**5 Minute Explanation – 10 Minute Practice**

**Memory Tip #1**

**Improve Memory by Improving Attention**

In each class, you will learn a new strategy for improving your memory in your everyday life. Today, though we are going to focus on helping you build a cognitive skill that is not “memory” per se but is essential for having a better memory.

Today we are going to help you improve your memory by helping you improve your ATTENTION. The reason we are starting here is because **attention is the gateway to memory**. You can’t expect to remember things that you don’t see, hear, feel or otherwise experience, right? How can we expect our brains to hold onto information that doesn’t get in in the first place?

**What are some ways that you can improve your attention?**

[Lead a brief, positive and validating discussion on ways to pay better attention – click to reveal suggestions on the slide to fill in any gaps].

**Look up and around** - Open your eyes - Simply being more aware can improve your attention. **Putting in the effort** to look around and making mental notes of where you parked your car or whether or not you locked the door, can do wonders for setting a good foundation for remembering things!

**Stay “Present” - Dial down the internal chatter or the mental to-do list**. In conversations, remind yourself that you will be able to come up with something to say after the person is finished talking in order to stop the mental rehearsal of your next point. This way you can really pay attention to what the other person is saying

**Get your hearing or vision checked and corrected if needed** – Don’t let vanity get in the way of your brain health. Vision and hearing loss not only keep you from taking in current information, but over time it seems that they can weaken you whole brain. As we just learned today, cells that fire together, wire together, so if your brain is not getting good quality stimulation from your ears or your eyes, all of the brain circuits that process that information (including your memory circuits) have less stimulation, and therefore seem to also weaken over time.