

Quicker Notes, Better Memory,
and
Improved Learning with

MIND MAPS

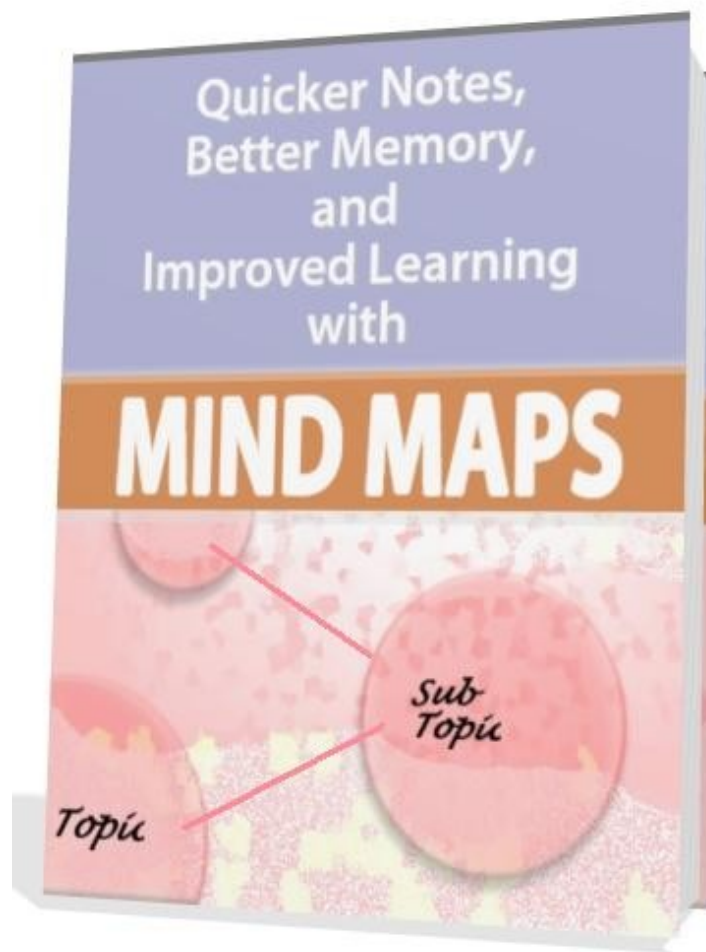


TABLE OF CONTENTS

DISCLAIMER AND RIGHTS	2
TABLE OF CONTENTS	3
INTRODUCTION	5
WHAT IS MIND MAPPING?	5
A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW.....	6
CHAPTER ONE - ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF MIND MAPS	8
ADVANTAGES	8
<i>More Compatible with the Brain</i>	8
<i>Balances the Brain</i>	9
<i>Emphasizes Associations</i>	10
<i>Uses Keywords</i>	10
<i>Simplifies Complicated Information</i>	11
<i>Enhances Creativity</i>	12
<i>Makes It Faster to Take and Review Notes</i>	12
<i>Improves Learning and Memory</i>	13
DISADVANTAGES	14
CHAPTER TWO - HOW TO MAKE A MIND MAP	16
EXAMPLE	17
MIND MAPS FOR LECTURES.....	20
CHAPTER THREE – SOME IMPORTANT CONSIDERATIONS	21
THE IMPORTANCE OF PRACTICE	21
THE IMPORTANCE OF COLORS	21
THE IMPORTANCE OF LISTENING	24
<i>The ARCURRC Model of Listening</i>	25
HAND DRAWN MIND MAPS VS. COMPUTERIZED MIND MAPS?	27
CHAPTER FOUR - USES OF MIND MAPPING	29
NOTE-TAKING	29
MAKING PLANS.....	29
BRAINSTORMING	30
GROUP MIND MAPPING	30
COLLABORATIVE WRITING	32
PROBLEM RESOLUTION	33
USING MIND MAPS FOR PRESENTATIONS.....	33
MIND MAPS AS LEARNING TOOLS	33
USING MIND MAPPING TO ESTIMATE PROJECT TIME	34
AN UNUSUAL APPLICATION OF MIND MAPS: USING MIND MAPS FOR PREACHING.....	36
CREATING AN ESSAY USING A MIND MAP	37
ENJOYING LITERATURE AND DRAMA THROUGH MIND MAPPING.....	38
MIND MAPPING FOR CHILDREN	40
CHAPTER FIVE - SPEED READING AND MIND MAPPING	42

CHAPTER SIX - OTHER RELATED METHODS	48
CONCEPT MAPPING.....	48
COGNITIVE MAPS.....	49
CONCLUSION	51

INTRODUCTION

We live in the information age, which means that our problem is less one of obtaining information and more one of retaining and organizing all the quantities of information that we are required to ingest – both during our studies and afterwards. This we need to do to keep up with rapid changes in many fields and a continual influx of new information.

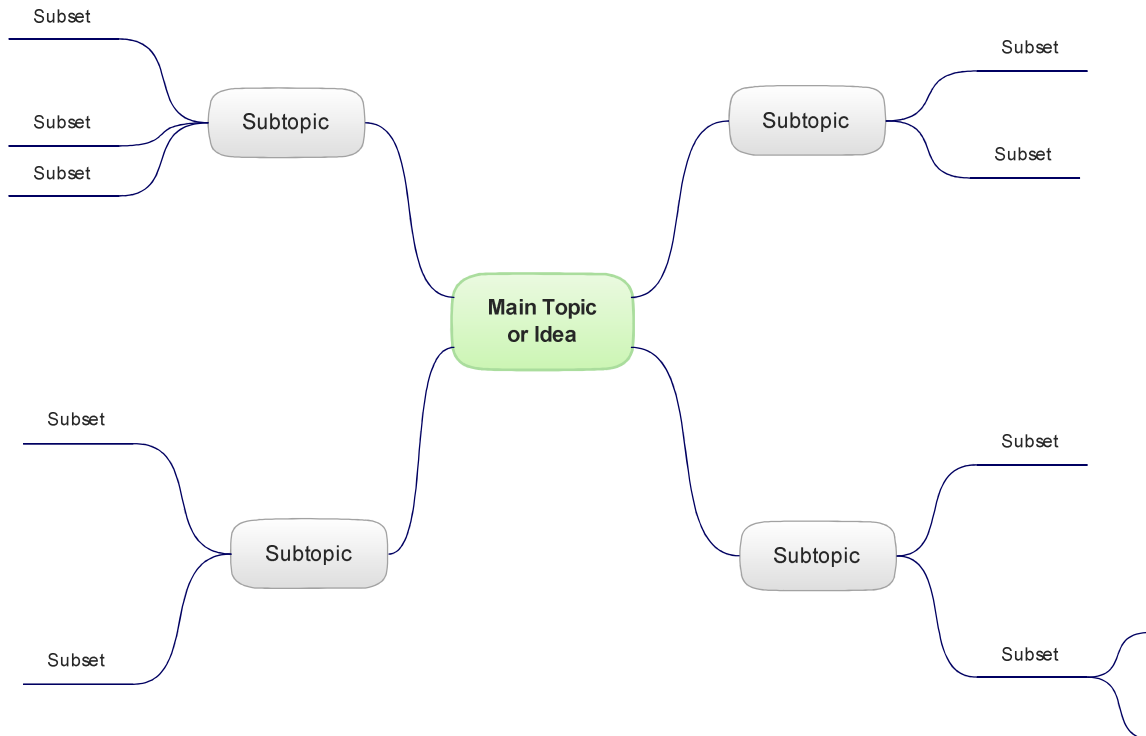
One of the recent techniques that have been devised to help us in this task is called Mind Mapping.

What is Mind Mapping?

Basically, a Mind Map is a diagram which you create yourself as a way to organize ideas. In conventional note-taking, you write down information line by line or perhaps column by column. Mind Mapping differs from such note-taking in that you present the information more in the form of a diagram, starting with a central key idea drawn in the center of the paper.

Other ideas which are somehow related to the central key idea are arranged radially around it, with lines branching out from the central key idea to these sub-topics to show that they are related to one another. Details related to each sub-topic can be shown to be connected to it through more lines.

It looks something like this:



As you can see, you have the main topic in the middle, and the subtopics and its subset's branch out from the central idea.

Mind maps function on the principle of “Radiant Thinking” (a term developed by Tony Buzan, an avid promoter of mind mapping). Radiant Thinking means our thoughts spread out indefinitely from a key central idea, as shown in the diagram above, which Buzan says is the natural and automatic way for humans to think.

Through mind mapping, we are able to capture on a flat surface the multidimensional reality of what it is we need to learn. In fact, different cortical skills come into play when we mind map: line, form, color, visual rhythm, texture, dimension and particularly imagination. Using images in mind mapping produces more precise and powerful associations of ideas.

A Historical Overview

One of the earliest systems of using visual memory aids is believed to have been invented by the ancient orator Simonedes of Ceos. This Greek was among the most respected orators in his time. He relied on strong mental images, coupled with associations he was familiar with (such as a well-

known location) to integrate information into his mind. We must remember that having a good memory was one of the most admired skills in ancient Greece.

During the 3rd Century, the respected thinker named Porphyry of Tyros is known to have created the earliest types of mind maps to graphically represent Aristotle's concept categories. Another person who used the concept of mind mapping before Buzan was the Majorcan writer and philosopher Ramon Lull.

Dr. Allan Collins may be said to be the "father of modern mind maps" because he was able to tap into the use of the semantic network as a theory to explain how humans learn, and eventually develop this theory into the concept of mind mapping. Collins' dedication and published research (as well as his efforts to understand the relationship between learning, creativity, and graphical thinking) in the early 1960s earned him that noted title. Another respected researcher during that period, M. Ross Quillian, also contributed to the development of the concept of mind maps.

More recently, popular psychology author Tony Buzan has taken the concept of mind maps and improved it. He has a website where one can find books and training to learn about mind maps, as well as software to help you make them. You'll find it at <http://www.buzanworld.com/>

CHAPTER ONE - ADVANTAGES AND DISADVANTAGES OF MIND MAPS

Advantages

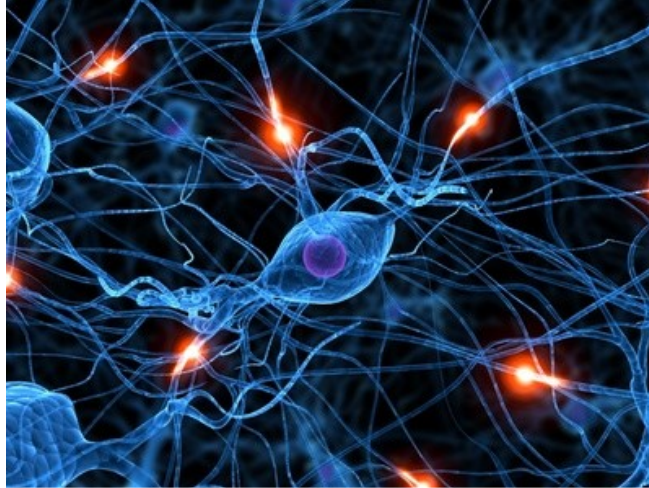
More Compatible with the Brain

Mind Maps are an effective way to improve learning and memorization because it is more compatible with the way the brain functions. Rather than the linear mode of note-taking, mind maps resemble the brain's neurological structure, where the brain functions by creating interconnected links of thousands of little protrusions on the 'arms' of a brain cell (neuron) with the protrusions of other brain cells. In fact, one human brain can have an incalculable number of inter-neural links and pathways.

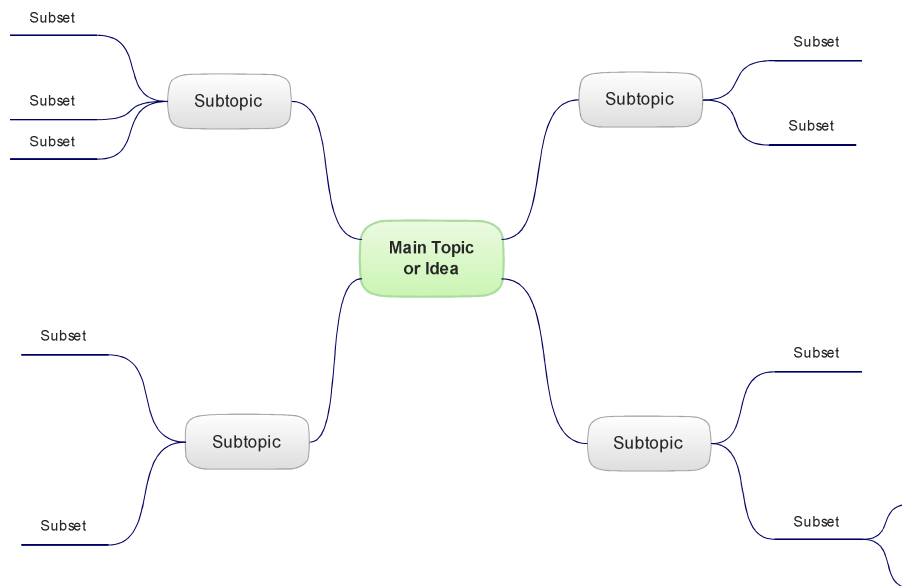
To make this concept more clear, our brains are composed of billions and billions of neurons as illustrated in the picture below. A neuron represents the core component of the brain.



If you notice, within each neuron stems 100's to sometimes 1000's of branch like connections called dendrites. These dendrites or links connect to other neurons (as shown below) and together they make up the complex structure of the brain.



If you look at a mind map example, you can see that it is structured similarly. Looking at the example below of the mind map we showed earlier, we can see that mind maps work similar to how our brain processes information. One idea can be interconnected to many other ideas. This helps us understand, relate, and connect information so we can process and memorize them quicker, faster, and better.



Balances the Brain

Another advantage of mind maps is that it trains both hemispheres of the brain to be balanced and active at the same time. Our brains are divided into two hemispheres, the left and right. In most people, the right part of

our brain is tasked with visual, associative, and non-verbal thinking as well as a lot of creative thinking. The left hemisphere, on the other hand, is responsible for analytical thoughts (which can only be examined one at a time) – such as when we are writing. Studies have shown that when the less-used hemisphere (usually the right) is drawn in and used in tandem with the dominant hemisphere, it produces a significant increase in the individual's total abilities and effectiveness.

That's because multiple sensory channels are being employed at the same time allowing multiple intelligences to be drawn together. Usually, we find it difficult to express our thoughts on paper. But when the right hemisphere is triggered in tandem with the left hemisphere, such as when we are producing a mind map, we overcome this difficulty. Surprisingly, when both hemispheres are stimulated in this way, the result is performance that is not just twice as effective, but rather five to ten times as effective.

Emphasizes Associations

Mind maps were developed based on the human mind's special way of relating thoughts to each other. A linear way of note-taking, according to Tony Buzan, actually limits creativity and memory since there is little leeway for the brain to create associations about ideas. In addition, using line-by-line or list-style notes trains the brain to think that there is a limit to the links between ideas – once the reader comes to the end of the list, he has “finished.” In reality, links between ideas go on infinitely in our minds.

Uses Keywords

The other aspect of Radiant Thinking is its use of keywords that are connected to the key main idea. Research headed by Dr. Gordon Howe of Exeter University showed that note-taking improves when there are keywords, and the fewer keywords used, the better it is for retention of information.

A keyword is simply a word that defines an idea. For example, if you were going to do a mind map of this eBook, the main idea could be represented by the keyword *Mind Map* and would be placed in the center of the