

The following are copies of a blog series Coach Banks wrote on the topic of **MEMORIZATION**. If you would like to read more recent posts please visit <http://old.claybanksstudio.com/blog/>

## WHAT'S POWERING YOUR MEMORY – Part I

June 19, 2012 By [Clay Banks](#)

The car you drive can have the most powerful engine imaginable, however...without the right fuel, it's not gonna perform very well. Hence, the reason for different octane fuels, ranging from 89 (there is lower), to rocket fuel (or Kentucky sour mash).



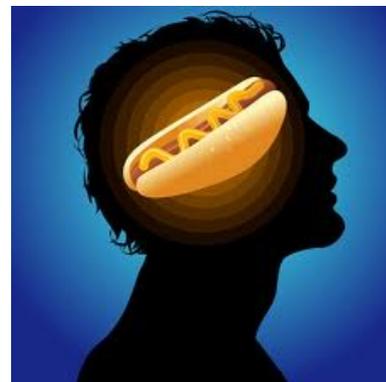
< **Is this you?**  
Friendly & smiley.  
or...  
**Is this you? >**  
Fierce & aggressive.



The **FOOD** you eat regularly is your **BRAIN FOOD**. It's the same food that fuels your 'thinker'. And your brain's performance is directly linked to what fuels it. So, let me ask you a simple question: "What are you filling your tank with?"



< **THIS?**  
or...  
**THIS? >**



If you just stop for a second and think about it...what we do as actors is more often than not called a “PERFORMANCE”. Why? Have you *seen* bad acting before?? Right! And it’s not what most people want to experience either. We want to see brilliant acting. Outstanding PERFORMANCES! And when it’s done correctly...that’s exactly what it is...a PERFORMANCE.

Don’t take your food consumption for granted...“*Wishful thinking doesn’t therefore a successful actor make you!*” You’ve got to act...smart...in all areas of the craft. And your nutrition is certainly one of them.

**BRAIN FOOD** – Think about what you eat!

**See You On Set!**  
**Coach Banks**

## **“THE ACTORS FREEWAY”**

### **Free Weekly Acting Exercises (*a free way to train*)**

WRITE one short paragraph of something, anything, filled with as much LITERAL and CONCEPTUAL information as you can. Then send it off to an acting buddy or scene partner. They intern will do the same.

Once you receive your paragraph, begin to memorize it ‘verbatim’. Try using what you know about mnemonics to assist you. See blog post on MNEMONICS. <http://old.claybanksstudio.com/blog/>

Work on memorizing menu items. Every time you eat out, try and remember all of the ingredients of that food item by the time the waiter comes to take your order. Then attempt to tell them exactly what you would like as it appears on the menu.

**REMEMBER: Memory is a muscle that requires exercise — regularly.**  
Remember all of the ingredients of that food item by the time the wait person comes to take your order. Then attempt to tell them exactly what you would like, as it appears on the menu.

**REMEMBER: Memory is a muscle that requires exercise — regularly.**

# THE MEMORIZATION PROCESS – Part II

May 21, 2012 By [Clay Banks](#)

## THE MEMORIZATION PROCESS –

- **Taking it all in**
- **Locating it again later**
- **Delivering it just as it were**

So, now that we're into this teaching on memory (intake and recall), one of the most important things I'd like for you to focus on is the raising of your awareness as to just how your memory actually works. Understanding this information will slide your knowledge fulcrum to the right (refer to the ZONE teaching) resulting in you becoming more confident. You becoming more confident will result in this whole process becoming more effective for you.

## TAKING INFORMATION IN (LEARNING LINES):

Your state of being when you take information in will greatly effect your ability to memorize effectively.



A clear head, lack of distractions, lack of stress, your care level, and setting aside a designated a chunk of time are just a few of the things you may want to consider when studying.

“I’m sorry, there was just so much going on that I can’t remember.”

## WHERE YOU PUT THE INFORMATION (STORAGE):

Now, for the sake of this lesson, we're going to consider the three basic types of memory that we use.

SENSE MEMORY– SHORT TERM MEMORY – LONG TERM MEMORY.

Think of your mind as if it were mechanical, much like a computer. Your memory might look something like this:



Sensory Memory



Short Term Memory



Long Term Memory (Archival)

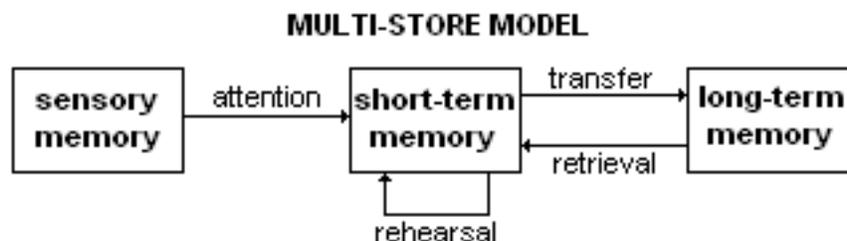
**Sense Memory** is similar to RAM (Random Access Memory), it only works when the power is on!

**Short Term Memory** only lasts for a few seconds to a few minutes...then it's gone!

**Long Term Memory** can last a lifetime...and beyond!  
(I really didn't mean for all of this to rhyme...)

### HOW TO GET THE INFORMATION BACK OUT (DELIVERY):

When you do the above properly and over time, not cramming at the last minute, your recall will be as easy as remembering your own name. Not to confuse you, but just take a look at this:



We'll be taking all of this to the next level this week. So, remember... don't forget!

**See You In The Studio!**  
**Coach**

# THE MEMORIZATION PROCESS CONTINUED – Part III

June 3, 2012 By [Clay Banks](#)

ARTISTS –TOTAL RECALL – It’s all in there, now let’s get it back out.  
Before we roll out any further with this lesson on MEMORIZATION be sure to read Part 1 first.



Having said that...

When considering methods to optimize memorization, you may come across something to this effect –“MEMORIZATION is a method of learning that allows an individual to recall information VERBATIM.” (see definition)

DEFINITIONS...

VERBATIM:

in exactly the same words as were used originally – word for word

So, let’s take a look at a little device called... **MNEMONICS.**

(Pronounced new\_mon\_ics.)

A mnemonic is a triggering device that assists in remembering something. Generally an association of many sorts that helps convert information from SHORT TERM memory to LONG TERM memory. Thus, enabling you to recall or “remember” things easier.

EXAMPLE: Take, for instance, any line of dialog. Now isolate the true MEANING of that line. What does that line mean to you? Draw a familiar association to that meaning, fill it with information... color, sound, feeling...and put it into action (the glue). Place it somewhere on/in your person (body), and pinch it. That’s correct; pinch that part of you (careful where you place the info). Now, let some time pass and pinch that location again. If you’ve done everything correctly, that information (line of dialog) should come back to you... just as you stored it. If not, continue to strengthen your mnemonic device.



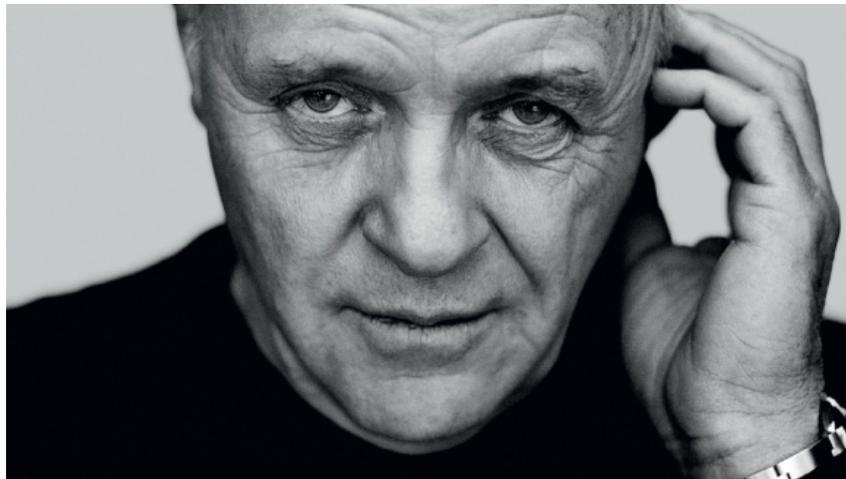
## Pinch

This is just one example of how mnemonics functions. You're not going to be pinching yourself all through your scene work. It's just to show you more visually how mnemonics works to help recall stored information. Remember the string on the finger thing?

See You On Set!  
Coach Banks

P.S.

Sir Anthony Hopkins not only reads his lines well over 200 times (that's right, 200) but he writes each line down three times. By the third time, he feels he's committed the line to memory. Writing your lines down will help you process and memorize them.



This is just one of the many ways to help you to memorize. It's incredibly important for me to stress the amount of 'work' that's involved in properly preparing for a scene.

# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

June 19, 2012 By [Clay Banks](#)

## ARTISTS – FOOD FOR THOUGHT

OK, I know that many of you have been patiently waiting for this “FOOD FOR THE BRAIN” teaching for a couple of weeks now... so I won't keep you in suspense any longer. Here it is...

After extensive investigative research, combing through a myriad of material and complex nutritional studies, deciphering through all sorts of contradicting and diametrically opposed opinions...I'm going to break it all down and keep it very simple for you. Ready?



### **EAT RIGHT AND DRINK PLENTY OF WATER**

Now, maybe that's not what you were expecting. But, if I were to go into too much detail about it all, I know that most of you would most likely tune out. So, here's my extended, mini version for you to chew on.

If you eat really BAD food, food containing heaps of empty calories, high sugar and sodium counts and ridiculous amount of fats, not only will your brain not function correctly, but you're putting yourself at risk of far too many things for me to mention in this article.

Apparently, your brain (like your body) seems to respond incredibly well to heavy doses of water, every day. So, here's the best thing for you to do:

### **DRINK HEAPS OF H2O!**

Consume half your body weight in ounces of water. If you weigh in at 100 pounds, you're not only very thin (or young), but you should be drinking 50 ounces of water each day...minimum.

Start by drinking at least eight to sixteen ounces of water as soon as you wake

up in the morning. Just get it down! Keep a bottle of water by your bed and create a ritual of downing it as soon as you wake up. This will provide you with more benefits than you can imagine. Some benefits include: better brain function, clearer eyes, a healthier you overall (inside and out), and even weight loss. It's cheap, it's easy, and it's healthy.

**NOTE:** If you're looking to lose a little weight along the way, consume a liter of ICE WATER as soon as you wake up and at least 30 minutes before your first meal. Your first meal (breakfast) should be no later than 45 minutes after you wake up and it should contain at least 20 grams of protein. Do this for a week and smile away the pounds!

**OMEGA-3!** Something else your brain seems to like is Omega-3 oil. Again, not only for your brain and memory but for so many other things that promote good overall health as well.

You can get your Omega-3s from fish (salmon, halibut, tuna and scallops), EPA DHA liquids and capsules, walnuts and flax. There are other foods that will do the trick, however these seem to be some of the more concentrated Omega-3 foods.

I could go on, but seeing as this is an article for actors about how to better memorize lines and not necessarily an article on health and nutrition...I'll end it here.

**BRAIN FOOD** -- My conclusion to this teaching:  
In the words of Mickey Mantle (and others)...

**"If I had known I was going to live this long, I would have taken better care of myself."**

Eat Healthy.

**See You On Set!**  
**Coach Banks**



## **“THE ACTORS FREE-WAY”**

### **Free Weekly Acting Exercises (a free way to train)**

Recall two distinct, separate past memories. Something very tragic and something else very wonderful. Continue to work on the memories, building them with as much detail as you can.

Think of this as MEMORY PUSH-UPS

Write down everything you consume for THREE days. Then go back and look at your lists.

NOTE — For ONE FULL DAY, I’m asking you to take a picture of everything you plan on eating, right before you eat it. Just use your phone. And, yes...that’s EVERYTHING! If this assists you in curbing your ‘wild’ food consumption — repeat until you’re eating habits change (for the better).