



Photo by Angelina Litvin on Unsplash

DO YOU DARE TO DOODLE?

Why doodling is good for you, and why scribbling can improve your listening skills.

Almost everybody does it, often intuitively: idly scribbling away during presentations and meetings while we are supposed to be listening. It often begins with a circle or a square, or the colouring in of a few letters. These are scribbles that often arise without a conscious thought, plan or structure; and yet, before you know it, a true work of art appears.

While someone doodling away during a meeting or presentation might appear uninterested - bored, even - in fact it is a positive sign. Studies show that doodling is a highly effective way of activating your memory. Doodling listeners retain 29 percent more of the information that they hear than non-doodlers. Unlike daydreaming and other multitasking activities, doodling does not distract the brain from the primary task that it has been given.

Instead, it helps the brain to focus on its primary task. In other words, it is not a 'mental break' while you listen. As Sunni Brown's Ted Talk elegantly describes it, "To Doodle is to make spontaneous marks to help yourself think."

This is another wonderful example of how visualisation can improve the effectiveness, speed and ease with which the brain retains information. So next time you are in a meeting and see someone doodling away, put away that disapproving frown and join in. In fact: try making it an integrated activity in your meeting, and get everyone doodling!

Legal Design | *Designed to deliver*

— Author: S. van Hecke

Inspired by: Sunni Brown, Doodlers, Unite! Ted Talk and Jackie Andrade, 2009, What does Doodling do?, Applied Cognitive Psychology