



How to Understand Anything in a Few Minutes a Day

Ten Steps to Significantly Increasing Your Knowledge

Judith DeLany, LMT

The thirst for knowledge and understanding is a universal human characteristic. Satisfaction that comes from accomplishing an educational goal is far reaching, beyond the obvious of understanding the information. It can also affect personal health and wellbeing through intellectual stimulation.

These simple steps can be applied to any subject you seek to understand. We have chosen anatomy to demonstrate these steps, but any subject can be used. 15-20 minutes each day will not only increase your knowledge base, but will also affect your self-image, personal discipline and possibly your income. Make the commitment for one month and see what happens.

1 Create a reading nook. This personal area can be as small as a chair and one shelf or as large as a personal library. Be sure to have a comfortable chair and a shelf or stand on which to place your books. A table is optional.

2 Select several books on the same subject as the one you wish to study. For instance, with anatomy and dysfunctions, you might want a Merck Manual, a medical dictionary, a cadaver book, Platzer's Locomotor System, anatomy flashcards, Guyton's Medical Textbook, Clemente's Anatomy, Cailliet's series or any other reference you might like to use. These books remain in this area, or, if borrowed, are promptly returned, as they will be used daily.

3 Select a book, article, or magazine to study, for instance, *Clinical Application of Neuromuscular Techniques* (either volume). Place it in the study area. You will study material from this each day until you have completed it, so choose one you like.

4 Set a time each day when you will donate 15-20 minutes consistently and faithfully to this one piece of material. By reading only a small amount, you will likely remember most of what you read. You may read longer than this if you want, but this amount of time is enough to make a difference without significantly consuming your time.

5 Remember that the goal is to thoroughly understand everything you read, regardless of the number of pages or chapters covered. This is the key and the most important factor of this system of learning. One paragraph thoroughly understood is better than 40 pages of confusion.

6 Begin reading at the beginning and don't go further until you understand the material you have read. Consult other books, if needed. Most books are written to build on the material from the previous chapters; skipping around may not produce the best result. It matters how much you understand rather than how long it takes to reach the end.

7 When you find a word you don't understand, stop and look it up so that the material will make more sense.

When you find a condition mentioned that you cannot explain yourself, even if it is familiar, look it up in the Merck Manual. Do not write it down and wait until later. Do not read further until you understand. This important key should not be compromised.

8 Open several books on the same topic and compare what several authors or artists express. A different opinion may make another impression on you, especially when studying anatomy.

9 Remember that sometimes you will spend your entire time looking up words, jumping from book to book or doing the dictionary chase from word to word. It's okay. Even if you only covered one paragraph in your selected text, your time was well spent.

10 You will begin to look forward to your private time with your author(s) of choice. Enjoy and have fun!

About the author: Judith DeLany, LMT, has been studying and developing therapeutic applications for over two decades. She is a dynamic speaker on the subject of muscular pain and a published author of NMT manuals and articles. She is an associate editor for *Journal of Bodywork and Movement Therapies*, a peer-reviewed journal published by Churchill Livingstone (Elsevier Science Publishing). Judith has co-authored (with Dr. Leon Chaitow) two definitive textbooks on pain management titled *Clinical Application of Neuromuscular Techniques, Vol. 1, the upper body* and *Vol. 2, the lower body*. For seminar information write to NMT Center, 900 14th Avenue North, St. Petersburg, FL 33705, email to nmtcenter@aol.com, phone (727) 821-7167 or visit our website at www.nmtcenter.com.