However, before you can

comfortably express your needs, you must believe that you have a legitimate right to have those needs. What rights do you have?

Keep in mind that you have the following rights:

- The right to decide how to lead your life. This includes pursuing your own goals and dreams and establishing your own priorities.
- The right to your own values, beliefs, opinions, and emotions – and the right to respect yourself for them, no matter the opinion of others.
- The right not to justify or explain your actions or feelings to others.
- The right to tell others how you wish to be treated.
- The right to express yourself and to say “No”, “I don’t know”, “I don’t understand”, or even “I don’t care.” You have the right to take the time you need to formulate your ideas before expressing them.
- The right to ask for information or help – without having negative feelings about your needs.
- The right to change your mind, to make mistakes, and sometimes to act illogical – with full understanding and acceptance of the consequences.
- The right to like yourself even though you’re not perfect, and sometimes to do less than you are capable of doing.
- The right to have positive, satisfying relationships within which you feel comfortable and free to express yourself honestly – and the right to change or end relationships if they don’t meet your needs.
- The right to change, enhance, or develop your life in anyway you determine.

When you do not believe that you have rights, you may behave very passively to circumstances and events in your life. When you allow the needs, opinions, and judgments of others to become more important than your own, you are likely to feel hurt, anxious and even angry. This type of passive or non-assertive behaviour is often indirect, emotionally dishonest and self-denying.

Many people feel that attending to their legitimate needs and asserting their rights translates to being selfish. Selfishness means being concerned about only your rights, with little or no regard for others. Implicit in your rights is the fact that you are concerned about the legitimate rights of others as well.

Specific Techniques for Assertiveness

1. Be as specific and clear as possible about what you want, think and feel. The following statements project this preciseness:
“I want to ...”
“I don’t want you to ...”
“I liked it when you did that.”
“I have a different opinion, I think that...”
2. Be direct. Deliver your message to the person for whom it is intended. If you want to tell James something, tell James; do not tell everyone except James
3. “Own” your message. Acknowledge that your message comes from your frame of references, your conception of good vs. bad or right vs. wrong, and your perception. You can acknowledge ownership with personalised (“I”) statements such as “I don’t agree with you (as compared to “you’re wrong”).
4. Ask for feedback. “Am I being clear? How do you see this situation? What do you want to do?” Asking for feedback can encourage others to correct any misperceptions you may have as well as help others realise that you are expressing an opinion, feeling, or desire rather than a demand. Encourage others to be clear, direct, and specific in their feedback to you.

As you learn to become more assertive, remember to use your assertive “skills” selectively. It is not just what you say to someone verbally, but also how you communicate nonverbally with voice tone, gestures, eye contact, facial expression and posture that will influence your impact on others. You must remember that it takes time and practise, as well as a willingness to accept yourself as you make mistakes, to reach the goal of acting assertively. As you practise your techniques, it is often helpful to have accepting relationships and a supportive environment. People who understand and care about you are your strongest asset.



3.2 Time Management

Time is one of your most important resources. Your potential for success lies in whether you use or waste time available to you. Most of us do not have enough hours in the day; yet, others have time to kill. Time is irreplaceable. There are only twenty-four hours in a day, and every one has those same twenty-four hours. How teachers perceive time and how they manage their own personal time and time in the classroom have a great deal to do with their success. Managing your time successfully is the secret to accomplishing not only what you must...but also what you want. When you don't accomplish what you should, you may feel confused, compromised, and frustrated. You may begin wondering:

- “Where did I go wrong?”
- “Why couldn't I get the job done on time as I had planned?”
- “Why can't I ever meet deadlines?”

In seeking answers to these questions, many persons become absorbed in the time management techniques they have seen work for others and completely ignore the attitudinal principles under-lying those techniques, yet both are important. Consider the following myths, which demonstrate how certain attitudes can work against effective time management.

- MYTH: My life is completely controlled by external events.
- MYTH: I should meet everyone's expectations.
- MYTH: I should have no limits.

After reflecting on these myths consider the following facts:

- You can have control over many aspects of your life, but you and you alone are responsible for initiating that control. Persons who don't believe they control their lives are constantly looking for clear-cut signals to motivate them. For instance, they depend on external events such as deadlines and expectations of others to guide them and tell them how and when they should perform various tasks. Learning to recognise what you can control in relation to the choices you have is the first step in the process of managing your time. Learn to evaluate what must be done within the given time frame and determine what can be postponed.
- Other people's needs and demands may not be appropriate for you and your lifestyle. They may be poorly timed, highly questionable, or simply unattainable. You may have different

priorities of your own. By trying to meet the expectations of others, you may be short changing yourself and your needs. It is important that you are clear about your own personal needs first...before you consider what others expect of you.

- We all have limits...failure to acknowledge this may cause you to become perfectionist in your expectations. Perfectionists are especially prone to procrastination because the perfection they demand is impossible. These individuals never have a sense of accomplishment nor do they get a chance to feel good about themselves because they never meet their standards. Having reasonable expectations allows you the freedom to set time management goals that are within your grasp and that can help you achieve a sense of success.
- Be aware of your biological rhythms and use them to your advantage. For example, if you work best in the morning, do not plan all your studying for the evening. Take advantage of times when your energy levels are at their highest and do your most demanding work at those times.
- Be aware that the physical characteristics of your work environment can help or hinder your success.

Specific Techniques for managing Time

- Develop an overview of everything that you want to accomplish. If your perspective is a semester, your first step should be to define clearly the goals that must be accomplished within that semester. This first step should be an all inclusive – include not only academic responsibilities but also personal and social activities. ***Devote a minimum of 10-15 minutes per day to planning a schedule of activities and refer to it from time to time.***
- Next, identify the goals in all areas of your life that you consider important. Decide which need immediate attention and which can be postponed. Be realistic about your time resources.
- Anticipate deadlines and foreseeable crises (midterms, dates that papers are due) and plan in advance to make these deadlines part of your routine. Construct a reasonable timetable and insert the proper dates for these responsibilities.
- Now work backward through the timetable and include the activities that can be scheduled more flexibly (athletics, exercise, hobbies etc.).
- As you again review your timetable, consider each week as a subcategory to be planned, and each day within a given week as a further subcategory but an integral part of the whole picture.

Identify specific goals for each week and assign categories of “A”, “B”, or “C” to each goal. Assign “A” to those items which are most important, “B” to those of moderate importance, and “C” to those low in importance.

- Now look at the items on your “B” list. Re-evaluate and reclassify them to either “A” or “C” categories. Either increasing or decreasing their importance will eliminate your being distracted by activities, which could compete, with your most important priorities.
- Avoid getting bogged down in “C” tasks. Do not hesitate to skip these activities or delegate them to others.
- Finally, review your list of activities in the “A” category. Determine the steps you need to follow to reach these goals. Eliminate the routine and low priority goals.



3.3 Procrastination: A major time trap

As a self-directed learner you will have to guard against procrastination, as this will steal your time.

Technically, procrastination refers to the avoidance of a specific task or work, which needs to be accomplished. It is letting the low-priority tasks get in the way of high-priority ones. Some examples are: socialising with colleagues when you know that an important work project is due soon, or watching TV instead of doing your household chores.

We've all been plagued by procrastination at one time or another. For some, it's a chronic problem. Others find that it hits only some areas of their lives. The net results, though, are usually the same - wasted time, missed opportunities, poor performance, self-deprecation, or increased stress.

We all seem to do fine with things we want to do or enjoy doing for fun. But, when we perceive tasks as difficult, inconvenient, or scary, we may shift into our procrastination mode. We have very clever ways of fooling ourselves. See how many of the following excuses hit home for you:

- I'll wait until I'm in the mood to do it.
- It's OK to celebrate ... besides, I'll start my diet (sobriety) tomorrow.
- My health problem isn't that bad. Time will heal this pain.
- There's plenty of time to get it done.

- Why does the boss give us so much to do? It's not fair.
- It's too hard to talk about. I don't know where to begin.
- I work better under pressure so I don't need to do it right now.
- I've got too many other things to do first.

Once exposed, these self-defeating statements don't sound so convincing. But, when we privately tell ourselves these excuses, they seem quite believable. Don't be fooled by how innocent they sound. They get us to postpone important tasks and duties.

Causes

In order to understand and solve your procrastination problems, you must carefully analyse those situations where your work is not being completed. Procrastination is a bad habit. Many individuals cite the following as causes of procrastination:

- **Lack of relevance** – If something is neither relevant nor meaningful to a person, it may be difficult to get them motivated to begin.
- **Acceptance of another's goals** – If a project has been imposed or assigned to you and it is not consistent with your own interest, you may be reluctant to spend the necessary time to see it to its conclusion.
- **Perfectionism** – Perfection is unattainable. Setting unreachable standards will discourage one from pursuing the task. Worry over producing the perfect project prevents them from finishing on time.
- **Ambiguity** – It may be difficult to get started on a task if you are uncertain of what is expected of you.
- **Fear of the unknown** – You don't have any way of knowing how well you'll do if you are venturing into a new field or realm. Such an uncertain condition may inhibit the desire to begin.
- **Inability to handle the task** – You may avoid the task completely if you lack the training, skill, or ability to do the job. This feeling of inadequacy will cause delays.

Strategies for fighting procrastination

Following are some suggestions for breaking the habit of procrastination. Remember, don't just read them – do them.

1. **Rational Self-Talk.** Those old excuses really don't hold up to rational inspection. The "two-column technique" will help. Write down all your excuses on one side of a piece of paper. Start challenging the faulty reasoning behind each of the excuses. Write down your realistic thoughts on the opposite side of each excuse. Here are two examples of excuses and realistic thoughts.

EXCUSE: I'm not in the mood right now. REALISTIC THOUGHT: Mood doesn't do my work, actions do. If I wait for the right mood, I may never get it done.

EXCUSE: I'm just lazy. REALISTIC THOUGHT: Labelling myself as lazy only brings me down. My work is separate from who I am as a person. Getting started is the key to finishing.

2. **Positive Self-Statements.** Incorporate a list of self-motivating statements into your repertoire of thoughts. Consider ...
 - "There's no time like the present."
 - "The sooner I get done, the sooner I can play."
 - "There's no such thing as perfectionism. It's an illusion that keeps me from doing what I have to do right now."
 - "It's cheaper and less painful if I do it now rather than wait until it gets worse."
3. **Don't Invite Catastrophe.** Jumping to the conclusion that you will fail or that you are no good at something will only create a wall of fear that will stop you cold. Recognise that your negative predictions are not facts. Focus on the present and what positive steps you can take toward reaching your goals.
4. **Design Clear Goals.** Think about what you want and what needs to be done. Be specific. If it's getting that work project completed by the deadline, figure out a timetable with realistic goals at each step. Keep your sights within reason. Having goals too big can scare you away from starting.
5. **Set Priorities.** Write down all the things that need to be done in order of their importance. The greater their importance or urgency; the higher their priority. Put "messing around" (distractions) in its proper place - last! Start at the top of the list and work your way down.

6. **Partialise the Tasks (Chunking).** Big projects feel overwhelming. Break them down into the smallest and most manageable subparts. You'll get more done if you can do it piece by piece. For example, make an outline for a written report before you start composing or do a small portion of the chores rather than all at once. Partialising works especially well with the unpleasant jobs. Most of us can handle duties we dislike as long as they're for a short time and in small increments.
7. **Get Organised.** Have all your materials ready before you begin a task. Use a daily schedule and have it with you all the time. List the tasks of the day or week realistically. Check off the tasks when you have completed them.
8. **Take a Stand.** Commit yourself to doing the task. Write yourself a "contract" and sign it. Better still; tell a friend, partner, or supervisor about your plans.
9. **Use Prompts.** Write reminders to yourself and put them in conspicuous places like on the TV, refrigerator, bathroom mirror, front door, and car dashboard. The more we remember, the greater the likelihood we'll follow through with our plans.
10. **Reward Yourself.** Self-reinforcement has a powerful effect on developing a "do it now" attitude. Celebrate, pat yourself on the back, smile, and let yourself enjoy the completion of even the smallest of tasks. Don't minimize your accomplishments. Remember, you're already that much closer to finishing those things that need to be done. Go ahead, get started ... NOW!

Avoid Time Wasters and Interruptions

Your best plan or intentions may be difficult to implement at times. You may frequently find that time-wasters and interruptions are the culprits. Therefore, safeguarding blocks of work time is essential. Some interruptions can be avoided by keeping in mind the following:

- Arrange your work area so that your back is to the traffic flow.
- Close your door; open it selectively.
- Find and use a special space such as the Library or an office where friends will be unable to find you.
- Return telephone calls when it is more convenient for you, perhaps when you take a study break, or simply unplug or turn off your phone.



3.4 Stress Management

Stress is inevitable. There is no way we can be alive and not experience it. It affects everyone, yet many people lack a basic understanding of it and, therefore, are unable to control and/or manage it effectively. Stress! How much do you know about it? How do you respond to it? What can be done to manage stress, to moderate its negative effects? Can stress be used to your advantage?

What is Stress?

Stress is the “wear and tear” our bodies experience as we adjust to our continually changing environment. It has physical and emotional effects on us and can create positive or negative feelings. As a positive influence, stress can help compel us to action; it can result in a new awareness and an exciting new perspective. As a negative influence, it can result in feelings of distrust, rejection, anger, and depression, which, in turn, can lead to health problems such as headaches, upset stomach, rashes, insomnia, ulcers, high blood pressure, heart disease and stroke. Stress can help or hinder us depending on how we react to it.

Warning signs of Stress

Stress shows itself in three ways: physical, emotional and behavioural (Youngs, 1993). Some of the common symptoms are listed below. Learn to recognise these symptoms early and heed their warnings:

- Headaches
- Nervousness
- Inability to get rid of bad thoughts (or recurring bad dreams)
- Faintness or dizziness
- Loss of sexual interest
- Excessive criticism of others difficulty in speaking when you are excited
- Continual feelings of annoyance and irritation
- Pains in the heart or chest
- Low energy or bouts of high energy followed by depression
- Excessive perspiration
- Poor appetite/excessive appetite
- Outburst of temper you cannot control

- Frequently “blue” lonely feelings
- Constant fearfulness
- Feeling that people are unfriendly or dislike you / lowered self esteem
- Inferiority feelings
- Loss of concentration
- Weakness in parts of body heart pounding or racing
- Sleep difficulties (too much or too little)

Stressors

Stressors are the sources of pressure and tension that cause stress. Although there are several ways to categorise stress, the following five major stressor areas represent a relatively comprehensive classification.

1. Personal stressors – involve experiences relating to your needs and personality dispositions.
2. Private stressors – involve experiences relating to your home and family conditions.
3. Bio-environmental– involve experiences between you and the surrounding social, cultural and physical environment.
4. Interpersonal stressors – involve the relationships between you and others.
5. Psychosocial stressors – involve the pursuit of your needs in relation to other people.



Activity 5

1. Make a list of five stressors in your life – anything that causes you stress.

2. Assign priorities to each item written – which causes you most stress? Which causes you least stress?

Discuss your answers with your tutor.



Personality Factors - Type A and Type B. Research over the last twenty years has focused on what is perhaps the most dangerous personal influence on stress.

The **type A** personality is characterised by impatience, restlessness, aggressiveness, competitiveness, polyphasic activities (having many irons in the fire at one time), and being under considerable time pressure. The type A work for long hours on the job to meet pressing and recurring deadlines and inconsistently impatient with the rate at which things take place. Type A is always eating, moving and walking rapidly.

Type B people on the other hand experience fewer pressing deadlines or conflicts, are relatively free of any sense of time urgency or hostility and are generally less competitive on the job. The Type B feels no need to display or discuss his/her achievements or accomplishments unless such exposure is demanded by the situation. Type B's play for fun and relaxation rather than to exhibit their superiority. They relax without guilt.

In Activity 6, you will be able to determine your stress personality.

Effects of Stress

Many medical practitioners believe that 50 to 70 percent of all physical illnesses are related to stress. The link between stress and heart disease is well known, and high levels of stress are associated with diabetes, ulcers, high blood pressure and arteriosclerosis. Stress can also cause depression, irritation anxiety, fatigue, lowered self-esteem and reduced job satisfaction and performance. Sustained over a long period, stress can lead to attempts to escape by using drugs and alcohol and can also lead to burnout, a state of physical and mental exhaustion.

How can I eliminate stress from my life?

Positive stress adds anticipation and excitement to life. We all thrive under a certain amount of stress. Deadlines, competitions, confrontations, and even our own frustrations and sorrows add depth and enrichment to our lives. Our goal is not to eliminate stress but to learn how to manage it and how to use it to help us. Excessive stress may leave us “tied up in knots”. What we need to do is to find the optimal level of stress, which will individually motivate but not overwhelm each of us.

Managing Stress

Those who deal most effectively with stress are flexible enough to adapt to the stressors around them. They don't take themselves quite so seriously, lead a more balanced life, learn new skills to lessen the influences of the stress without feeling intimidated, and seek outside help when they recognise the need for it.

How about YOU? What are the ways you cope with your stressors? Are you more likely to:

- Just begin your day hoping to get all the things done that you would like to do?
- Avoid exercise, especially when you are tense?
- Let interruptions and the needs of others dominate yours?
- Feel you don't have time to relax?
- Skip meals when rushed?
- Let your feelings build up and then vent your frustration when you can no longer hold them in?

Or are you more likely to:

- Start your day by taking 15 minutes of quiet time to get organised, then prioritise the things you must get done that day?
- Work out several times a week, especially when you are tense?
- Schedule “off limits” time when you need it?
- Take time out to relax?
- Eat breakfast each day?
- Express your feelings clearly and in a straightforward way?

How do you “cope” or handle it when the stresses and strains of life knock at your door? Identify your personal coping behaviour “style”. Record it for yourself below:

When under stress, pressure and anxiety, I:

Take a moment to review your response. Does your general style of coping work for you? In other words, is it effective, or could there be more productive and effective ways?

Just as there are many sources of stress, there are many possibilities for its management. However, all requires effort toward change: changing the source of stress and/or changing your reaction to it. How do you proceed?

1. Become aware of your stressors and your emotional and physical reactions.
 - Notice your distress. Don’t ignore it. Don’t gloss over your problems.
 - Determine what events distress you
 - Determine how your body responds to the stress. Do you become nervous or physically upset?
2. Recognise what you can change.
 - Can you change your stressors by avoiding or eliminating them completely?
 - Can you reduce their intensity?
 - Can you shorten your exposure to stress (take a break, leave the physical premises)?

3. Reduce the intensity of your emotional reactions to stress.
 - Are you viewing your stressors in exaggerated terms?
 - Are you expecting to please everyone?
 - Are you overreacting and viewing things as absolutely critical and urgent?
4. Try to temper your excess emotions.
 - Learn to moderate your physical reactions to stress.
 - Slow, deep breathing will bring your heart rate and respiration back to normal.
 - Relaxation techniques can reduce muscle tension.
 - Medications, when prescribed by a physician, can help in the short-term in moderating your physical reactions.
5. Build your physical reserves.
 - Exercise for cardiovascular fitness three to four times a week.
 - Eat well-balanced nutritious meals.
 - Maintain your ideal weight
 - Avoid nicotine, excessive caffeine and other stimulants
 - Mix leisure with work. Take breaks and get away when you can.
 - Get enough sleep. Be as consistent with your sleep schedule as possible.
6. Maintain your emotional reserves.
 - Develop some mutually supportive friendships/relationships.
 - Pursue realistic goals that are meaningful to you.
 - Expect some frustrations, failures and sorrows.
 - Always be kind and gentle with yourself: be a friend to yourself.



Summary

Assertiveness refers to the ability to express yourself and your rights without violating the rights of others.

Managing your time effectively and plugging time leaks increase your chances of coping with life's demands.

Stress can be good or bad. It manifests itself in the mental, physical and emotional well being of the individual. If understood, managed and reduced properly there will be fewer human sufferings.



Activity 6 Are you a type A personality?

(Adapted from, Organisational Behaviour, 1998)

Instructions: Choose from the following responses to answer the questions below,

- | | |
|-----------------------|----------------|
| a) almost always true | c) seldom true |
| b) usually true | d) never true |

Answer each question according to what is generally true for you.

- _____ 1. I do not like to wait for other people to complete their work before I proceed with my own.
- _____ 2. I hate to wait in most lines.
- _____ 3. People tell me that I tend to get irritated too easily.
- _____ 4. Whenever possible, I try to make activities competitive.
- _____ 5. I have a tendency to rush into work that needs to be done before knowing the procedure I will use to complete the job.
- _____ 6. Even when I go on vacation, I usually take some work along.
- _____ 7. When I make a mistake, it is usually because I have rushed into the job before completely planning it through.
- _____ 8. I feel guilty for taking time off from work.

- _____ 9. People tell me I have a bad temper when it comes to competitive situations.
- _____ 10. I tend to lose my temper when I am under a lot of pressure at work.
- _____ 11. Whenever possible, I will attempt to complete two or more tasks at once.
- _____ 12. I tend to race against the clock.
- _____ 13. I have no patience for lateness.
- _____ 14. I catch myself rushing when there is no need.

Directions for Scoring

Give 1 point to each **a or b**. If you have received a total score of 5 or greater you may possess some of the basic components of the type A personality. If you are type A personality, then you will definitely have to refer to the steps for managing your stress described in Section A.



Activity 7

Do you know your signs of stress?

Everyone has experienced some symptom of stress at some point in his/her life. It is suggested that you keep a log and chart your stress symptoms. What is the big stressor for you right now?

A big stressor for me right now is: _____

How are you affected by that stress? _____

Physical Signs: _____

Emotional Signs: _____

Behavioural Signs: _____

Review these from time to time and see if you are able to better manage stress in your life.



Activity 8

How do you spend your time?

Activity	Time in Hours
Class	
Work	
Family time/child care	
Studying	
Sleeping	
Eating	
Commuting / Travelling	
Personal business (shopping, medical visits, etc)	
Household maintenance	
Telephone time	
Leisure	
Religious Activities	
TOTAL	

Subtract the total number of hours you estimate you spend on these activities from 168 (the number of hours in a week).

168

minus Total _____

Unscheduled time _____

Now spend a week recording the actual amount of time you spend on these activities. Tally the hours in the boxes in the table using straight tally marks; round off to half hours and use dots for half-hour increments.

ACTIVITY	Mon.	Tue.	Wed.	Thu.	Fri.	Sat	Sun.
Class							
Work							
Family/childcare							
Studying							
Sleeping							
Eating							
Commute/Travel							
Personal business							
Household maintenance							
Telephone							
Leisure							
Religious Activities							
TOTALS							

Add your totals to find your GRAND TOTAL: ____

Does this match with your estimate? If not, where are the differences?
What has surprised you about how you actually spend your time?



Activity 9

Prepare your to-do lists

Make a to-do list for what you have to do tomorrow. List all pending activities in priority order. Assign the letter A to tasks that must be done, B to tasks that should be done, and C to those that might be done. Tackle the items on your A list first.

Tomorrow's Date: _____

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Include all tasks and events and do this daily in order to better manage your time.

References

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- Steers, R. M. (1998). *Organisational Behaviour*. Harper Collins Publishers

Section 4



Learning Skills

Traditionally, the teacher has been regarded as the most important element of instruction. But the teacher cannot learn for the students. The teacher can only provide the instructional conditions that facilitate learning; the rest is up to the student. The student must then use appropriate skills for learning.

Learning skills include a myriad of skills from self-organisation, planning and study skills to controlling and evaluating one's own learning. These skills are important because they are lifelong skills. They are critical for success at school, in the workplace and in our lives. The range of skills may include the planning skills, social skills, study skills and self-organisation skills.

The planning skills are almost generic. They involve the 'metacognition skills' and the skills such as analysing needs, setting objectives, deciding methodology, identifying resources, framing time-line and evaluating learning. The skills and abilities to plan and do these things will help you achieve your goals.

Social skills involve the skills for communications and interactions such as asking for information and help, sharing ideas, professional interaction and collaboration and so on.

The study skills involve a range of skills such as listening and reading skills, writing skills, research skills, reference skills (e.g. using library), computer skills, test taking skills and so on.

The self-organisation skills are skills for organising yourself. These may involve the skills for keeping yourself fit, managing time, organising your reading room, keeping learning records and so on.

Learning-to-learn skills involve identifying all possible opportunities for learning and making use of those opportunities.

On completion of this section, you will be able to—

- Use strategies for controlling your own learning.
- Identify your learning style
- Utilise appropriate study techniques

4.1 Metacognition

Metacognition is the ability of the learner to control his or her own learning. It not only involves the learning skills, but also includes the planning, implementing and evaluating skills.

Metacognition is very important for undertaking self-directed learning projects. A self - directed learning project is one in which learners identify and analyse their needs, set objectives, identify and utilise required resources and opportunities and finally evaluate their learning by themselves.

Identifying and analysing needs

Learning is related to some needs. But how would you identify your needs? It is usual for us always to feel some needs. It may be that you are taking a new job or you are preparing for facing a new situation in your life. Whatever the situation may be, you need to analyse the needs and relate them with learning to be able to face the situation more confidently.

Analysing your current job, psychological type, developmental stage, learning style, and target learning situation may help you identify your needs precisely.

Setting objectives

After identifying and analysing needs, you set the objectives of your learning. Objectives are the means to achieve goals. For example, let's suppose that your goal is to be a better informed person on the national budget. To achieve this goal, you decide that you will read a chapter on developing budgets in an available text; you will need to go through the pages of the newspapers to find critical analysis of the budget, and follow a discussion on the budget on the television. These are actually your objectives.

To set realistic objectives, try to choose action verbs that you can measure. For example: to tell, to explain, to show and so on.

Identifying resources

One of the metacognition skills is your ability to identify available learning resources. As you know, learning resources could be people, materials, equipment, or institutions. But it is important how you identify those resources: while identifying resources, try to consider and

explore all available resources in your environment to which you have possible access.

Utilising resources and opportunities

It is not sufficient only to identify the needs and learning resources; rather it is important how you utilise those resources and learning opportunities to carry out your learning plan.

Once you identify your learning needs, set objectives and identify the available resources for your learning, try to implement your plan. To do so, frame a time line for your learning project and try to mobilize every available resource and utilise every opportunity for your learning. You may also wish to make some regular time to carry out your learning project.

Evaluating learning

Once you implement your learning plan, you can evaluate your success. To measure your success, try to identify some clear milestones against which you can evaluate your achievements.

For example your aim was to be able to interpret the national budget. To achieve this aim you planned to participate in a workshop on budget, read some relevant literature and follow the news articles and discussions on budget. Now while taking part in these activities, try to assess whether you are able to read the budget, identify its trends, recognise the significance of the revenues and allocations, and interpret the possible effect of the budget on national economy and standard of living.

It is always better to relate the assessment criteria to your objectives and use the same action verbs to measure the success of the activities.



4.2 Study Strategies

Academic performance can be greatly improved by your using study skills to complement instruction. They are important because they help you to learn. They also help to meet the expectation that you will become an independent learner. Above all, study skills are important because they are lifelong skills. They are critical for success in the workplace and in our lives.

4.3 Note-taking and skills for face-to-face sessions

Adequate notes are a necessary adjunct to efficient study and learning. Here are some suggestions:

1. Listen actively - if possible think before you write - but don't get behind.
2. Be open-minded about points you disagree on. Don't let arguing interfere with your note-taking.
3. Raise questions if appropriate.
4. Develop and use a standard method of note-taking including punctuation, abbreviations, margins, etc.
5. Take and keep notes in a large notebook. The only merit to a small notebook is ease of carrying and that is not your main objective. A large notebook allows you to adequately indent and use an outline form.
6. Leave a few spaces blank as you move from one point to the next so that you can fill in additional points later if necessary. Your objective is to take helpful notes, not to save paper.
7. Do not try to take down everything that the lecturer says. It is impossible in the first place and unnecessary in the second place because not everything is of equal importance. Spend more time listening and attempt to take down the main points. If you are writing as fast as you can, you cannot be as discriminating a listener. There may be some times, however, when it is more important to write than to think.
8. Listen for cues as to important points, transition from one point to the next, repetition of points for emphasis, changes in voice inflections, enumeration of a series of points, etc.
9. Many lecturers attempt to present a few major points and several minor points in a lecture. The rest is explanatory material and samples. Try to see the main points and do not get lost in a barrage of minor points that do not seem related to each other. The relationship is there if you will listen for it. Be alert to cues about what the lecturer thinks is important.
10. Make your original notes legible enough for your own reading, but use abbreviations of your own invention when possible. The effort required to recopy notes can be better spent in rereading them and thinking about them. Although neatness is a virtue in some respect, it does not necessarily increase your learning.

11. Copy down everything on the board, regardless. Did you ever stop to think that every blackboard scribble might be a clue to an exam item? You may not be able to integrate what is on the board into your lecture notes, but if you copy it, it may serve as a useful clue for you later. If not, what the heck -- you haven't wasted anything. You were in the classroom anyway.
12. Sit as close to the front of the class, there are fewer distractions and it is easier to hear, see and attend to important material.
13. Get assignments and suggestions precisely - ask questions if you're not sure.

Summarising: This involves writing brief statements that represent the main idea of the information being read.

Outlining: Outlining presents the main points of the material in a hierarchical format, with each detail organised under a higher-level category.

Mapping: Students identify main ideas and then diagram connections between them.

The PQR4 Method: (Educational Psychology , Slavin 1997)

1. **Preview:** Survey or scan the material quickly to get an idea of the general organisation and major topics and subtopic. Pay attention to headings and subheadings, and identify what you will be reading and studying.
2. **Question:** Ask yourself questions about the material as you read it. Use headings to invent questions using the “wh” words: who, what, why, where.
3. **Read:** Read the material. Do not take extensive written notes. Try to answer the questions you posed while reading.
4. **Reflect on the material:** Try to understand and make meaning of the presented information by (1) relating it to things you already know, (2) relating the subtopics in the text to primary concepts or principles.
5. **Recite:** Practise remembering the information by stating points out loud and asking and answering questions.
6. **Review:** In the final step, actively review the material, focusing on asking yourself questions and rereading the material only when you are not sure of the answer.



4.4 Basic guidelines on studying

Do you know your Learning Style?

Learning Styles are various approaches to learning and studying. Although many different learning styles have been described, one theme that unites most of the styles is the difference between deep and surface approaches to processing information in a learning situation.

Surface Learning as the name implies means simply scraping the surface of the material being studied, without carrying out any deep processing of the material. Students who adopt such a surface approach tend to work according to the following general pattern:

- Concentrating purely on assessment requirements
- Accepting information and ideas passively
- Memorising facts and procedures routinely
- Ignoring guiding principles or patterns
- Failing to reflect on the underlying purpose or relationship of the information to a “bigger picture”

Students who adopt a deep approach, on the other hand, make a serious attempt to turn other people's ideas into their own. They tend to work according to the following general pattern:

- Endeavouring to understand material for themselves
- Interacting vigorously and critically with content
- Relating ideas to previous knowledge and experience
- Using organising principles to integrate ideas
- Relating evidence to conclusion
- Examine the logic of the arguments

Students who adopt a strategic approach to learning consciously set out to achieve the highest possible grades. They tend to work according to the following general pattern:

- Putting steady effort into study
- Identifying relevant material that will be addressed in assignments and testing
- Contriving to put time and effort to maximum effect
- Knowing the requirements and criteria for assessment

A learner can potentially use either deep or surface level processing therefore, these do not represent fixed cognitive styles. You can be versatile in your approach depending on how you perceive the task.

How do you discover your learning Style? An adaptation of Solomon's Learning Style Inventory can assist you (See Exercise 4.2)

Following are descriptions of two categories of learning styles that you will use to decide your own learning style. Most people will get somewhere along the continuum between the two types in each category.

Are you visual or verbal?

Visual learners remember best what they see: pictures, diagrams, flow charts, time lines, films, and demonstrations. They tend to forget words and ideas that are spoken only. Classes generally don't include that much visual information. Note that although words written on paper or a blackboard are something you see, understanding that easily is part of being verbal learner. Visual learners learn most easily from visual charts that don't involve words.

Student suggested strategies for the visual learner:

- Add diagrams to your notes whenever possible. Dates can be drawn on a time line; math functions can be graphed; percentages can be drawn in a pie chart.
- Organise your notes so that you can clearly see main points and supporting facts and how things are connected.
- Connect related facts in your notes by drawing arrows
- Colour –code your notes with highlighters so that everything that relates to one topic is the same colour.

Verbal learners remember much of what they hear and more of what they hear and then say. They benefit from discussion, prefer verbal explanation to visual demonstrations, and learn effectively, by explaining things to others. Written words are processed as verbal information; therefore, verbal learners learn well through reading. The majority of classes, since they present material through the written word, lecture, or discussion, are geared to verbal learners.

Student-suggested strategies for the verbal learner:

- Get enough sleep and show up on time so that you can take everything in most efficiently.
- Talk about what you learn. Work in study groups so that you have an opportunity to explain and discuss what you are learning.

Are you sequential or global?

Sequential learners find it easiest to learn material presented in a logical, ordered progression. They solve problems in a linear, step-by-step manner. They can work with sections of material without yet fully understanding the whole picture. They tend to be stronger when looking at the parts of a whole rather than understanding the whole and then dividing it up into parts. They learn best when taking in material in a progression from easiest to more complex to most difficult. Most courses are taught sequentially.

Student-suggested strategies for the sequential learner:

- If you have a class where an instructor jumps around from topic to topic or skip steps, ask the instructor to fill in the skipped portions or to help you connect the topics.
- When you study notes from a class where the instructor presents information at random, don't read your notes as they are. Take time to re-write the material according to whatever logic helps you to understand it best. Even though this takes a while, it will save you study time in the long run.

Global learners learn in fits and starts. They may feel lost for days or weeks, unable to solve even the simplest problems or show the most rudimentary understanding, until they suddenly "get it". They may feel stupid and discouraged when struggling with material, which many other students seem to learn easily. Once they understand, though, they tend to see the big picture to an extent that others may not often achieve. They are often highly creative.

Student-suggest strategies for the global learner:

- First of all, just recognising that you aren't slow or stupid can help.
- Before you try to study a chapter in a book, read all the subheadings to try to get an overview of where the chapter is going.
- When you get your first assignment on a new topic, set aside extra time and skim the entire chapter before you begin.

- Instead of spending a short time on every subject every night, try setting aside evenings for specific subjects and immerse yourself in just one subject at a time. Then stay away from that subject for a day or two.
- Try to relate subjects to other things that you already know. Keep asking yourself how you could apply the material and what it has to do with anything else.
- Don't lose faith in yourself. You will get it, and once you do, you may be able to do more with it than you can imagine



4.5 Getting ready to study

1. Set aside a place for study and study only!
 - A. Find a specific place (or places) that you can use for studying (for example, the campus libraries, vacant classrooms, quiet areas in the student centre, bedroom at home, etc.)
 - B. Make a place specific to studying. You are trying to build a habit of studying when you are in this place. So, don't use your study space for social conversations, writing letters, daydreaming, etc.
 - C. Ensure that your study area has the following:
 - good lighting
 - ventilation
 - a comfortable chair, but not too comfortable
 - a desk large enough to spread out your materials
 - D. Ensure that your study area does not have the following:
 - a distracting view of other activities that you want to be involved in
 - a telephone
 - a loud stereo
 - a TV which is playing loudly
 - a roommate or friend who wants to talk a lot
 - a refrigerator stocked with scrumptious goodies

2. Divide your work into small, short-range goals.
 - A. Don't set a goal as vague and large as ... "I am going to spend all day Saturday studying!" You will only set yourself up for failure and discouragement.
 - B. Take the time block that you have scheduled for study and set a reachable study goal. (for example: finish reading 3 sections of chapter seven in my Psychology text, or complete one math problem, or write the rough draft of the introduction to my English paper, etc.)
 - C. Set your goal when you sit down to study but before you begin to work.

Set a goal that you can reach. You may, in fact, do more than your goal but set a reasonable goal even if it seems too easy.

4.6 Remembering

College students are confronted with two kinds or types of memory work. The first and more common is general remembering or remembering the idea without using the exact words of the book or professor. General memory is called for in all subjects; however, the arts, social sciences and literature probably make the greatest use of this particular kind of remembering.

The other type of memory work is the verbatim memorising or remembering the identical words by which something is expressed. This type of memorising may be called for in all subjects but especially in law, dramatics, science, engineering, mathematics, and foreign language where the exact wording of formulas, rules, norms, law, lines in a play, or vocabulary must be remembered.

Other kinds of memory have their place and it is important for the student to know when to stop with the general idea and when to fix in mind the exact words, numbers, and symbols.

1. Understand thoroughly what is to be remembered and memorised. When something is understood, be it a name or a chemical chain it is almost completely learned, for anything thoroughly understood is well on the way toward being memorised. In the very process of trying to understand, to get clearly in mind a complex series of events, or chain of reasoning, the best possible process of trying to fix in mind for later use is being followed.

2. Spot what is to be memorised verbatim. It is a good plan to use a special marking symbol in text and notebook to indicate parts and passages, rules, data, and all other elements which need to be memorised instead of just understood and remembered.
3. Use of various types of mnemonic devices – These are memory directed tactics which help a learner to transform and organise information to be able to retrieve when it is required.
4. Acronyms, Rhymes and Acoustics are mnemonic tactics may be used
5. Acronyms – are formed from taking the initial letters of a series words and making a new word. Eg. North American Treaty **Organisation**
6. Acoustics – sentences made up of words derived from the first letter of each word.
7. Elaborative Rehearsal – involves connecting information you are trying to learn with something you already know, so that the material becomes personally meaningful. Try to examine the material from many angles. Think about what you are trying to learn. Find an interest in the material if you wish to memorise it with ease.
8. Study first the items you want to remember longest.
9. Learn complete units at one time, as that is the way it will have to be recalled.
10. Over learn to make certain.
11. Analyse material and strive to intensify the impressions the material makes.
12. Fix concrete imagery whenever possible. Close your eyes and get a picture of the explanation and summary answer. Try to see it on the page. See the key words underlined.
13. Make you own applications, examples, and illustrations.
14. Reduce the material to be remembered to your own self-made system or series of numbered steps.
15. Represent the idea graphically by use of pictorial or diagrammatic forms.
16. Make a list of key words most useful in explaining the idea or content of the lesson.
17. Form a variety of associations among the points you wish to remember. The richer the associations, the better the memory.
18. Try making the idea clear to a friend without referring to your book or notes.

19. Actually write out examination questions on the material that you think you might get at the end of the term. Then write answers to your own questions. Since you now have the chance, consult the text or your notes to improve your answers.
20. Follow suggestions for reviewing. This is an important part of remembering.



Summary

'Metacognition' is the learner's ability to control his/her own learning. Metacognition skills are important for implementing self-directed learning projects which involves identifying and analysing needs, setting objectives, identifying resources, utilising resources and opportunities and evaluating learning.

Learning how to learn skills are a range of skills that help a learner to utilise every possible learning opportunity and learn in a planned way. Such skills include planning skills, social skills, study skills and self-organisation skills.



Activity 10 Create a mnemonic device

Take a look at all the principles of good memory, whether they apply to how you take in information or how you store it. Make up a mnemonic device that allows you to remember them quickly. You can use a sentence, an acronym or a rhyme.

Think of one other time when you have used mnemonic device to remember something. What was the device how did it help you?



Activity 11

Discovering your learning style

Complete the following learning style inventory adapted from Solomon's learning style inventory. Circle a or b to indicate your answer to each question. You must answer every question and you must choose only one answer for each question. If both answers seem to apply to you, choose the answer that applies more often.

1. When I recall what I did yesterday, I am most likely to think in terms of
 - a. pictures/images
 - b. words/verbal descriptions
2. I usually think new material is
 - a. easier at the beginning and then harder as it gets more complicated
 - b. often confusing at the beginning but easier as I start to understand what the whole subject is about
3. I prefer to receive new information in the form of
 - a. pictures, diagrams, graphs, or maps
 - b. written directions or verbal information
4. I learn
 - a. at a fairly regular pace. If I study hard I'll "get it" and then move on.
 - b. in fits and starts. I might be totally confused and then suddenly it all "clicks"
5. In a book with lots of pictures and charts, I am likely to
 - a. look over the pictures and charts carefully
 - b. focus on the written text
6. It's easier for me to memorize facts from
 - a. a list
 - b. whole story/essay with the facts embedded in it

7. I like instructors
 - a. who put a lot of diagrams on the board
 - b. who spend a lot of time explaining
8. Once I understand
 - a. all of the parts, I understand the whole thing
 - b. the whole thing, I see how the parts fit
9. I remember best
 - a. what I see
 - b. what I hear
10. When I solve problems that involve some math, I usually
 - a. work my way to the solutions one step at a time
 - b. see the solutions but then have to struggle to figure out the steps to get them
11. When I get directions to a new place, I prefer
 - a. a map
 - b. written instructions
12. When I am thinking about something I've read,
 - a. I remember the incidents and try to put them together to figure out the themes
 - b. I just know what the themes are when I finish reading and then I have to back-up and find the incidents that demonstrate them
13. When I see a diagram or sketch in class, I am most likely to remember
 - a. the picture
 - b. what the instructor said about it
13. It is more important to me that an instructor
 - a. lays out the material in clear, sequential steps
 - b. gives me an overall picture and relate the material to other subjects

Scoring sheet

1. Put 1's in the appropriate spaces in the table on the following page (e.g., if you answered 'a' to Question 3, put a 1 in Column a by Question 3).
2. Total the columns and write the totals in the indicated spaces.
3. For each of the two scales, subtract the smaller total from the larger one. Write the difference.
4. On the table overleaf, mark X's above your scores on each of the two scales.

Visual/Verbal		Sequential/Global	
a	b	a	b
1 ____	____	2 ____	____
3 ____	____	4 ____	____
5 ____	____	6 ____	____
7 ____	____	8 ____	____
9 ____	____	10 ____	____
11 ____	____	12 ____	____
13 ____	____	14 ____	____
Total: _____		Total: _____	
Difference: _____		Difference: _____	

Visual/ -----
Verbal

7a 6a 5a 4a 3a 2a 1a 0 1b 2b 3b 4b 5b 6b 7b

Sequential/ -----
Global

7a 6a 5a 4a 3a 2a 1a 0 1b 2b 3b 4b 5b 6b 7b

If your score on a scale is 1 or 2, you are fairly well balanced on the two dimensions of that scale.

If your score on a scale is 3,4, or 5, you have a moderate preference for one dimension of the scale and will learn more easily in a teaching environment that favours that dimension.

If your score on a scale is 6 or 7, you have a very strong preference for one dimension of that scale. You may have real difficulty learning in an environment that does not support that preference.

References

Carter C.et.al.(198?) *Keys to Success* . Prentice Hall N. J.

Slavin, Robert, (1997) *Educational Psychology*. Allyn and Bacon.

Section 5



How teachers can influence personal development of students

As you know, the power to attain your goals stems from your own motivation and commitment; however, in the previous sections you have learnt about various factors and strategies of personal development. You should be motivated to utilise these strategies and techniques with your own students. As a teacher of technical and vocational education and training, your aim is not only to strive for your own personal development but also to help your students develop personally.

Teachers have, obviously, influence on their students, since the students learn from their teachers, share experience with them and many students take their teachers as their role models. It is important to know how you can influence the self-development of your students.

On completion of this Section, you will be able to:

- identify various roles of a teacher
- explain the ways how a teacher can influence the self-development of the students
- work out ways of facilitating the self-development of your students

5.1 Teacher as motivator

Motivation is the individual's underlying attitude of eagerness and willingness to do something. You know motivation is an important factor that influences learning and teachers can influence learner motivation.

So there is a role of the teacher as motivator of the students. In fact, some educationists think the main role of the teacher is to motivate the students. If sufficiently motivated the students will explore and learn by themselves. But if they are poorly motivated, it is difficult for them to be engaged in learning.

How can teachers motivate their students? Here are a few tips:

Help your students analyse their needs. Relate learning with their practical needs. Help them to discover the purpose of learning.

Pay attention to your students. Listen to their problems. Show empathy. Help them to work out their own strategies.

Tell them success stories. Give practical examples. Provide a vision of the target learning situation, that is, how the students will benefit from learning.

Encourage the students in problem solving. Let them explore and have fun.

Recognise and appreciate their achievements. Provide constructive feedback soon as possible. Give reinforcement and reward for their progress, especially in the form of your comments.

Help them measure and evaluate their success. Encourage them to be self-directed learners.

There may be many other ways of motivating your students. Share them with your colleagues.

5.2 Teacher as guide

In your motivational role, you encourage the students to undertake the learning adventures. But sometimes you also have to work as a guide for their adventures. That means you have to take part in the learning experiences of your students and show them the ways to explore and fulfil the learning objectives.

The role of a teacher-guide is the role of a scout and a coach. As a scout you show the learning path to your students indicating the 'sign-posts' and various ways to access learning. As a coach you train them in the necessary learning skills and suggest to them how to advance through the critical learning path.

As a teacher-guide you may do the following things for your students:

- focus on some general strategies for learning
- train your learning skills
- encourage the students to develop their individual learning plans
- evaluate their learning plan and provide some alternative suggestions for their comparison

- check the validity and effectiveness of their learning methodologies
- provide necessary support to your students for their learning endeavour
- challenge their notions if required
- help them to synthesise their ideas and experiences to form an overall picture

So as a teacher-guide your role is to provide necessary support, resource, direction and guidance so that the students can explore and learn by themselves.



5.3 Teacher as a resource person

The most common role of a teacher is the role of a resource person. That means teachers are expected to have mastery over the subjects they teach and they have to transmit their knowledge and skills to their students through the instructions.

Although the teachers are not the 'sole authority' of learning, it is often expected that teachers know everything of their subjects and they have to supply necessary knowledge and skills to their students. This age-old notion about teachers as instructors is being changed recently.

Nevertheless teachers sometimes do have to act as instructors and resource persons for supplying necessary knowledge and skills to the students.

So it is important to keep yourself current and up-to-date about the latest developments of your subject to be a successful resource person. Especially because there may be some passive students who require the teacher to take a more active role and control than the self-directed learners.

5.4 Teacher as facilitator

In the traditional notion of education, the teacher is the only source of learning and the role of teachers is to transmit their knowledge, skills and attitude to the students in a planned way. However, with recent developments in epistemology (the study of the nature of knowledge) and learning theories, the role of a teacher is evolving to that of a facilitator rather than an instructor.

Facilitating learning means encouraging, supporting and promoting learning in various ways. While facilitating, the teacher-facilitator encourages the students to play more active role than the teacher does and the teachers often share their ideas, notions and experiences with the students when asked. The teacher-facilitators also value the ideas, notions and experiences of the students and consider them as equally valid.

You could facilitate your students' learning process in many ways. If your aim is to facilitate your students to show a desired level of performance, you could do a simple analysis of performance discrepancy. Usually people do not or cannot perform at the same desired level due to one or more of three reasons. First, they may be prevented from doing that, which means there could be some barriers to performance. Secondly, they may not be willing to do that, which means they lack motivation for doing that. Thirdly, they may not be able to do that, which means they lack knowledge and skills for doing the job.

You see, the instructional role of a teacher, which is to convey knowledge and skills, is only relevant to the third reason. In other cases, as a facilitator your role would be to remove the barriers to learning and to create motivation for performing at the desired level.

5.5 Teacher as exemplar

Teachers are thought of as exemplars of the subjects they teach. Many students take their teachers as their role model and try to follow their examples. So, teachers have an obvious impact on their students.

Besides 'learning to know' or the knowledge and 'learning to do' or the skills, it is also very important to learn to 'be'. That is, to change or build up attitudes. Beyond acquiring necessary knowledge and skills, building up proper attitudes is also essential for all professions and is requisite to learning.

Teachers could be the best source for building up such attitudes. In their teachers, the students often see the result of their learning, that is, what they would be as a result of their learning. So it is important for the teachers to present themselves as the exemplars of their subjects to the students.

To exemplify something is actually related to a total approach to living. It is very much connected with your attitude towards life, working philosophy, way of thinking, habits and day- to- day practise.

Remember that your students may try to follow you. So, practise yourself what you would recommend to your students.



Summary

- Teachers can influence learning and personal development of their students. There are many ways teachers can do so.
- Teachers can motivate students for learning and personal development.
- They can guide students throughout the learning process and show them the ways of learning.
- Teachers can identify sources of learning and provide necessary counselling and guidance to the students.
- Teachers can initiate and facilitate the learning process of the students.
- Teacher can also exemplify their subjects and act as the role models for the students.



Activity 12

Based upon the discussions in this section, how would you identify the role of the teacher in the following situations? Choose phrases from the following list:

- Teacher as motivator
 - Teacher as guide
 - Teacher as resource person
 - Teacher as facilitator
 - Teacher as exemplar
-
- a) A group of students wants to know how to fix up a camera. The teacher explains how a camera works and shows them how to fix up a camera that was out of order.
 - b) A student is doing research on telephone conferencing. She discusses her ideas with her teacher. The teacher questions the validity of her hypotheses and offers his suggestions to set the experiment.
 - c) A teacher engages her students in experiments and group discussions. She herself sits with the students and takes part in their activities.
 - d) A teacher tells his students great stories of scientific inventions to develop their inquiring minds.
 - e) A teacher is very hard working and organised. His instructions, activities, suggestions and habits impress most of the students. Some students even express that they would like to take him as their role model.



Answer key and discussion

- a) Teacher as resource person.

Here the teacher is the source of learning.

- b) Teacher as guide.

The teacher is questioning the ideas of the student and offering suggestions.

- c) Teacher as facilitator.

The teacher is facilitating the learning process.

- d) Teacher as motivator.

The teacher is motivating the students by telling stories.

- e) Teacher as exemplar.

Perhaps the teacher is exemplifying the subject he teaches. Some students want to take him as their role model.



Assignment 5.5-1

Unit 5.5 Personal Development

Do extensive examination and analysis of yourself incorporating the topics and principles covered in this unit. Identify your strengths and weaknesses in each area. Suggest ways- based on the knowledge and skills learnt in this unit that you might use to improve and develop your self.

Guidelines:

1. Give a good overview of your background, family and your psychological needs.
2. Present self-assessment under each of the following areas:
 - Your personal mission statement.
 - Self -concept and self esteem (for example – how does your physical appearance and intellectual development affect your self concept?)
 - Goal Setting (What goals have you set and how do you plan to achieve them)
 - Lifestyle (Identify areas in your lifestyle that you may wish to change and suggest ways of initiating these changes)
 - Values (Your hierarchy of values – What do you value most?)
 - Assertiveness (How assertive are you? How do you plan to deal with asserting yourself?)
 - Stress (Identify the major stressors in your life. How do you plan to reduce and manage them?)
 - Time Management (Identify the major time wasters in your life. How do you plan to eliminate these time wasters?)
 - Study Strategies (Assessment of your study style. Are they working for you?)
 - Learning Styles (In what ways can you utilise the knowledge about your lifestyle)
 - Attitudes (What steps have you taken to create a more positive attitude)
 - Habits (Which habits have you changed?)

You may wish to share any negative or positive experiences as it relates to any of the topics.