

Human Meta-Skills: Photo-Reading:

Self-Engineering Skills to Enhance Information Assimilation & Memory

The term “cryptomnesia”, refers to concealed memory recollection, which is akin to the latent ability to totally recall almost everything we have ever seen. Humans have unlimited memory, in the sense that no matter how much one remembers, with a little effort, one can always remember a little more.

Strong evidence suggests that all of us possess photographic memory capabilities far beyond what we may realize. Only a few people however, seem gifted with the natural ability to automatically retrieve and examine their mental “photographs” at will. Contrary to popular myth, most of these people are not geniuses, but rather average to below average intelligence.

They do however, know how to find out what they want, when they want it. Essentially this ability, or skill-set, enables people to learn and apply new information faster, because the new information they are exposed to is quickly interfaced with the information they already know. This article will introduce you to a specific learned skill called “Photo-Reading”; a skill that will help you learn the ability to automatically retrieve far more from your concealed memories than you hitherto thought possible.

There are a great many such skills that we can each learn to apply in differing ways to enhance our overall abilities. Each of these many abilities has become known as a “meta-skill”. There are meta-skills to enhance mathematics, reading, speaking, creative analysis, writing, problem solving, reasoning, amongst others.

Our ability to learn any new specialized skill, such as fully utilizing a computer’s

capacity as a tool, depends to a large measure on how well we have grasped these fundamental skills.

The specific skills of reading and comprehension have become inestimably vital to our successful participation in the modern world. Taken to their extreme as meta-skills, these unleashed, unlimited natural abilities become invaluable. Photo-Readers not only vastly increase the speed and quantity of reading, but have also proven to retain and retrieve useful data at many times their ordinary capacity and many times the capacity of their traditional counterparts.

How does it work? The explanation starts with an understanding of subliminal learning. The peculiar power of subliminal learning has long been recognised. As far back as 1916 researchers discovered and documented that sailors who were taught Morse Code in their sleep learned it three weeks faster than those who were taught normally. In 1954, a movie theatre in *Fort Lee, New Jersey*, experimented for six weeks with high speed advertisements on the screen between movie frames. Messages such as “eat popcorn” and “drink *Coca-Cola*” would blink onscreen for 40 milliseconds at a time, which is far too quickly to be consciously noticed. Yet during the six weeks of the tests, popcorn sales rose 57.7%, *Coca-Cola* sales increased 18.1%, and other soft drink sales increased dramatically as well.

Public disclosure of the experiments prompted widespread demands to outlaw subliminal advertising. The outcry soon died down and the practice was never banned! Subliminal advertising remains to this day a multi-billion dollar industry. Widespread evidence suggests that all digital audio and video recordings as well as all digital broadcasting venues contain subliminal messages, most often without the knowledge

of the producer/author/artist, or listener. Even “home-made” digital recordings of both audio and video are often subject to pre-recorded subliminal tracks on blank discs and tapes that are designed such that they cannot be erased or over-written. Big business and governments recognize the ultimate power of this tool, realizing that information perceived subconsciously impacts the brain and the memory much more quickly and far more powerfully than does conscious input.

In other words, everyone learns very fast at the subliminal level. Photo-Reading is a technique that recognizes this universal reality. To properly accomplish it, you must properly expose yourself to information far too quickly for your conscious mind to process it. Photo-Readers glance at each page for only a second or two, and immediately after finishing reading a book at this speed, they have no more conscious awareness of what they have read than the patrons in the *Fort Lee* theatre experiment. Yet like in the theatre, the “mental photographs” of the pages have a comprehensive and powerful impact on the brain. When properly understood, they can also be selectively activated for use later.

In 1985 and 1986 a man named *Paul Scheele* developed a standardized method for people from all walks of life to learn this meta-skill. His technique can be found in his book, “*The Photo-Reading Whole Mind System*” which has been sold by “*Learning Strategies Corporation*”, of *Minnesota*. The information contained herein, although remarkably similar, is presented from the author’s own, self-taught technique for accomplishing the same thing.

Normal reading is conducted at roughly the same speed as we speak, because we have usually been taught to “sub vocalize” the words that we read. This means that we are forcing the brain to accept input of new information that we read, at the same speed as

if we were speaking it. In other words, we are pretending that our brain’s speed capacity is similar to the speed at which we can speak, or about 150 to 170 words per minute on average. Subliminal learning skills prove that the brain is much, much faster.

The first step in speeding up the reading process was to advance from the speed of the mouth to the speed of the eyes. Conventional “Speed Reading” techniques teach us to eliminate the sub vocalization, and to concentrate simply on the words as fast as we are able to “see” them. This provides remarkable improvements in the overall speed of reading for many people. Typically, a good Speed Reader can effectively read about 3,500 to 5,000 or more words per minute with as good if not better retention than traditional readers. It is believed that the improved retention is due to the brain not being as “bored” with the input process as during normal sub-vocalized reading.

The next and obvious step to speeding up the reading process was to advance from the speed at which we can “see”, or focus, on words, to the speed at which the brain can actually process the visual data. This subliminal, or subconscious speed at which the brain can process visual data is much faster than even we can consciously “see” it when Speed Reading. This next step is Photo-Reading.

Not just anyone can do it. Everyone can do it because it is proven that everyone does it whether they will ever realize it or not. Standard reading tests given to *Scheele*’s students in 1986 showed results of being able to read in the range of 68,000 words per minute with about a 74 to 76% comprehension rate, far above conventional readers in both speed and retention. So since we are all assimilating information subliminally virtually all of the time, we might just as well learn how to

take the most possible advantage of it.

A simplified variation of this technique that has worked well for the author and many of the author's referrals, is as follows:

Firstly, your environment must be conducive to "relaxing". The idea here is to allow your brain to take in as much of the targeted information as it can, in as little time as possible, with as few interruptions, disturbances or distractions as possible. In fact, the same things that would interrupt concentration while "normal" reading was taking place, will have a multiplied effect on the Photo-Reading process. You can Photo-Read about 400 times faster, but interruptions, disturbances, and distractions can often also have about a 400 times the impact on your loss of concentration, retention and comprehension.

Even little things such as your physical discomfort during the process will greatly interfere. You must find a comfortable position that you know you will remain comfortable in for the duration of your Photo-Reading experience. If you have to think, even sub-consciously about moving and re-positioning yourself, you will lose valuable capacity. The most common successful position is widely accepted to be the sitting up, very straight-backed in a comfortable chair with both feet on the floor and the reading material in front of you on an angled surface facing directly at you when you position your head in its most comfortable angle (*for most people, about 15 degrees downward tilt*) and eyes looking straight out. This must also be such that your arms can comfortably rest one on each side of the reading material so that you can turn pages with a minimum of physical movement, basically just by moving your hands or fingers as little as possible, while your arms remain as comfortably still as possible.

No telephones ringing, no door-bells ringing or to be answered, absolutely no back-

ground music or disruptive noises, no distractions, no exceptions! You must go into the experience with a complete and absolute knowing that YOU WILL NOT BE DISTRACTED OR INTERRUPTED BY ANYTHING, BECAUSE YOU HAVE TAKEN THE PROPER MEASURES TO ENSURE IT. Otherwise you will simply be wasting your time.

Now when you can comfortably sit and look at the pages you want to read without having to move or tilt your head, then imagine you are hovering over yourself and staring (*not looking*) past your own head at both pages in front of you. When you do this you will notice your two hands holding the pages on each side. The technique of pretending to peer over your own head simply allows you to widen your visual perspective, allowing you to take in both pages at once.

Now concentrate on relaxing into the so-called Alpha State, where your brain waves are slowed to a leisurely 8 to 12 cycles per second rather than the normal 12 to 23 due to all of the "normal" distractions. Some people can automatically go into Alpha State from experience, others may never have heard of it. Don't worry, everyone also does this, it's just a matter of recognizing it. You might think of it as almost a "day-dream-like" state, yet still reasonably alert. Experts agree that this relaxed state is ideal for learning.

Now before you start reading, silently state, and repeat several times, and understand your purpose for reading your selected material. Your mind is very powerful and it is also very wise. You cannot "fool" it into taking the time to Photo-Read something that is not truly important to you. Information for information's sake, or the funnies for example, simply will not be retained by your mind because it knows truthfully that you are wasting its time. You must accept that your sub-conscious mind thinks, or operates almost

independently of your conscious desires. You cannot convince it of anything, unless you actually believe it yourself at the conscious level.

Your purpose for reading must be internally vocalized. What do you expect to gain from the material? Is it just interesting, or is it going to be helpful or useful in some specific way? What level of detail do you want? Do you need to remember every detail or just the major points in the chapters or in the book? Will you have need for the information immediately or at some distant future date? How much time are you truly willing to spend to learn this material?

Right before starting to Photo-Read, achieve a state of profound relaxation that opens your creative brain, meaning a deep Alpha, almost Theta State. Close your eyes and let any anxiety flow out with each breath and let tranquility flow in until every muscle group in your body is relaxed. Be careful not to fall asleep. Eventually you will gain the knack of getting into this state without such elaborate preparations. With practice, a couple of deep breaths, after finding your physical comfort spot for Photo-Reading, will serve as an automatic trigger.

Now you must find the automatic Photo-Read "Photo-Focus". When you focus with precision on single words as in normal reading, or on sentences or paragraphs as in speed reading, your logical brain functions, switch to a higher mode, and your more creative, higher capacity Alpha brain functions, switch off to some degree. Some people refer to this as "left" and "right" brain, but that thinking is more subjective. The whole brain works together, with either a logical focus or a creative focus. To properly Photo-Read, we need to be in the creative mode with some logic still functioning.

When we Photo-Read we never focus on any words or sentences or paragraphs.

NEVER! Instead, we deliberately try to focus simultaneously on the white spaces around both sides of the pages and down the centre of the pages. When you first practice this, if you remember to pretend to be gazing from behind your own head, looking at the entire two pages all at once while focusing only on the white spaces, and just noticing your two hands on the sides, you will be doing it correctly. Suddenly you will notice the page take on an almost three-dimensional depth, and the letters on each page may actually appear to move together and then apart like they are temporarily blocking your view of the centre white space. When you can consistently gain that sense of depth, you have attained the Photo-Focus 'moment'.

Now before you actually Photo-Read, you must have first practiced all of the above steps until you develop a familiarity with your physical comfort space for Photo-Reading, and until you are confident that you are mentally relaxed into Alpha State almost to Theta State, and until you can automatically go into Photo-Focus.

To Photo-Read, simply Photo-Focus on the first pages, then start to systematically turn the pages, allowing about 1½ to 2 seconds per page for each page to come into Photo-Focus. Let your mind stay as otherwise blank as possible, and do not allow yourself to have mental discussions which can be self-fulfilling prophecies, such as "This isn't going to work". One way to keep from having self-distracting conversations is to make up some form of non-relevant chant or hum that you can perform in time with the rhythm of turning the pages. This deliberately self-induced, no-thinking-required chanting will eliminate the possibility of your mind wandering and creating its own distractions. Many people chant repeatedly such things as "relax...keep the state...see the page...'pause'...relax...keep the state...see

the page... 'pause'...relax..., and so on”.

Do not try to read the words on the pages at all. In fact if you allow yourself to actually focus on any of the words, you have probably lost the “Photo-Image” of that entire page, by having replaced it with whatever you focused on, even for an instant. Don't try to rush it. Give each set of pages just enough time to come properly into Photo-Focus, and then turn just after you go out of that focus but before you can actually get into normal focus. Continue the process to the end of the material you are reading.

Now don't test yourself when finished by trying to see what you can recall, because you will only become discouraged. You MUST follow the activation procedures that come next, in order to learn how to retrieve any of the information you just photographed with your mind.

You must give your mind time to incubate the information. If you are in a tremendous hurry, you can try to begin activation within about one hour, however it is best to wait at least a full 24 hours. Research has concluded that learned skills as well as new information consolidates in the brain during REM sleep. Performance of many newly learned tasks actually improves the day after the new skill is first learned, even with no practice in between. This will always apply to Photo-Reading.

Sometimes information will be activated spontaneously, without your conscious effort or awareness. Most often you will have to manually activate your information. Start by asking yourself, “What is important in the material I read yesterday?” “What do I need to know or perform to pass my test, write my report, contribute to the meeting, etc.” Then do not expect instant answers. These sorts of questions are meant simply to get your subconscious mind thinking about ways to

resurrect the stored information. The most important thing is to stay relaxed and remain confident that it will work if you stay curious.

After a few minutes of dwelling on these questions, you will become curious about certain sections or passages in the book. Turn to these sections. Now scan rapidly down the centre of each page. If any word or phrase catches your attention, dip into the page and read a line or two until you are satisfied. Resume your scan pattern, and limit each reading dip to a paragraph or two of any article or a page or two of any book. Follow your hunches not your logic. Allow your subconscious to direct where you will dip into the text, even if the passage seems irrelevant to your purpose. If you mistrust your initial hunches or want greater thoroughness, scan and dip throughout the entire book, but don't spend too much time or you will be defeating the whole purpose. The purpose of the scan and dip is to remind your mind of what it has already stored, so that it can then go and get it to answer the questions you have posed.

The early effects of Photo-Reading may not be obvious to most people. But they are there. The effect comes first in vague feelings and hunches that are easily ignored if you are not looking for them. You must develop this skill with practice like any other skill and it involves developing a feel, or alertness to these subtle inner suggestions or signals.

Examples of how this may be applied vary widely. After a frustrating meeting spent trying to understand an attorney's legalese, a businessman went to a bookstore and Photo-Read every book he could find on the subject which he was seeking advice. About to leave, he felt a strong urge to go back and scan the shelves. He walked directly to a particular book and opened it to the exact page he needed. An engineer was fumbling with a topic he had little expertise with. Later he remembered having

Photo-Read a large stack of related trade journals in his office. A quick scan of the stack caused him to select a journal which revealed an article that he had forgotten he had read, but which completely answered his problem.

In other words, the information was in the brain, or at least enough of it to trigger an immediate location of the rest of it. If you need information from any material you have Photo-Read, you may be able to activate it without the original material as reference, or sometimes you may require access to the original material, but you will amazingly know right where to go to find your specific answers.

The clearest mark of genius in the popular belief, is the mastery of logic skills such as math, fluency in foreign languages, or an impressive vocabulary. Yet these achievements are based on little more than rote memorization. Photo-Reading accelerates your progress in all of these areas.

Try Photo-Reading a dictionary several times. The exercise will greatly enhance your vocabulary. Or try reading the Bible this way.

Suddenly when asked questions on topics you may not have felt comfortable with before, you will find yourself with simple and elegant answers. In tandem with formal study, Photo-Reading will accelerate your progress in almost any area many times over. It is a meta-skill with few equals.

Remember to practice the techniques set forth in the beginning of this article before trying and expecting results from your first Photo-Reading experience. And like most new skills, it may be best to start with a smaller article of less than one hundred pages as opposed to a several hundred page book. This does not make it more efficient except that it may help you to build more confidence in your ability to use the system, which is also important. It all sounds complicated and difficult, but really, with a very little bit of practice, even mentally challenged people have quickly learned to develop this skill-set.