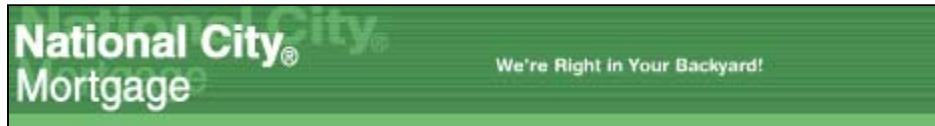


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Valley&State

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Learning approach helps people retain memories

By **Bill Choy**

Ashland Daily Tidings

Shara Gardner had quite a need to remember a vast amount of knowledge in a short period of time.

Gardner, of Ashland, is a research assistant for a documentary filmmaker and needed to remember and comprehend a number of subjects for a film project such as physics, mathematics and philosophy.

To help retain this vital information, Gardner has just finished her fourth one-on-one lesson with Tom Freudenthal of Ashland using his Centered Learning approach.

The program teaches people how to retain and understand complex information using a series of memory and speed reading tasks to learn how to read faster and still retain the knowledge. This includes mind mapping, relaxation, brain-based learning and teaching, augmenting the learning based on each persons learning style, advanced memory and mental photography.

Gardner has seen a difference in her memory retention and comprehension.

"My reading skill is increasing and so is my comprehension. I'm understanding what I'm reading," she said. "That's exactly what I wanted."

The problem is many people try to remember something by reading it over and over again, which is not as effective, Freudenthal said.

"If you just read and read hoping everything will stick, it won't," he said. "The brain gets bored."

Freudenthal recently moved to Ashland from his native Germany to be with his life partner. Freudenthal, who ran a Center Learning Center in Germany quickly went to work organizing in Ashland. Since arriving at the end of January, he has tutored several people using the method. He plans to teach several workshops locally and is in the works to expand the program throughout the West Coast.

To Freudenthal, the problem with retaining memory for most people is it's usually no fun and that we use only a fraction of our brains. Many, he says, are unhappy with their ability to memorize.

"If they use this system they can learn what they want more efficiently," he said. " They want to change their lives and retain information in a more literate way."

People who use the program range from college students to people like Gardner who need to retain more information for their careers.

Gardner has been impressed with Freudenthal.

"Tom is very good at what he does," she said. " He really cares about people and wants you to get it."

For more information on Centered Learning, call 482-8199 or go to www.centered-learning.com.

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