



## Trying to Remember

By Dr. Linda Hancock

### ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Dr. Hancock has written a regular weekly column entitled “All Psyched Up” for newspapers in two Canadian provinces for more than a dozen years. Over the years, her readers and clients have said that they have benefited from her common-sense solutions, wisdom, and sense of humour. Dr. Linda Hancock, the author of “Life is An Adventure...every step of the way” and “Open for Business Success” is a Registered Psychologist who has a private practice in Medicine Hat. She can be reached at 403-529-6877 or through email [office@drlindahancock.com](mailto:office@drlindahancock.com)

### Published

July 13th, 2013

It just seems that there is so much to remember these days. I really don't think that I can blame age (or don't want to) because there is an excess of information that I didn't even have when I was younger. Like passwords and PIN numbers. You aren't supposed to use the same one over and over again but how on earth can you remember all of them? Well, you could enter them in a computer app as long as you put a password on the app!

Over the years I have developed some strategies that allow me to trick myself into doing well. Today I share these with you:

1. Listen well - It is impossible for your brain to remember things that you didn't hear in the first place. When you are being introduced to a group that includes new people take a couple of minutes to ask the person about their name and use it a couple of times before moving on to the next person. It is acceptable (and flattering) to the person if you ask for the correct spelling or try to associate it with someone famous.
2. Take immediate action - Don't trust your memory to be accurate after time has lapsed. If you need to do something or want to remember, use a strategy such as writing it down right away. People will respect the fact that it is important enough for you to give the item priority status.
3. Use technology to help you remember - I have all the important birthdays in my iPhone along with the year that the person was born and an electronic reminder so that I never miss sending congratulating them.
4. Put EVERYTHING on your calendar - Even if it is just making a telephone call or paying a bill, your calendar should be the one and only place that you put all your commitments.
5. Have one journal where you enter information - I always recommend that clients have a health journal which they carry with them to every appointment. It should document the medications, dates and directions provided by each medical professional. You can also enter the questions that you want to ask at your next appointment (and the answers given) so that your mind is free from the anxiety that accompanies fear of forgetting.
6. Phone yourself - When I am at the office and want to remind myself to bring something from home, I just call my voice mail and leave a message. Then, when I arrive home and listen to the message I immediately put the item in a bag on the door handle for the next morning.
7. Keep a pad of sticky notes by the door - When you think of something that you need to do, write yourself a note a put it on the door. I usually write a list of things in the order that will save time and gas. The sticky note can easily be moved from the door to the dash of the car and serve as a guide for you.

To be honest, I don't want to remember everything. But when there are things that I really need to do, the above strategies help me to look and feel good.

This week try to implement at least one of these and notice how nice it is to free your mind up a little!