

Eight Weeks of Conversation Cafe Week One: Lifestyle Topic- Learning Styles

One theory of education suggests people learn in various ways. They say learning styles reflect different parts of the brain people use to help remember information. When more than one part of the brain is used during learning, a person is able to remember more information better. By knowing your learning styles you can use techniques to improve the speed and quality of your memory and understanding.

Here are some learning styles. Read through each one and discuss how you relate to them.

Visual – Do you use pictures or images to remember information?

Aural (auditory – musical) Do you remember information by hearing it or listening to music?

Verbal – Do you primarily learn by words, both spoken and written?

Physical -- Do you learn by doing something with your hands or body, like building something or moving things around?

Logical – Do you remember by using logic and reasoning?

Social – Does studying in groups help you?

Solitary – Do you prefer to study alone?

The following are questions to help you further identify your learning style. See if you can identify your top three learning styles.

- 1) What type of book would you like to read?
 - a) A book with many pictures
 - b) A book with many words
 - c) A book with words puzzles

- 2) When you do not know if a word is spelled correctly what do you do?
 - a) Write it down to see if it looks correct
 - b) Spell it out loud to see if it sounds correct
 - c) Trace the letters in the air

- 3) What is the best way for you to study for an exam?
 - a) Read your notes and review charts and pictures
 - b) Have a friend ask you questions for you to answer out loud
 - c) Make up cards for you to review with answers on the back

- 4) What is the best way for you to learn how to do a task?
 - a) Have someone show you
 - b) Read about it or listen to someone explain it
 - c) By doing it yourself

- 5) What do you find most distracting when you are studying?
 - a) People walking past you
 - b) Loud noises
 - c) An uncomfortable chair

- 6) When you are in a new city, how do you find your way around?
 - a) Use a map
 - b) Ask for directions
 - c) Walk until you find what you are looking for

- 7) What do you like to do to relax?
 - a) Read
 - b) Listen to music
 - c) Exercise

- 8) What are you most likely to remember about new people you meet?
 - a) Their face but not their name
 - b) Their name but not their face
 - c) What you talked about with them

Share with the group what you think are your top three learning styles.

After discussing learning styles, what new habits or techniques can you use for learning?

Some educators suggest that learning styles are not that important and are not backed by research. These people say that what helps people learn is when they connect new information with older understandings. By this kind of interaction mentally, we tend to remember and understand in greater ways than just repeating information. What do you think?