

Remember To Buy Bread

We need to buy bread and are kerfuffled by the meaningless of the advice we are given by caregivers as a guide to doing this simple task.

Rote is a way of learning by endless repetition. It is also a homonym for 'wrote'. Rote is enacted by repetitive verbalizing, thinking and writing.

For those of us who are struggling with a degree of difficulty to retrieve information from our brain, we are advised that 'rote' helps us do that. That may be a fine thing to tell us, but it can be tediously boring. We can say 'bread' many times, we can write it out many times, and visualize paying for it at the store many times. This process can be so tedious that we wonder whether it really matters if we do get bread.

Since pencil makes the best memory, we are also advised to write it on paper, but that presents a problem. We can easily lose the piece of paper or forget that we have it to look at when we're at the store. We are, thus, caught between a rock and a hard place by trying to carry out the advice of rote and list.

However, there are ways we can look at such types of advice to help our memory.

They are:

ROTE: Everybody, no matter how severe their brain injury, remembers the alphabet. That is because it has been etched in our mind by endless repetition, by repetitive singing of the alphabet song and by writing it out in sequence many times. Knowing the alphabet proves to anybody that rote does work!

LIST: We can carry in our pocket or purse a small blank notebook. This notebook can be used to record anything we want to remember to do. When we get to the store for our bread, we can look at our notebook and easily find what we wanted to buy at the store. When we buy it, we can cross it off our notebook so that we don't foolishly end up buying bread later on in the day.

CUE: There is a type of memory that's not particularly discussed. That involves visual memory. When we know we need to buy bread, we can visualize ourself at the store, picking out the bread, paying for it and putting it away where it goes at home. That visualization works. We are essentially cuing ourselves to what we need by what we see.

Thus we have solved our problem of remembering to buy bread. We can repeat it by the rote method, we can list it by using our notebook that is always with us, and we can give ourselves a cue by visualizing getting it.

While these words are focusing on buying bread, the same methods work for anything. Once you try it, you will be successful.

There's no such thing as a problem that can't be solved. Whatever your particular problem as a result of your brain injury, write in and you will receive advice of how to compensate effectively. Once you get into the swing of doing things you want when you want, your expectation of doing so will escalate tremendously.

With a positive expectation, most humans can do things. This is shown by the rhyme that goes: "I think I can, I think I can, I think I really can. I can do most anything if I only think I can. I knew I could, I knew I could." It's not whether you win or lose, but how you play the game. Play your game by trying things until something works! If you don't try, you don't succeed! Even though we're not a judge, we can TRY!

Of interest, we should realize that the methods that are called rote, list and cue are used by anybody to remember anything. They are also the way students are taught by teachers to remember and babies are taught by parents to remember. With understanding that it actually works, we can be our own teachers!