



**CLARITY
COGNITION®**

Memory

CLARITY COGNITION

 www.ClarityCognition.com
 @ClarityCog

Worried about your memory?

Memory worries are the most common issue that occurs when we have difficulties with any aspect of our cognition, in fact concerns about memory is often the reason why people seek medical help. Therefore, it is very important to understand how memory works. There are many factors that can impact our perception of memory, including; stress, anxiety, mood and poor sleep. When we are worried about our memory, yet our assessments carried out by medical professionals return within normal range, this is often called Subjective Cognitive Impairment (SCI).

Overview of Memory

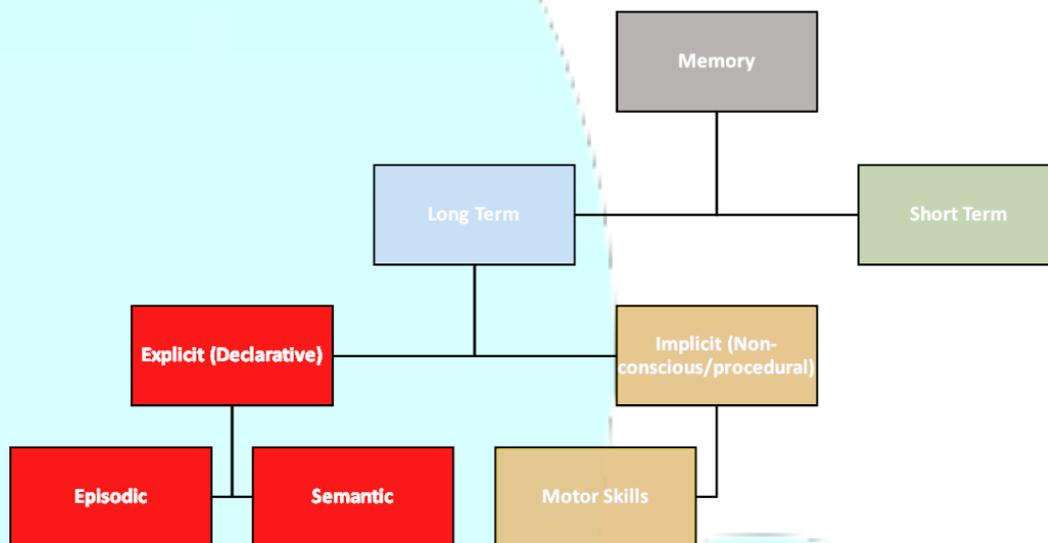
There are two broad categories of memory. We have **short-term memory**, which is our ability to retrain small amounts of information for a limited period of time and **long-term memory**, which can be divided further. Long-term memory can be split into **explicit** and **implicit** memory. Implicit memory can be thought of as our **motor memory**, like the ability to ride a bike or how a pianist can instinctually play the piano with minima thought.

Explicit memory can be further divided and is split into:

Episodic Memory: This is the memory of personally experienced events. It ranges from remembering things on the news to events from previous holidays. The part of the brain linked to these types of memory is an S shaped structure in the middle part of the brain called the hippocampus.

Semantic Memory: This type of memory is linked to word meaning and general knowledge, including the names of people and places. The parts of the brain associated with this type of memory are areas in the frontal and side parts of the brain. S

Importantly, short term, episodic and semantic memory can all be affected by other problems such as anxiety, depression and poor sleep.



The Memory Process

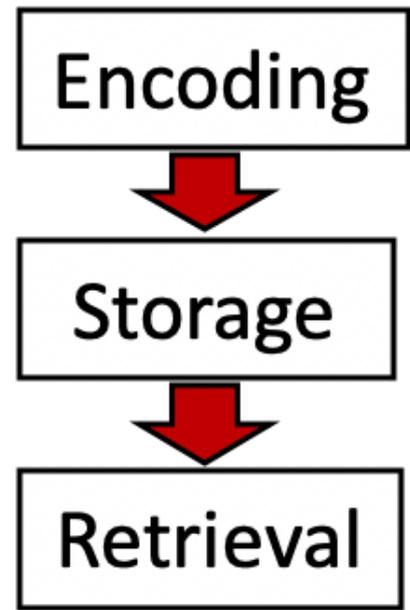
Memory is the brain's ability to convert, store, and retrieve information when needed. The way in which we lay down and recall memory follows three main stages:

Encoding is where we convert what we see and hear in our surroundings into a memory ready for storage. There are many things that can affect our ability to encode, such as poor sleep, low mood, excess stress and anxiety. When our concentration is reduced, we can also have problems encoding. In fact, often when people feel like they are forgetful, they “forget” because they did not encode memories in the first place. This means that the memory hadn't been remembered to begin with, so wasn't actually forgotten! This process is commonly experienced when we meet new people and try to recall their name later.

Importantly, in order to encode, we need to be able to pay attention. Actively making an effort to allow this process to happen can instantly improve our ability to remember. There are a number of memory techniques that can be learnt in order to help us encode items into our memory which are covered in our **Clarity Course**.

Another way in which we can optimise our ability to encode is to assess whether stress, anxiety, and low mood are affecting our ability to concentrate. It is also important to consider the impact of our immediate environment on our ability to encode. If you find yourself in a busy, loud and/or overwhelming environment, this may not be conducive to focusing attention in such a way that allows a memory to be laid down.

If we can encode information, we then allow for the memory to be **stored**.

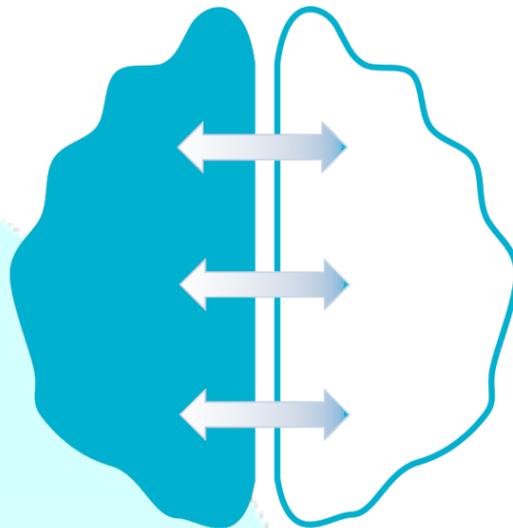


Remembering Something New

Everyone is unique and what might help one person remember may be different for another. What is important is turning what you need to remember into a format that your brain **likes** based on your own individual strengths and learning style. Our brains are composed of two sides and each has its own specific strengths. The left side of the brain is often considered to be stronger in logic and maths, whereas the right side of our brain is responsible for creativity and abstract reasoning. In order to utilise your memory in the best possible way, it is important to combine both sides of the brain, drawing on its specific strengths. This provides us with an opportunity to maximise our chances of remembering and gain an insight into how we best learn.

LEFT BRAIN

- Number skills
- Maths/science
- Language
- Objectivity
- Analytics
- Logic
- Reasoning



RIGHT BRAIN

- Shapes in 3D
- Music/Art
- Intuition
- Creativity
- Imagination
- Subjectivity
- Synthesizing
- Emotion
- Face Recognition

Combine both sides to maximise your memory

Techniques that focus on how to utilise the strengths of different parts of the brain to aid memory are discussed in detail within the **Clarity Course**.

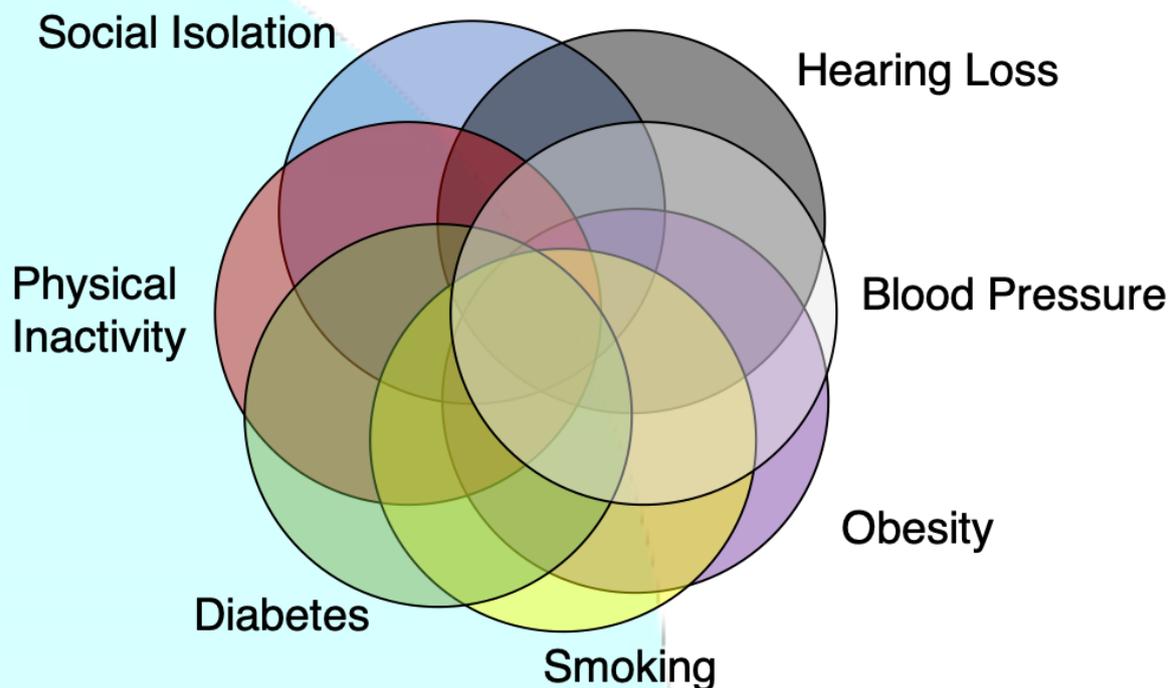
Reducing Risk Factors

Dementia is a fear for many people. You may know someone who has dementia and this can often be a great source of distress. Our understanding of dementia is increasing, and we are now more aware of the risk factors that render us more vulnerable to developing this condition. The good news is some of these risk factors are within our control and can be reduced.

Our risk of developing dementia is made up of two components:

1. Our genetics
2. Our environment

Sadly, there is not much we can do about our genetics, this is what we are born with. But we can however influence our environment and reduce our risk of dementia by up to **35%**. If we are able to reduce our risk by a small amount through lifestyle changes, this can have a huge impact in the long run. There are a number of areas that we need to consider when optimising our lifestyle.



Prevention is always better than cure, so try and modify the risk factors mentioned above. If you can significantly reduce them, overtime your overall risk of developing dementia could fall.

My thoughts and action plan, based on the information in this leaflet:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____