

## CREATING A CRAP BOARD - by Mark Waldman

1. Get a single sheet of paper.
2. Write down at least 20 of your limiting beliefs, worries, fears, weaknesses, doubts - real or imaginary - about learning your target language.
3. Then pause, relax, and ask your intuition what else you should add to the list.
4. Then add all of the weakness that you believe other people would say you have.
5. Now relax as deeply as possible, and at the same time, look at the paper in front of you.
  - a. Don't judge anything you see; just observe it like an object in the room.
  - b. As you gaze, yawn, slowly stretch, and if you are comfortable doing so gently stroke your hands and arms. You should immediately notice a reduction in intensity.
  - c. As you look at each item on your list, ask yourself: are these negative thoughts REALLY true? Are they happening right now? Most of the time you'll see that they are just memories.
6. Next, repeat this phrase as you look at the items that aren't really true: "These problems are not real; they are memories from the past projected on the future."
7. For those that are true, write down 2 things you can do today to lessen that problem, and repeat this exercise for 7 days.
8. Put your Crap Board on the wall where you can see it regularly while at work. **DO NOT THROW IT AWAY!** If you do, your unconscious mind will start to ruminate on all that negativity. When it's on a sheet of paper, there is a neural "disconnect," as if your brain knows that your crap is safely tucked away and on hold.

## **BONUS ACTIVITY**

9. As you look at each item on your list, and using a 1-to-10 scale, rate the "truth" of each item (1 = not at all true, 10 = absolutely true) and assign it a number.
10. Then do the same thing with this question: How "intense" does this negative thought/feeling/belief feel RIGHT NOW? (1 = no reaction, 10 = every intense and overwhelming).

If you remain deeply relaxed, you'll notice that nearly everything on your list may only have a rating of 2-5.

When you reflect on this, you'll realize that it's hardly worth the worry to ruminate on most of your crap! And the longer you keep meditating, yawning, stretching, and gently massaging and nurturing your body, the more the "truth" and "intensity" levels will drop.

Over time, if you notice new negative thoughts and feelings about language learning come up, write them on your crap board.

Each day you will notice less negative thoughts. It's true that old memories are always "there" in your brain, but you don't have to listen to them or believe they are true. You can even talk to them and tell them to shut up! They usually will. Then focus on your 3 deepest values for that day and the new belief you want to embed into your memory.

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