

The Power of Reflection:Applying The Five R's for Student Success

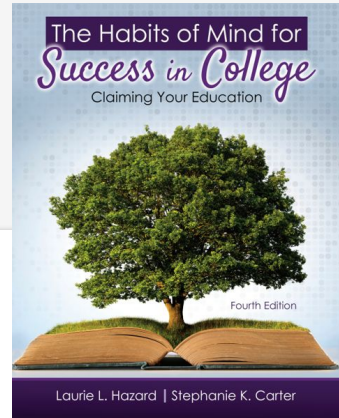
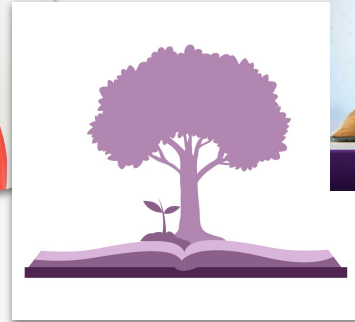
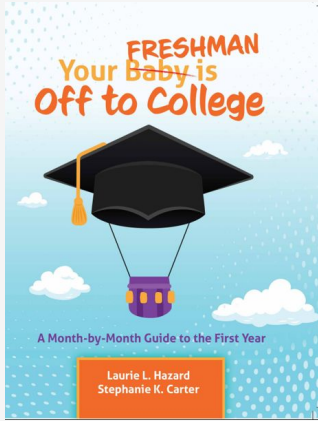


The Power of Reflection:Applying The
Five R's for Student Success

Insights for College Transitions:Volume
21 (Issue 1)



Meet Today's Speaker



- Higher Education Administrator & Faculty Member for over 35 years:
- Founder of Recognize Your Potential Consulting Firm
- Innovative Educators Partner
- Kendall Hunt Student Success Author
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SESSION OBJECTIVES: From Theory To Practice



Review theoretical grounding and the power of reflection in learning



Learn about anticipatory problem solving and developing self-advocacy skills



Understand transformative learning and reciprocal determinism



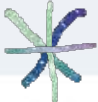
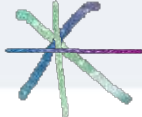
Help students assess outcomes



Embed actionable strategies utilizing the Five R's for Student Success

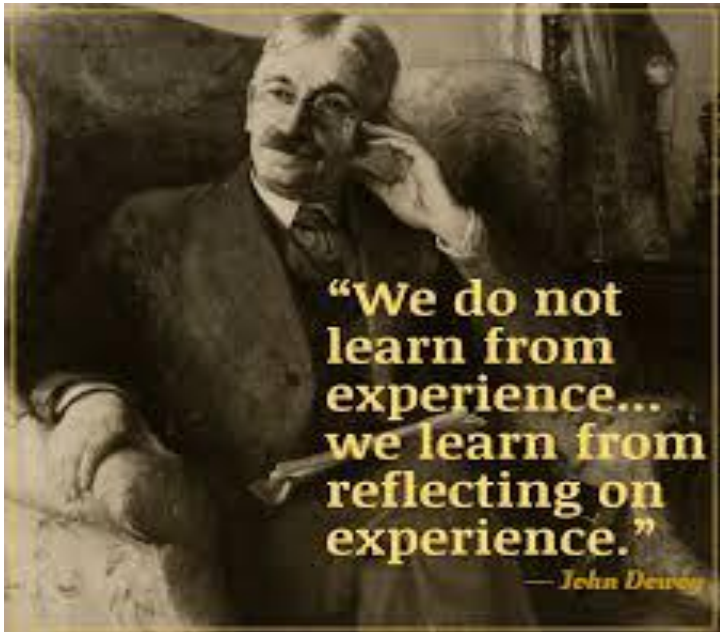
Perennial Question In Curriculum: What Is Most Worth Knowing?

TEN HABITS OF MIND FOR SUCCESS IN COLLEGE AND IN LIFE

1.  Possess Humility
2.  Ask For Help 
3.  Have the Willingness to Change and Take Risks
4.  Cultivate Critical Thinking Skills 
5.  Form Healthy Relationships and Practice Healthy Habits
6.  Develop a Deeper Self-Awareness 
7.  Manage Your Time and Behavior
8.  Develop Cultural Competence
9.  Take Responsibility
10.  Develop a Growth Mindset

Habits of Mind History: John Dewey (1933)

John Dewey



Reflective Thinking

- Reflective thinking as a universal educational aim
- Begins with experiences that raise difficulties or dilemmas: felt difficulty
- Reflect on problems or experiences by asking "What's going on?"

The Phenomenal Field and Metacognitive and Reflection Barriers:

- ❑ The most important determinants of behavior
- ❑ Those thoughts, feelings, attitudes that are conscious or capable of becoming conscious; that encompass who we are
- ❑ Potential barriers to growth and development
- ❑ I am FILL IN THE BLANK
- ❑ Academic self-concept



Current Factors Affecting Learning & Academic Performance

Mental Health Crisis

Anxiety disrupts attention, working memory, and executive functioning (Cruz et al., 2026)

Digital Distractions

50-54% of Gen Z spend 4+ hours daily on social media platforms (Lee, 2026)

Changing Abilities in Reading Endurance and Comprehension

There is a measurable generational collapse in sustained reading and writing and the academy is responding to it with improvisation and exhaustion rather than the structural overhaul it requires (Jagt, 2026)

In the Age of AI, Why Metacognition and Reflection Matter



“We found that AI technologies such as ChatGPT may promote learners' dependence on technology and potentially trigger metacognitive "laziness", **which can potentially hinder their ability to self-regulate and engage deeply in learning**” (Fan, et al., 2025).

Fan, Y., Tang, L., Le, H., Shen, K., Tan, S., Zhao, Y., ... & Gašević, D. (2025). Beware of metacognitive laziness: Effects of generative artificial intelligence on learning motivation, processes, and performance. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 56(2), 489-530.

Learned Helplessness and Resilience

Learned Helplessness

- **Learned helplessness** is repeated exposure to uncontrollable stressors results in individuals failing to use any control options that may later become available.
- Essentially, individuals are said to learn that they lack behavioral control over environmental events, which, in turn, undermines the motivation to make changes or attempt to alter situations.

Resilience

- Psychologists define **resilience** as the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress—such as family and relationship problems, serious health problems, or workplace and financial stressors.
- As much as resilience involves “bouncing back” from these difficult experiences, it can also involve profound personal growth.

Solve These Anagrams

- Bat

- Lemon

- Cinerama

- Tab

- Melon

- American

Solve These Anagrams

- Whirl

- Slapstick

- Listen

- Unsolvable

- Unsolvable

- Silent

Faulty Assumptions & What's Really Behind Student Behavior

Case Studies

- ❑ Father died last spring and has received no grief counseling
- ❑ Mother going in for surgery this week
- ❑ Commuter
- ❑ Low-level depression
- ❑ Responsibilities at home



Leveraging Metacognition and Reflection Can Remove Barriers And Build Confidence and Self-Efficacy



Confidence

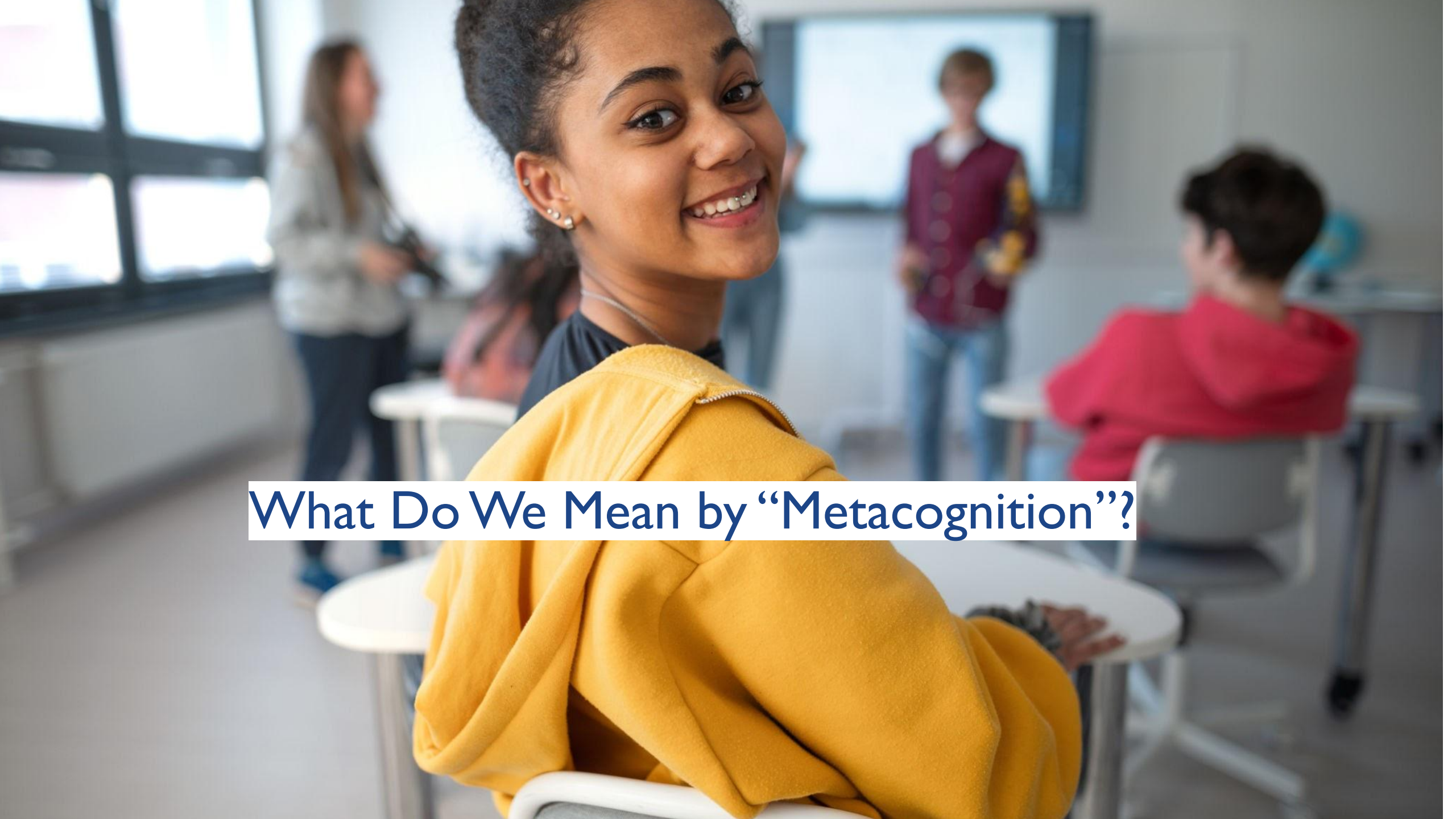
Confidence is the belief in one's own abilities and qualities, which influences motivation and perseverance.

Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to the belief in one's capacity to execute specific tasks successfully, impacting effort and resilience.

Positive Attitude

A “Can-Do” attitude fosters motivation and helps overcome challenges by promoting a proactive mindset.

A young woman with dark hair tied back, wearing a bright yellow hoodie, is seated in a classroom and looking back over her shoulder with a warm smile. The background is a blurred classroom scene with other students and a large window. A white text box with a blue border is overlaid on the image.

What Do We Mean by “Metacognition”?

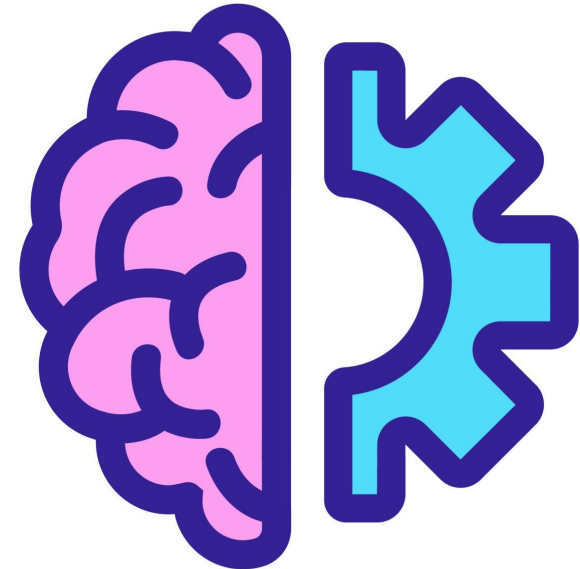
Challenges to Metacognitive Processes



- Metacognition is hard to define
- It covers many different processes
- It happens inside a person's head
- Teachers can't easily see it
- It's hard to measure

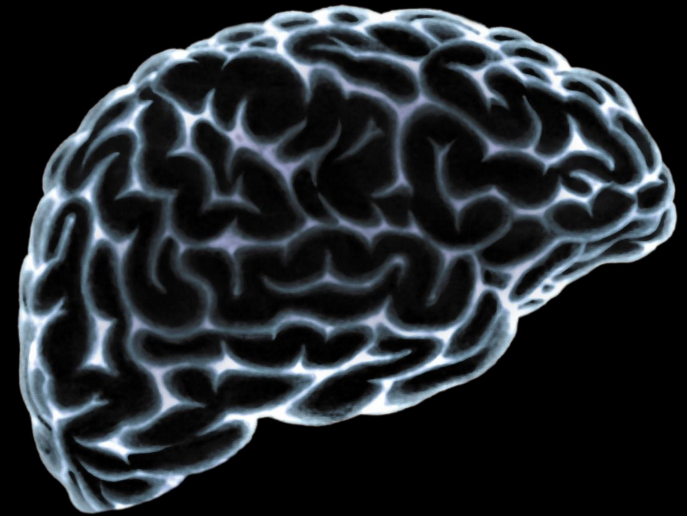
Varied Definitions of Metacognition

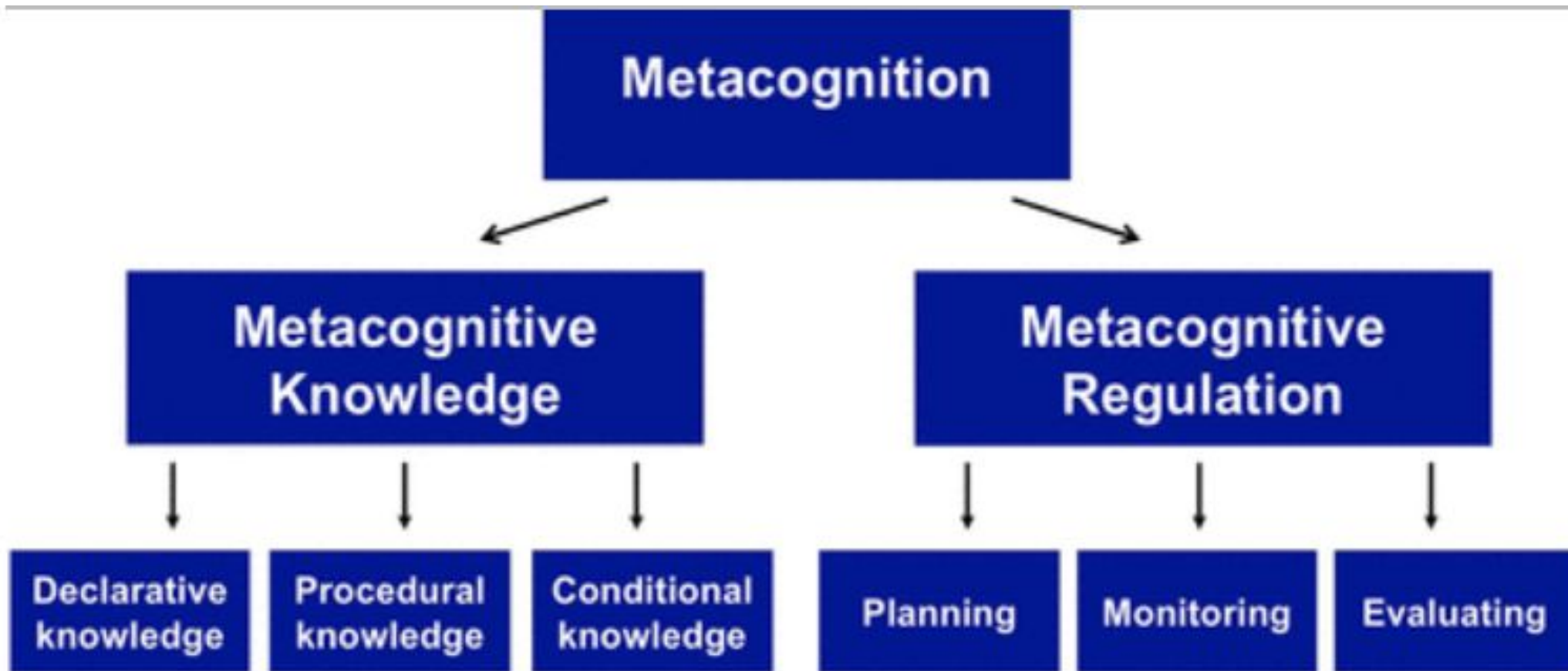
- The ability to “understand and monitor one’s own thoughts and assumptions and the implications of one’s own activities” (Lin, 2001).
- “Thinking about one’s thinking” (Ricky & Stacey, 2000).
- Processes used to plan, monitor, and assess learning (Hazard, 2026).
- Self-regulatory processes and self-motivational beliefs interact in three cyclical phases:
 - Forethought
 - Performance
 - Self-reflection phases (Zimmerman, 2000).



Students With Strong Metacognitive Skills

- **Learn more and perform better** than peers (Wang et al., 1990).
- **Identify concepts** they do not understand and **select appropriate strategies** for learning.
- Know how to **implement strategies** they have selected and carry out their overall study plans.
- **Evaluate their strategies** and **adjust their plans** based on outcomes.
- **Demonstrate expert-like approaches** in their thinking and are more effective and efficient in their learning.





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Metacognitive Knowledge

vs.

Metacognitive Regulation

- **Declarative:** knowing about yourself as a learner, the demands of the task, and what learning strategies exist
- **Procedural:** involves knowing how to use learning strategies
- **Conditional:** knowing when and why to use particular learning strategies

- **Planning:** deciding what strategies to use for a learning task and when to use them
- **Monitoring:** assessing understanding of concepts and the effectiveness of strategies while learning
- **Evaluating:** appraising prior plans and adjusting it for future learning.

What are the course demands and features (syllabus)?

How well do you know yourselves and your learning strengths and challenges (intrapersonal skills/EQ)?

How can you tailor learning strategies and study skills to create strategies address those two domains (faculty office hours/learning center)?

PSYCHOLOGY OF LEARNING

Psychology: The study of behavior and mental processes.

Behavior:
Anything we do that is observable like a facial expression.

Mental Processes:
Thoughts, feelings, and attitudes

Learning: a relatively permanent change in behavior due to experience.

Learning: Cognitive, Affective, and Behavior change

LEARNING

Cognitive, Affective,
and Behavior change

Cognitive Change:
Mindset

Affective Change:
Social-Emotional Learning

Behavior Change:
Study habits,
procrastinatory behavior,
goal setting, service
utilization

TYPES OF LEARNING

Vicarious Experiences of Consequences

Direct Experience of Consequences

Self-Produced Consequences



Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change



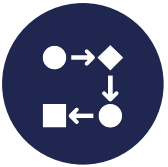
Precontemplation

No intention to change behavior in the foreseeable future. Individuals is unaware of problems or that there is a need for change.



Contemplation

Individuals have identified a problem. They are deciding whether there is a need to take action to correct the problem. Do the pro & cons of change outweigh the pro & cons of maintaining present behavioral pattern?



Preparation

When the individual decides there is a need to take some action. Specific plans of action are developed in this stage as the individual chooses among alternative potential solutions.



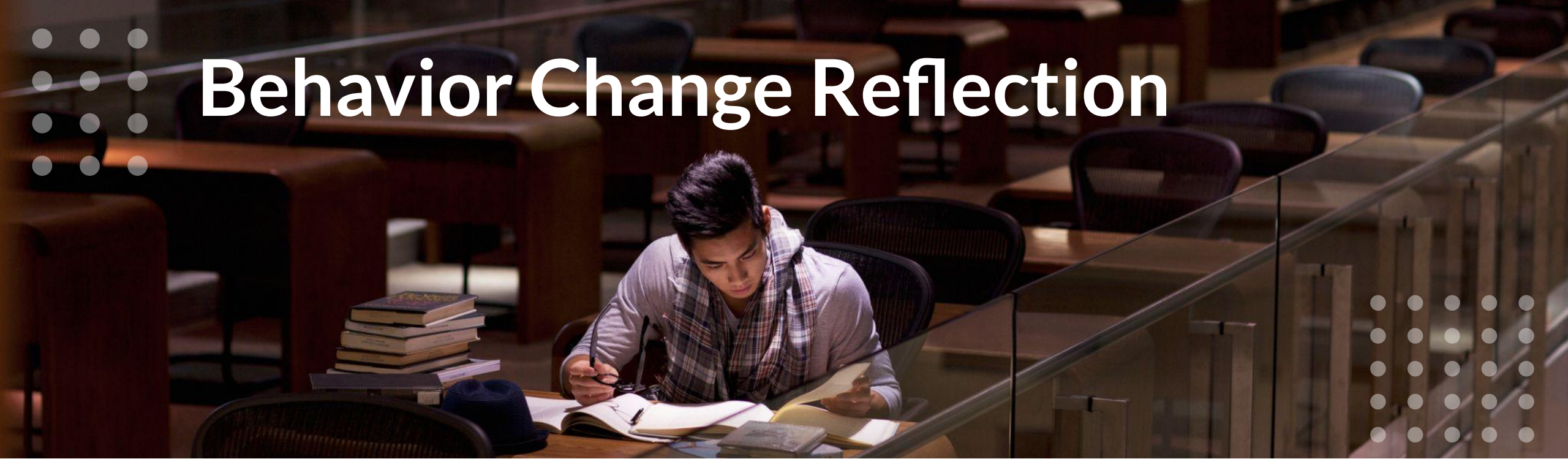
Action

Individuals put their plans into action and change their behavioral patterns.



Maintenance

Individual works to prevent relapse and consolidate the gains attained during action.



Behavior Change Reflection

1 →

Reflect on a behavior you have been trying to change or struggling to change.

2 →

Stage yourself.

3 →

Think of a behavior where you reached maintenance stage and then regressed. What caused you to regress into earlier stages?

6 Areas of Adjustment

for 1st Year College Students (Hazard & Carter, 2018)



Academic

How well do you use learning strategies to actively adjust to a wide variety of learning situations?



Social

How successful are you at making connections, forming healthy relationships, and managing conflict?



Emotional

How well do you use strategies and resources to cope with the stresses of university life?



Intellectual

How open are you to new ideas and how well do you adapt your thinking to new concepts and ideas?



Cultural

How well do you interact in a diverse cultural environment and value those who are different from you?



Financial

How well can you plan for the financial requirements of attending university and establishing your career?

6 AREAS of ADJUSTMENT ACTIVITIES & ASSIGNMENTS

- Create six posters with one area of adjustment on each poster and hang them around your classroom. Ask students to stand in front of the poster for the area they are most concerned about. Discuss the resources on campus that are available to support students with each area of adjustment.
- Break students down into groups or pairs. Ask them to identify the area they are most concerned about and the area they are least concerned about and why. Ask the student to identify the resources on campus that are designed to help them with each area of adjustment.
- On their own, ask the student to rank order and record the areas of adjustment from the area that they are most concerned about to the area they are least concerned about. Have them pair and share, and then facilitate a discussion about the resources on campus that are designed to help them with each area of adjustment,
- For a writing assignment or written reflection: Identify the area of adjustment you are most concerned about. Explain why this area is most concerning. Identify the area of adjustment you are least concerned about. Explain why this area is least concerning. Provide concrete examples. For the area you are most concerned about, identify what campus resource can help. During this week, utilize the campus resource. Describe the experience.

The Five R's for Student Success

- **Recognize:** Knowing Yourself and Learning About Anticipatory Problem Solving
- **Reach:** Developing Self-Advocacy Skills
- **Realize:** Processing “Disorienting Dilemmas”
- **Remove:** Considering Internal and External Factor Related to Student Success
- **Results:** Assessing Outcomes

I. Recognize: Knowing Yourself and Learning About Anticipatory Problem Solving

Knowing Yourself

A dimension of emotional intelligence called **intrapersonal** skills.

- Distinguish IQ and EQ
- Gardner: MI
- Goleman: EQ

Anticipatory Problem Solving

A proactive strategy where potential problems and challenges are identified before they occur; solutions are developed and implemented in anticipation of challenges

Anticipatory Problem-Solving Assignments

Campus Resources: Connect to Areas of Adjustment



Identify A Target Course



2. Reach: Develop Self-Advocacy Skills (the ability to ask for help)





4 C's of Self-Advocacy

- Courage to admit you are struggling
- Clarification of problem you are experience
- Communication skills to articulate the challenges
- Confidence to bring the issues to those who are in the position to help

Help Students Frame Questions

- I need help
- Will you help me understand
- I am unclear on
- I am struggling with
- Do you know where
- Do you know how
- In class today, I was challenged when
- I felt lost at this point



Self-Advocacy Video



https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=74G_Zpz-7Bk

3. Realize: Processing Disorienting Dilemmas



- **Transformative learning** occurs when students' meaning systems are discovered to be inadequate in accommodating some life experience, yet the student is psychologically ready to replace the former meaning system with a new perspective
- The question is, how do we do we "ready" students to replace former meaning systems with a new perspective?

Mezirow, 1991

PROCESSING A DISORIENTING DILEMMA

Content Reflection

What was the dilemma?

Process Reflection

How did you handle the experience?

Premise Reflection

Examination of assumptions, beliefs, and values

Types of Reflections for Processing A Disorienting Dilemma

Reflection	Questions and Self-Examination	Example
Content	What was the dilemma?	I failed my first quiz and was totally shocked
Process	How did you handle it?	I felt disappointed and plan to set aside more time to study next time
Premise	Look at your assumptions, beliefs, and values	I studied the night before because cramming has always worked for me in the past

4. Remove: Consider Internal and External Barriers to Student Success



RECIPROCAL
DETERMINISM: THE
PERSON/ENVIRONMENT
INTERACTION

Behavior and internal
personal factors: **the
students**

Environmental influences:
the institution

Operate as interlocking
determinants of each
other

**Social Cognitive
Theorist: Albert
Bandura**

Different people choose
different environments

Our personalities shape
how we interpret and
react to events

Our personalities help
create situations to which
we react

BRAINSTORM SOME COMMON INTERNAL & EXTERNAL BARRIERS TO ACHIEVING GOALS

Internal: from within the individual

- Lack of “know how” or knowledge
- Lack of motivation
- Lack of interest
- Time and behavior management issues
- Procrastination habits
- Low confidence and self-efficacy
- Negative attitudes

External: from the environment

- Friends
- Family
- Work
- Co-Workers/Supervisor
- Space and place
- Social media
- Activities
- Over-scheduling

5. Results: Assessing Outcomes (Five A's for Facing Failure)

1. Accept Disappointment
2. Adjust Expectations
3. Assess Outcomes
 - What happened?
 - So what?
 - Now what?
4. Ask For help
5. Activate A Plan

<https://collegiateparent.com/cpm/ul-magazine/the-five-as-of-facing-failure-in-college-and-beyond/>

The Five R's Require Metacognitive Strategies: Some Favorites

Success Counseling

1. What do you want (to get out of this semester)?
2. What are you doing now to get what you want?
What are you doing today to get what you want?
3. Is it helping (you get closer to your goals)?
4. Examine your options and create a plan to do better.
5. Be aware of potential obstacles and never give up.

Activate Prior Knowledge

KWL

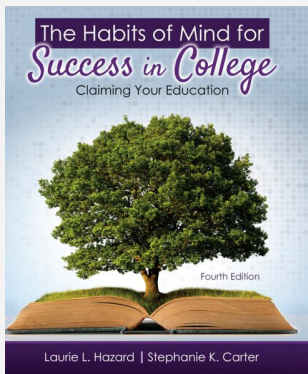
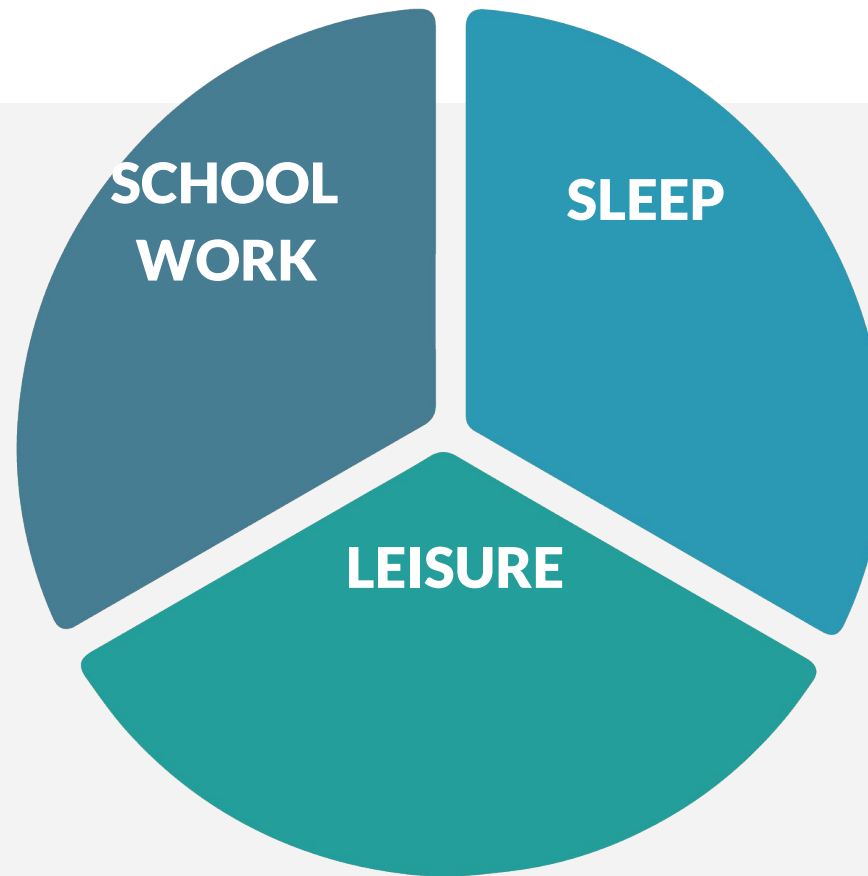
- What do you already **K**now?
- What do you **W**ant to know?
- What have you **L**earned?

Student Success Course Reflection

- What specifically did you learn from the assignment, class discussion, or co-curricular activity?
- What topics were unclear, or generated further questions?
- How is the information you acquired applicable to the other courses in which you are enrolled?
- In what way did the assignment, class discussion, or co-curricular activity expand your worldview?
- Will your future behavior be influenced by what you have recently learned?
- Were there any other specific issues of importance to you?

Practice Healthy Habits

8-8-8 Formula



Hazard L. & Nadeau, (2013)
Foundations for Learning.
Pearson Education

Procrastination Exploration

1

What are you currently putting off doing?

2

What have you procrastinated about in the past?

3

What patterns emerge? Are there certain types of tasks you tend to put off?

4

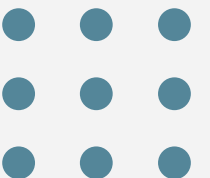
How are you aware when you are procrastinating?

5

What are your replacement activities? That is, activities other than those you should be doing?

6

After answering these questions, describe a time where you overcame procrastination and doing so contributed to your success. At the same time, describe a time where procrastination rendered you immobile and there were consequences.



Questions

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<https://tinyurl.com/Habits-of-Mind-Book>

