



DIVISION OF
Arts and Sciences

Arts and Sciences Division
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Dear Arts & Sciences Students, Faculty, and Staff:

Hello, I am Jason Stone, the Division Head of Arts & Sciences at OSU-OKC. Let's continue our conversation about your future. I am delighted that you chose to invest in yourself and attend to the next video in our series about the Habits of the Mind. The Habit that we are stressing in this video is metacognition, or thinking about your thinking.

One of the most important Habits of the Mind that you can develop is to thoughtfully reflect about your thinking. Educational research shows that the most successful learners are the ones who regularly reflect on their thought processes (Tobias & Everson, 1996) and determine for themselves how they could think about a problem, task, or subject more productively.

Metacognition might be a term that you have not heard before. Let's break it down into its parts. "Meta" is typically used as a prefix. In common English usage when used as a prefix, the construction means "about". According to Webster's Dictionary the origin of this prefix is from the Greek language where the word functions like a preposition that describes things that are "around" or "beyond", so metacommunication is communication about communication. Metadata is data about your data. Metacognition is thinking about your thinking.

The Habits of the Mind authors Costa and Kallick (2007) wrote, "Metacognition means becoming increasingly aware of one's actions and the effect of those actions on others and on the environment." Metacognition stems from intrapersonal communication, or self-talk. Our ability to engage in a conversation with ourselves and others about our thinking is a critical first step to engaging in metacognition.

How many of you have enrolled in an online class and said, "Wow. This is not for me." I need to get into an onsite section. You assessed your level of computer skills, familiarity with the subject, and/or computer resources and decided that the online format might not be the best option for you to take a particular course. That assessment is an example of metacognition. You thought about your learning and cognition and decided that it would be difficult for you to access this learning in an online format. That is metacognition, or thinking about your thinking.

An important insight about your metacognition is that each subject can be accessed through multiple different models of instruction, learning modalities, and strategies. Engaging in metacognition means thinking about how you as a life-long learner can best learn about that material. Is that reading your textbook, a journal article, starting a discussion thread online, reaching out to an expert, signing up for a free online course, watching a YouTube video, or taking a traditional class? Technology is rapidly increasing the speed of change in the workplace. As this trend intensifies, you will be asked to learn even more from those around you, from those who are afar from you in an online environment, or to train yourself. Possessing the Habit of the Mind of good metacognition will help you overcome fast-paced change.

You can put what you've learned about the Habits of the Mind to immediate use. Some of you are engaging in harmful self-defeating cognition. You will not be aware of this and be able to fix it unless you engage in some metacognition. Constantly programming yourself with fear



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about a subject or an assignment is a harmful mental habit. Nobody likes to think that he or she is bad at something.

Some of you are required to take classes in subjects that you may not have had much success in the past. Can you really say that you put very much effort into your reading, your writing, or your arithmetic? Did you really apply yourself in that subject that you did poorly in? A talented friend and colleague of mine recently shared with me that she has had success helping students engage in metacognition about harmful self-destructive thinking by inviting students to reframe their cognitions about their previous level of effort. So it may not be that you are bad at math, you might not have much experience really trying to succeed in that subject. By reflecting on your mental processes, you can help to program yourself to be more confident and productive about that class or that assignment that you are dreading. The key to changing your attitude about that thing that you are adverse to is to engage in some metacognition and reframe that negative into a neutral or positive cognition.

The entire year-long focus on the Habits of the Mind is an invitation to engage in metacognition. Our stakeholders, some of the largest and most influential employers in the metro area asked us to help you develop better mental habits. Reflecting on your current mental habits and trying to change those habits are examples of metacognition.

Please join me and attend to the other videos in this series. Invest in yourself and your future. Attend to your thinking habits. Your mental habits will determine how far you go. Thank you for your time and attention.

Have a great day and "Go Pokes!"

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