

May 13

It was great to see so many swimmers at the banquet! A fantastic way to build team culture and celebrate the team's success and individual awards! It makes me proud when swimmers are happy for others' success and awards!

1. As we head into the meet weekend it is important that you express to your swimmer that you are excited to see your swimmers compete, regardless of results. Your swimmer cares about their results. They need to know that independent of results they have your unconditional support. They need to know that you enjoy watching them race more than the results. The 12 and under will compete in the afternoon. Once we get more info we will share!

2. Scroll down for the parent article of the week: **No Pain, No Brain Gain: Why Learning Demands (A Little) Discomfort**

Email with questions!

Important Dates:

- May 17-19: FLEET May Meet @ Cypress TX
- May 18 & 19: KATY May Meet @ Angleton TX
- May 20: No practice
- June 21-23: FCST Summer Splash Prelim/Final Meet @ FBISD Training Center
- June 24: No practice

Parent Article For The Week:

No Pain, No Brain Gain: Why Learning Demands (A Little) Discomfort

The brain isn't a muscle, but it still needs to "feel the burn" to build new neural connections that last. BY MARY SLAUGHTER AND DAVID ROCK - 3-MINUTE READ

Remember being in middle school and preparing for an exam? Chances are, you spent your study time paging through your class notes or rereading the textbook. Maybe you highlighted important details as you went.

We now know this is a pretty terrible way to study. You might've felt like you were absorbing the information, but you probably forgot most of it a few weeks after the test. In cases like these, you're falling for what psychologists call "fluency"—you have a grasp of the information while you're looking at it on the page. It feels good, easy, and reassuring. But that fluency doesn't translate to recalling what you learned later on, let alone any change in skills or behavior.

Instead, quality learning requires what brain scientists call "desirable difficulty." The more active the learning process, the better your comprehension and recall. It feels taxing, not exactly fluent or fun, and maybe even "bad," depending on whom you ask. But in the same way that you need a hard workout to increase your fitness, learning needs to feel strenuous to stick. It shouldn't be a breeze. Here's a closer look at why that is and what it takes to learn and remember things—without absolutely hating the experience.

WHEN THE GOING GETS TOUGH, IT'S PROBABLY WORKING

When learning is challenging, you have to pay more and better attention to each idea, causing your brain to build stronger connections between neural networks, which embeds the new knowledge for later recall. This

adds greater weight to the phrase “pay attention”: You’re not going to have robust recall unless you pay for it with your attention.

Many organizations’ corporate learning programs focus on course completion, and making learning “easy and friendly” helps increase completion rates. On the surface, it looks good to reduce the amount of time spent on training and get people saying they “enjoyed” the experience—which encourages others to take the training. But that doesn’t mean these programs are effective. Learning that doesn’t stick is wasted time.

Instead of passively reviewing material, go for active retrieval. Rather than highlighting a passage as you read it, try closing the textbook and writing down what you remember. Instead of rote repetition, use flashcards to quiz yourself and test your recall. It also helps to alternate between study topics—a process called “interleaving.” In a study published earlier this year in *Contemporary Educational Psychology*, researchers compared two undergraduate physics courses that asked students to complete problem-solving tasks either before or after a lecture. Students who tackled them before the lecture came away with a better conceptual understanding than those who heard the lecture first. Working on the problems first made the students discover and infer relevant concepts, principles, and procedures on their own before hearing them from the professor—a process that was more difficult, but resulted in superior understanding.

Most importantly, let some time pass, then test yourself again. The longer you wait and the closer you get to forget, the more durably you’ll encode the new information into long-term memory when you force your brain to retrieve it. That’s why, as scientists say, the right timing gives you extra learning “for free.” FEEL THE BURN Unfortunately, the trend in many organizations is to design learning to be as easy as possible. Aiming to respect their employees’ busy lives, companies build training programs that can be done at any time, with no prerequisites, and often on a mobile device. The result is fun and easy training programs that employees rave about (making them easier for developers to sell) but don’t actually instill lasting learning. Worse still, programs like these may lead employers to optimize for misleading metrics, like maximizing for “likes” or “shares” or high “net promoter scores,” which are easy to earn when programs are fun and fluent but not when they’re demanding. Instead of designing for recall or behavior change, we risk designing for popularity.

The reality is that to be effective, learning needs to be effortful. That’s not to say that anything that makes learning easier is counterproductive—or that all unpleasant learning is effective. The key here is a desirable difficulty. In the same way you feel a muscle “burn” when it’s being strengthened, the brain needs to feel some discomfort when it’s learning. Your mind might hurt for a while—but that’s a good thing.

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