

Compensatory Strategies For Studying

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Kelli Gary: The strategies that I used to help me get through my schoolwork, like I said, I did talk with the Office of Disabilities, but I didn't connect with them as much at the school. The program wasn't as formalized at my school. But I grabbed a little bit of information from them, and then I basically kind of developed my own strategies. And what worked for me is that, one, I had to come to the realization that the things that I used to be able to do easy, I could no longer do easy. Sorry, I could no longer cram for that test at the last minute and actually pass. If I wanted to, you know, understand this, I had to start working 2 or 3 weeks ahead of time. And I basically used a lot of repetition a lot of repetition. I read my chapters over and over again. I mean, what would have taken me a day to know or two days to know it took me two weeks to know. I studied. I lived in the library. I would read a chapter. I would outline the chapter, write it down. I used all of my senses. So I know I could no longer just crash and just read it and retain the information and go. I knew I had to read it. I had to write it. I took tape recorders, and I recorded myself reading the material. And so with all of those it was a plethora of things that's how I learned. It was a lot longer, a lot more work, a lot more intensive, but still the same result, you know, happened.

I actually passed the class. And that was the --the primary strategy for me is that I knew I had to work harder and use more repetition in my studies. A lot of my program my occupational therapy program did a lot of group work. Groups didn't work for me. I had to basically kind of shield myself from noise, from a lot of stimuli and go somewhere and sit back in a really quiet environment. I just couldn't give to the group that way. And so once I discovered that that's what I had to do, I used a lot of communication. I communicated with the faculty. Of course, a lot of them were OT so they did have some idea of the things that were wrong with me. They were familiar and I communicated with the students that I worked with. And I said I will get this part done, but I can't do it in a group. I had to do it on my own, and then I'll bring it back to you. And then maybe we can talk about it then.

And so I did a couple of other strategies. I was very -- I had problems concentrating. I had problems focusing. I had problems with abstract thinking and all of those things. And so one of the main things that I would do before I would study is I had a recliner chair in my living room and I would turn on classical music and turn the lights down and just lean back in the recliner chair for about 30 minutes. And it would calm my system down and allowed me to prepare to study. These are things I discovered just on my own. Just like, okay, this is not working, and I'm like all over the place. But then I was, like oh, wait, this is working. This music is working. I was never into classical music, but it worked for me.

I would find a study room in the library, turn the light off, and just do meditation for like about 30 minutes and then turn a light on, and I was a little bit more prepared to study. But I knew I couldn't be in a loud environment. I knew I couldn't be around a lot of people, and I knew that, you know, I just couldn't do it on the fly.