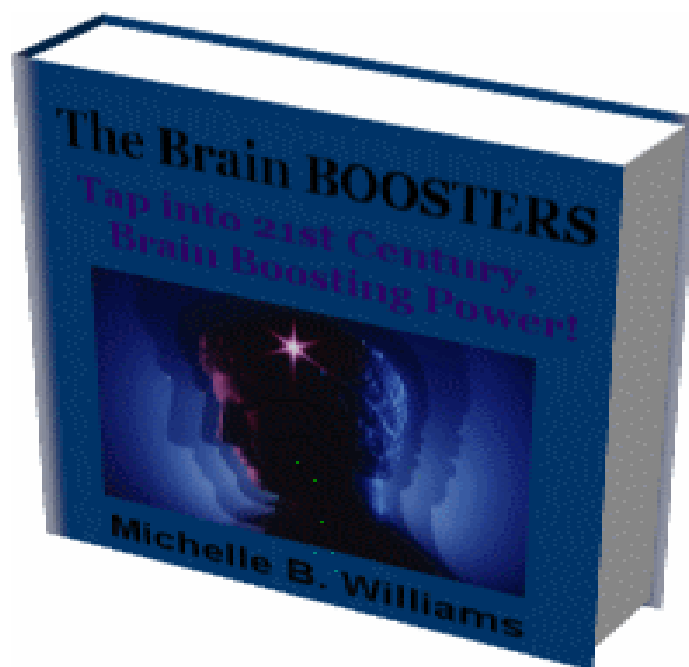


SPECIAL REPORT

The Brain BOOSTERS:

Tap into 21st Century Brain Boosting Power,
Today



by
Michelle B. Williams

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Foreword

My strong interest in the exciting world of brain performance enhancement, has been fueled by two groups of people, who are near and dear to my heart:

- ❖ My aging “baby boomer” relatives
- ❖ My young children

It is my hope that the new brain boosting information that I am about to share will allow my aging relatives, the opportunity to age gracefully while retaining the use of sharp mental faculties.

For my children, it is my hope that the steps that I take today, to ensure that they grow up, mentally fit with strong problem solving capability, will give them the best possible chance to make a wonderful contribution to their world.

Every effort has been made to keep things as simple as possible.

Many of you may be like me, in that I do not need to understand what is under the hood of the car. I just want to be able to turn the key and enjoy a wonderful ride.

However, I realize that many people will be deeply fascinated as their knowledge of how the brain works grows, and they will be hungry for more details. As such, information on the functioning and make-up of the brain itself is also provided.

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Introduction

Inside the human brain's three-pound package are ten billion nerve cells and almost one hundred billion smaller supporting cells. That's more power, in a smaller package, than a computer.

A common misconception is that the human brain is firm and grey in color, hence the expression "using your grey matter." In truth, the human brain is soft and jelly-like and of a deep red color. Chemicals or resins that the scientists use to preserve the brain are what cause the grey color and firm texture.

We know now that the brain has many functions, that every part of the brain has a different purpose, and that all the neurons are busy working all the time. What everyone could improve upon is the cognitive potential of their brains; that is by reading and studying, learning to solve problems, and increasing their brain's power.

As each decade passes, doctors and researchers learn more and more about the brain - its functions, the dangers it faces and ways to protect it. They are even experimenting with ways to make the brain more retentive and thereby smarter. Whether or not they ever concoct a "smart pill," there are ways you can train your brain to be more efficient, right now. You can protect your brain from dangerous outside influences. You can learn to feed and stimulate your brain so you not only live to a healthy old age, but you retain all your cognitive faculties. You can increase your brainpower and in the following report, we'll show you how.

Don't wait for that "smart pill." You can start right now to eliminate confusion in your thoughts and learn to think better and more clearly, no matter what your age.

Solving problems is easier when you're thinking clearly.

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By taking care of your brain and protecting it from danger, you can learn to make decisions quickly and easily.

Do you need to:

- Learn new information easily and with greater accuracy than ever before?
- Be more creative about finding solutions to problems?
- Reduce your mental and physical stress?

Whether it's learning a new language, studying for classes, or just memorizing a speech, clear thinking is more conducive to productive, high quality work. Any man, woman or child, with the proper training, can learn to think more clearly and thereby learn to be more productive. The only thing keeping you from a highly attuned mental capacity is a failure to understand what good, clear thinking is all about and how to attain it.

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Chapter One

The Brain & Its Functions

“The brain is a monstrous, beautiful mess. Its billions of nerve cells-called neurons-lie in a tangled web that displays cognitive powers far exceeding any of the silicon machines we have built to mimic it.” - William F. Allman

Your brain is the anterior or front part of your central nervous system, and is the primary control center for the peripheral nervous system. It controls involuntary activities such as the heartbeat, respiration, and digestion. These are also called autonomic functions and encompass sensation and movement. However, that’s not all of which your brain is capable, of course; it also controls thought, reasoning, and even abstraction. All of these are known as conscious activities. The human brain is capable of perception, imagination, memories, and the ability to interpret information.

What makes the human brain truly unique is its ability to make synaptic connections, creating an intricate and extremely densely connected neural network. Our mental abilities are separated into the cerebral hemispheres, right and left. Some functions, such as language and speech, are localized in specific areas in only one hemisphere. Your brain is resilient in that if one hemisphere is injured, at an early age, the functions can be recovered by the other hemisphere, sometimes only in part, sometimes in full. Both hemispheres can control memory and reasoning, as well as motor control.

Thanks to a process called neurogenesis, new neurons can grow, even in the mature adult brain. That means you can learn and develop your brain throughout your life.

The neocortex, which helps us in many aspects of our thinking process, contains billions of neurons, arranged in layers on the brain’s outer surface. There are two halves of the brain, the right and left side, and each half of the

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brain is divided into four sections or lobes, and each lobe has a special function or purpose. These lobes are the frontal, parietal, occipital and temporal lobes.

- Frontal Lobe: This controls planning and reasoning, as well as activating our muscles.
- Parietal Lobe: This controls physical sensation, such as heat, cold, pressure or pain.
- Occipital Lobe: Also called the visual cortex, this processes and interprets sensory information.
- Temporal Lobe: This controls hearing, speech perception and some kinds of memory. If you're one of the ninety percent of right-handed people, or one of the seventy percent of left-handed people, the left temporal lobe contains the center for spoken language.

All these functions actually, only take up a small space in each of the lobes, the rest of the space is for putting together the association of experiences and ideas. Simply put, it's for thinking. We are able to consider consciously what's going on, weigh our options and decide on the best choice for us to make.

The cerebellum is the part of our brain that helps control our posture and balance, even coordination. This is why once you have learned to ride a bike or drive a car, you never forget how. It requires effort to learn at first; but after that, practice makes it automatic.

The limbic system cooperates with the brain stem and regulates the body's temperature, blood pressure, heart rate and blood sugar. It's also the center of human emotion. The thalamus is essentially the brain's relay station. It channels impulses from all the senses, except smell, to the cerebral cortex and sorts out the important information from the insignificant; and together with the hippocampus, it plays a role in memory.

The hypothalamus regulates the body's temperature, as well as hunger and thirst. It also signals the pineal gland concerning sleep. The pineal gland receives nerve impulses from the eyes and regulates the body's internal clock and daily circadian rhythms. When it receives a message from the hypothalamus, it also

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secretes the hormone melatonin, which has to do with sleep and wakefulness. The amygdale is what integrates the senses and is essential to forming memories.

Knowing how the brain is set up and how it works will help us learn to protect, enhance and keep those brains in tip-top shape, honed and sharp, all of our lives.

So, what is your brain's potential and how can you attain it?

Read on.

Chapter Two

Dangers to Your Brain!

“Whatever any man does he first must do in his mind, whose machinery is the brain. The mind can do only what the brain is equipped to do, and so man must find out what kind of brain he has before he can understand his own behavior.” - Gay Gaer Luce & Julius Segal

It's common knowledge that you must always protect your head from physical danger. You wear a helmet when riding a motorcycle, skating, or playing sports. However, there are other dangers out there that you must also protect your brain against.

Studies have shown that the brain is an awesome learning device, but it can be influenced as much by negative perceptions as by positive ones. These negative influences can actually affect how the brain functions. If you limit your intellectual growth, that is, if you continuously tell yourself that you're not smart enough, your brain can never operate at peak efficiency. Self-image is how you feel about yourself and has a direct impact on your brain's efficiency, at least where intellectual activities are concerned.

So, what can you do to save your brain? You can't change your genes, but you can change your environment and your lifestyle.

Stress and Your Brain

At the first signs of stress, the adrenaline kicks in, setting off a burst of activity in your nervous system. This in turn, speeds up your heart and changes the size of the blood vessels. Besides getting you ready for fight or flight, it also helps you to remember those frightening events of your life. Therefore, this adrenaline surge also helps to plant emotional memories of the event in your life.

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After the surge of adrenaline, comes the second stage of the stress response.

The adrenal cortex begins to pump out cortisol, hydrocortisone and corticosterone. These are called glucocorticoids or GCs.

These GCs are helpful in dealing with emergencies.

Besides boosting glucose production and constricting blood vessels, they also go straight up to the brain to help regulate stress signaling. It tells your brain whether to calm down or boost the stress level, depending on what's best for you at the moment. These GCs can exert pressure on the temporal lobe to help you remember those emotional events.

Some stress is emergency induced and some is chronic. Chronic stress can be very dangerous to your brain, since it constantly sends GCs from the adrenal glands straight to the brain. That's why stressed out brains are at risk for damage.

The glucocorticoids go straight to the brain, to the memory system, most especially the hippocampus. It tells your memories that the event has survival value to you and you need to remember it. Unfortunately, the GCs are not always beneficial. These hormones are very powerful and sometimes stress can raise the levels of these hormones beyond what the brain's neurons can handle. This can result in damage to the parts of the brain that relate to memory.

Long periods of severe, prolonged stress can actually lead to the death of neurons. If you feel you're at the mercy of your circumstances, it can actually intensify the danger to your brain.

Different people react differently to stress. Some who go through traumatic events will go on to suffer some lasting effects, actually becoming psychologically overwhelmed. Others work through the event and come out virtually unscathed and with memories intact.

Knowing whether your stress is acute or chronic is key to figuring out why some brains are more susceptible to stress related damage.

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Each person possesses his/her own strengths and weaknesses when it comes to handling stress and knowing what to do about it. Those who are more vulnerable to anger, anxiety, low self-esteem, depression and post-traumatic stress disorder are more likely to suffer brain damage.

Keep in mind that everyone has moments of depression or “the blues” as some people call them. These normally do not last long and you shouldn’t worry about them. You will encounter these moments of sadness and grief or indulge in little “pity parties” many times in the course of your life.

Major depression is something different altogether and requires serious professional assistance. This is considered one of the biggest stresses for anyone and is immensely painful and ultimately dangerous for your brain. It is possible to recover from major depression, but what does it do to the brain? Doctors report that fifty percent of the people who undergo major depression possess high cortisol levels. A high cortisol level over a long period of time can bring about some degree of brain damage.

They’ve shown that the first neurons damaged in this way are in the memory center. The Washington University School of Medicine in St. Louis, in a study, discovered that people who had once been depressed, even several years before, showed twelve to fifteen percent atrophy of their hippocampi. That means the loss of millions of memory cells. Most people who have been depressed are more likely to have recurrent episodes of depression.

What else can cause our stress levels to rise to unhealthy levels? Anger, anxiety and low self-esteem can contribute to the problem. Here, we’re not talking about slight anxiety or the occasional feelings of anger towards a situation or an individual. Where the brain and its susceptibility to damage are concerned, we’re talking about severe anxiety of long duration. Someone who feels anger constantly and for years without respite, is not only a candidate for brain damage, but for a heart attack or stroke as well.

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As for low self-esteem, studies have proven that success and feeling good about oneself is definitely beneficial to your health. The opposite is also true, of course. Someone who has a chronically depressed personality is doing damage to his or her brains.

In this day and age, we are not running from wild beasts and our lives are not necessarily in constant danger, but we experience our own type of stress nevertheless. With deadlines and pressures at work, rush hour traffic, family problems, the ever present need to handle money and bills, it's no wonder we experience chronic stress. We are constantly feeling the adrenaline rush of our predecessors, but without the relief of fight or flight that they had. Dr. Jeff Victoroff, in his book, "Saving Your Brain," says that the cultural evolution has outpaced the evolution of the brain. We are developing frayed nerves, quite literally. Only by relaxing and slowing down can we help to save our brains.

So, what's the best way to reduce that stress, lower the hormone levels, relax and save your brain? Aerobic exercise! That's right-it's so simple! We have all that nervous energy stored up, and practically leaking out our ears and what do we do? We go and sit on the couch and watch television, but that's not enough to relieve the stress of our days. We need to throw ourselves literally into some form of physical activity, in order to relieve the pressure. Strenuous physical activity will reduce the stress, the anger, and the anxiety. The endorphins produced by this physical activity make our bodies and minds feel good; and then we feel better about ourselves, boosting our self-esteem. Emotionally happy and healthy people have brains that are happy and healthy too.

How wonderful would it be if that were all we had to do to relieve stress and thereby save our brain cells? In some cases, that works beautifully well. In others, not so much. No matter how much they exercise, stress still gets to them, threatening their physical and emotional health with high blood pressure, which can lead to strokes, which in turn destroys brain cells.

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On the Job Stress

How is your job affecting your brain?

Overly demanding work can create too much stress, releasing hormones that can quite literally kill brain cells. However, work that demands no thought, thereby not sufficiently engaging the brain is just as bad.

Boring, mind-numbing work may actually be just as hard on your brain as unrelieved stress. Work that doesn't challenge your brain can cause it to actually degenerate or atrophy.

Therefore, you must avoid excessively demanding work as well as insufficiently demanding work and strike a happy medium somewhere.

To be happy and healthy, physically, emotionally, and mentally, you need to feel a sense of purpose and a feeling of having mastered at least a part of your job, but still have enough of a challenge to be stimulated. That will allow you to have a healthy brain.

What are the hazards in your workplace? While there have always been occupational related hazards on the job, such as painters in danger of inhaling fumes from the materials they handle on a daily basis, the current era has probably produced more toxic dangers than ever before in history.

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and the Occupational Safety and Health Association (OSHA), all have tried to make our lives safer and healthier, testing virtually everything we could be exposed to in the performance of our jobs.

What keeps these organizations from being totally successful in protecting our bodies and our brains? It's the sheer volume of compounds they have to test every year. Thousands of compounds and toxins are synthesized every year and there's just no way to get them all tested.

When it comes to your job, how hard is too hard? We've left the pre-industrial society with its "it takes a village" philosophy and unfortunately, entered the competitive "work, work, work" society, with its risk of identity loss.

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Back in 1979, Americans worked an average of thirty-eight and a half hours per week, as compared to the forty-two hours per week in 2006. Most don't have a lunch "hour" anymore; it's more like thirty minutes. Once upon a time, workers could actually go home for lunch, but now there is simply not enough time for such luxuries, especially since most people now work so far from their homes.

Job stress is not necessarily the number of hours you put into the job, but the type of work you do too. An emergency room nurse has more stress than the receptionist does at a bank. The working mom may put in a forty hour week, but how about the extra fifty hours she puts in after she gets home, taking care of her children?

Stress at work can mean high levels of glucocorticoids assaulting your brain. Those with special stress such as doctors and surgeons or soldiers in battle are even more at risk. However, there are other mitigating circumstances that cause stress, such as:

- Changing jobs
- Working exceptionally long hours
- Conflicts on the job
- High noise levels during the workday
- Unfair compensation for work done
- Constantly changing hours
- Abusive conditions in the workplace

All these things can cause high levels of GCs to flood into the bloodstream, showing that job related stress could damage brain cells.

Ask yourself these questions about your job.

- Do you find your heart pounding from excitement about your job, or from stress?
- Do you find yourself sweating from exertion or frustration?
- Do you have a chance to pat yourself on the back for a job well done or do you feel frustrated at not being able to get everything done each day?

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- Are you appreciated by your peers and supervisor, or is every job criticized, so you cease to care about the job you do?
- Do you work well under pressure or does a deadline throw you into a panic?
- Do you have trouble focusing on the key points of a problem you are trying to solve?
- Do you become anxious and confused when faced with a problem and a deadline for solving it?
- Do you begin to feel that you're incapable of solving the problem?

If you enjoy your job, feel real satisfaction in doing it, and are made to feel you're an invaluable member of the team, you will experience much less stress in your life, and that's another way you can save your brain.

As long as we're discussing how work can impact your brain, let's also add another topic that could be adding to your stress levels.

While technology has enabled us to make remarkable strides in the fields of medicine and communications, it has also brought with it a new form of stress—that of Information Overload! Information can bombard you from every direction now. Just one issue of the New York Times contains more information than the average person from the 17th century encountered in an entire lifetime.

Not to mention that bad news seems to dominate the information flowing towards you. Unfortunately, bad news sells better than good news. There you go—more stress coming at you. Besides the newspapers, there are thousands of magazines, television, radio, email and snail mail bombarding you every day.

The good news is that the field of communication has taken giant leaps in our society too. The bad news is that everyone seems to feel the need for a cell phone, a pager, a blackberry, and a laptop computer.

Why do we feel the need to be connected every minute of the day?

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Unless you're a doctor, is it really necessary? Are we really just trying to impress others with our seeming productivity? At what cost?

More and more people are experiencing burnout, chronic fatigue, and nervousness. All because they can never escape this information overload.

How can you handle this overload and not let it control you?

That's going to mean leaving the computer at work, turning off the pager and the blackberry. Avoid the email once in a while. Take a break from technology and give yourself a much-needed vacation from the overload. Reduce the stress and learn to relax and your brain will thank you.

"The brain is a wonderful organ. It starts working the moment you get up in the morning and does not stop until you get into the office." - Robert Frost

Chapter Three

How to Train Your Brain

“You know you’ve got to exercise your brain just like your muscles.”

- Will Rogers

The average human brain, while it works all the time, functions at a very low level, unless stimulated and trained.

Training your brain to operate at peak efficiency increases your productivity, aids your ability to learn new information, and even stirs the creative juices. While it is a myth that people use only ten percent of their brain capacity, it is true that most people’s brains are not functioning at peak efficiency. However, you can change that and train your brain to be more retentive, more creative, and more productive.

Too often, people, when faced with a problem, slip into confusion and frustration. **Once they learn how to train their brains, the ability to switch to logic and clarity becomes second nature.**

Your brain is capable of intense concentration; you simply need to hone the ability to focus on a problem. The great thinkers of our society have learned this secret. Once learned, you will not fall into the emotional trap of confusion and frustration anymore, and you’ll know how to focus instantly on the problem and the solution you need.

Thanks to research, scientists have discovered that it is possible for you to learn to rewire your brain, simply by changing your thoughts and emotions. They found that certain types of meditation made it possible to increase the activity of the prefrontal cortex. They found a way to increase mental activity without necessarily increasing adrenaline and stress. Their research found that focusing on positive thoughts and emotions gave the greatest increase in brain activity.

This doesn’t mean you need to chant a mantra or go to your happy place while meditating.

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The researchers discovered that just thinking happy, loving thoughts makes your brain go into overtime, making mental connections and being productive and creative. Whether you've been trained in meditation techniques or not, you can learn to increase your brain's activity, without stress.

For starters, give yourself just ten minutes in the morning and ten minutes in the evening to focus on happy, loving thoughts. Changing the way you think and behave is up to you. Henry Ford said, "If you think you can do a thing or think you can't do a thing, you're right." Find a comfortable place to sit, relax and take a deep breath through your nose. Close your eyes and concentrate first on your breathing. Then focus on thinking about being joyful. Push aside the worries and concentrate on nothing by joy, happiness and love.

You can change the way your brain works, but it takes discipline, determination and practice. If you want to be smarter, you must choose to do so, by controlling your thoughts and emotions - by choosing to be happy, grateful, and appreciative. By choosing to be emotionally happy, you are changing the way your brain works, making new connections, in fact rewiring your brain to be more productive, more creative and smarter.

I know you're asking, why just making yourself feel happy could possibly have anything to do with getting smarter. It's simple. When your body feels good, blood circulates through the brain freely. This helps you to focus and lets your brain be as creative as it needs to be for the task at hand. Happiness releases hormones and body chemicals that will produce the greatest mental activity. Depression and unhappiness clog up the works, making your mental activity slow to a crawl and creating a sluggishness in the blood flow and thought processes. This is no way to work or live!

There's enough mental confusion being thrown at you from all directions, the last thing you need is to be bombarded by negative thoughts and emotions. All the worries and upsets, disappointments and anxieties just obliterates the learning process. When you're upset and confused, it's difficult to remember things, or even think straight.

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Even your observational skills are impaired by negativity and emotional upheaval. You can't enhance your brain while under the onslaught of worries and anxiety.

That's why the ten-minute twice a day are so important to your brain. During those times, you must not let any negativity into your consciousness. Allow your brain to relax with positive, kind, loving, happy thoughts.

Think about all that you're grateful for in your life, everything that makes you happy. Push aside any worries and upsets, at least for that twenty minutes a day. It's especially important to start your day feeling happy and relaxed, to get through your workday; and it's equally important to end the day with those happy emotions to help you sleep soundly, unperturbed by the day's events, whether good or bad.

Feeling happy reduces the confusion in your mind, relaxing your brain and your body and allowing creativity and mental clarity to keep you on the path. This helps the mental connections in your brain to stay clear and logical.

Because of the fight or flight hormones flooding our system, we tend to make choices based on fear. Instead of facing the fears and working through them, we make choices to help us avoid pain and confusion. Unfortunately, that works against us, rather than for us. Our brains tell us to avoid anything that could harm us. That includes not just physical harm, but humiliation, embarrassment, loss of respect and credibility by peers, even loss of love. Therefore, in fear, we make wrong choices, delay changes that would help us, and try to avoid any risk at all.

Basing decisions on fear never works in your favor. It merely keeps you from fully living life, and in fact can stifle the learning and growing process that keeps us alive and keeps our brains healthy.

After you master the ability to teach your brain to work for you, rather than against you, it's time to start getting that brain in shape. You exercise your body, why not your brain too? You know that exercising your body makes you feel good

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and improves your life and increases longevity. Therefore, it's time to give your brain a good workout.

Believe it or not, one of the ways you can stretch your brain's muscles is by playing video games. That's right, I said video games. Playing the games actually does give your brain a pretty good workout. It allows you to develop your peripheral vision, something extremely useful in the real world too. It also teaches you to recognize repeating patterns and to remember details, also useful in the real world. You're also learning with each game you master.

For those who think playing video games is just for nerds and geeks, there is actually a large community of people who enjoy the challenge of these games and are intent on mastering the skills. Many are games of strategy and very useful for teaching your brain. In many of the games, working your way through the various levels is much like working your way through the levels of real life, learning as you go.

Those who oppose the idea of video games being educational argue that the games are violent, that they are addictive and time consuming, and that young people especially are wasting their time. As with anything in life, perhaps moderation needs to be applied. On the plus side, playing the games enables us to learn and overcome challenges; and that is a good thing. Never stop learning, growing and being creative. It's good for your brain.

Another way to stretch your brain is to expose it to new ideas. Explore new areas of understanding. Just because you've never agreed with an idea, doesn't mean you can't give it some thought. Stretch it a little to include some new facts. Avoid getting into a rut and becoming set in your ways.

Have a particular interest in your life, something that gives you great pleasure. Find a group of like-minded individuals, a club, if you will. It can be in your local neighborhood or online. The point is to have some interesting discussions, some give and take, exchanging information and ideas. That will stretch your brain and make you feel good and your mind stimulated. Try joining a book club to discuss

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some good fiction. A good story will catch your interest, pull you in and let you get to know the characters. Can't find a book club? Start one!

Another way to relax and allow your brain to stretch is by listening to music. Researchers say that music can actually help you think better and boost your brainpower. At UC Irvine's Center for Neurobiology of Learning and Memory, a study was done on music and how it impacts the brain. Thirty-six students were given the standard spatial tests found in I.Q. tests. Before the test, they listened to Mozart's sonata for Two Pianos in D Major, for ten minutes. They listened to relaxation tapes just before the second test and simply sat in silence before the third test. All the students did remarkably better after listening to Mozart. In fact, they averaged nine I.Q. points higher after listening to the music. The music put the students into a more receptive state for the tests, so they did in fact have better access to the resources in their brains. Those involved with music on a regular basis, are actually much better at solving problems and when tested, scored eighty percent higher than those not in a musical program. If problem solving is part of your everyday life, and of course that is true for all of us, then let the music play on.

Your Conscious & Your Subconscious

When it comes to brainpower, your conscious mind is only one-sixth of your brain's thinking ability. However, your subconscious represents five-sixths of that ability. That means that put together, your whole mind has enough power to solve any problem that comes your way. Your conscious mind can only hold seven pieces of information in the short-term memory, but your subconscious mind stores every bit of knowledge you have ever learned. It contains everything you've ever heard, thought, read, or even imagined. In fact, you are much smarter than you think you are, thanks to the remarkable memory of your subconscious mind. It's from the subconscious mind that writers and artists get their inspiration. "The intellect has little to do on the road to discovery. There comes a leap in consciousness, call it intuition or what you will, and the solution

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comes to you, and you don't know how or why," said Albert Einstein. This is obviously the work of your subconscious.

The best part about your subconscious is that you can program it to work on whatever problem you're facing and it will work nonstop, day and night, even while you're sleeping. Whatever you're dealing with, if accompanied by strong emotions, and whether it's positive or negative, makes a deep impression on your subconscious.

Brainstorming is the most common solution when a problem arises. Another approach to the problem solving is lateral thinking. The first impulse when a problem arises is to go straight to the heart of the matter for a solution. That doesn't always work, however. Sometimes, there doesn't seem to be a straightforward approach to the solution. That's where lateral thinking comes in. Let's say for example, that you have a very important client that you need to meet with ASAP. You invite him to your office, but he says he can't make it. What do you do? Sit down and begin listing as many ideas as you can to make it possible for the two of you to somehow meet and discuss business. There is a notation used in lateral thinking called **Po**. This stands for 'Provocative operation.' This is used to propose an idea which in and of itself may not always be a good solution, but helps to move your thinking to a new place, where you can explore some new ideas, roll them around and see how they might provide the solution to the problem.

Therefore, that client does not want to come to you. What's next?

- Po: Do you go to him?
- Po: How about a video conference?
- Po: Could you send someone else in your place?
- Po: How about trying to make a deal with him? Ask him what it would take to get him to come.
- Po: You could just wait until he changes his mind.

I think you get the idea about lateral thinking. It's okay to come up with what might seem to be outrageous ideas, ideas you know will not work. It could very

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well lead to ideas that will, and that's what you're aiming for. And it does work; many large corporations have used this method of brainstorming to great advantage and great profits.

Right-Brain/Left-Brain

Have you ever wondered whether you were right-brained or left-brained? That's actually very difficult to pin down and perhaps very limiting in terms of your brainpower. Pigeonholing yourself is not a good idea anyway. By telling yourself that because you are methodical about certain things, you must be an analytical thinker, you are limiting your own possibilities. You might be very good at something creative, but will never realize it if you're too limiting. Just because you like being creative, doesn't mean you can't handle numbers like an accountant, if you choose to. Try not to limit your brain's abilities.

When it comes to processing information, both halves of your brain can do it, just in different ways. The dominant side is normally used to process information, but the learning can be enhanced if both sides are used in balance. This means you'll need to pump up your less dominant side, exercise it a bit. Knowing how each half of your brain works will help you to understand how to create a balance between the two sides.

The Left Side:

- Processes information in a linear style. That means that it takes pieces of information, lines them up and then puts them in a logical sequence, then comes up with a conclusion. List making is what left-brained people love to do. They love daily planning schedules, and they take great satisfaction in checking each item off the list as they accomplish it.
- Has no problem when it comes to symbols such as words, letters, and math notations. The left-brain person is at home with linguistic and mathematical problems.

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- Verbal thinking. Has no trouble with self-expression. The left brained person can explain a problem in detail, giving a step-by-step solution.
- Deals with reality more easily and adapts to different situations with more ease. Whatever their environment throws at them, they can adjust to it more easily.

The Right Side:

- Processes more randomly, skipping from item to item, jumping from topic to topic; more of a leapfrog approach.
- Needs things to be more concrete. They need to see and touch an object, rather than just discuss it.
- Non-verbal thinking. Has more difficulty expressing themselves in words and needs everything in writing.
- Not easily adaptable to their environment. Rather than adjust, they'd sooner change the environment.

No one has quite figured out exactly why, but the right hemisphere or right brain controls the left side of our bodies, processing what we see with our left eye; and conversely, the left hemisphere or left-brain controls the right side of our bodies and processes what we see with our right eye. Many think that this is what determines whether you are left-handed or right-handed, but scientists tell us it is not related at all. Yet, no one can explain why more artists have been left-handed. If you are right-handed, rest assured it doesn't mean you can't be artistic, if you choose to be.

Once again, don't narrow your vision concerning yourself, telling yourself you are limited due to the dominant side of your brain. Learn to balance and use both sides to best advantage. It will take some practice, but you can learn to process information on both sides of your brain. The artistic types can learn to be more linear and the logical types can learn to be more random.

You will also experience four different brain wave states. These are Beta, Alpha, Theta, and Delta. When your brain is in the Beta state, you are wide-

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awake and very alert. This is when your brain performs at its best, but not creatively.

The Alpha state is a slower brain wave state and your creativity starts to flow. Solutions begin to present themselves during this state.

In the Theta state, you are completely relaxed and are focused more on what's happening within you. You'll find this is very similar to a meditative state and you may even discover that the solution to a problem becomes very clear; you can actually see the 'big picture.'

When your brain is in the Delta state, you are sound asleep and it's time for your brain to recharge, to get you ready for another day and more problems and the need for creativity.

Though you are asleep, your brain is still working, indeed, it never stops, but it does slow down enough that the chatter stops. While you're awake, your brain is making connections across the neural network, in a constant flow of data. While you're asleep, however, your brain loses those connections, it does in fact, shut down for recharging. That's while you're in a deep sleep, when the brain is dreaming, the connections are still careening around in your mind, much like it does when you're awake. Scientists think that the deep sleep cycle allows the cortical circuits to shut out the noise of the constant connections, to allow your brain to rest and recuperate for the next day.

Chapter Four

Health & Your Brain

“Our mental and emotional diets determine our overall energy levels, health and well-being more than we realize. Every thought and feeling, no matter how big or small, impacts our inner energy reserves.” - Doc Childre

So, you've learned how to exercise your brain, stimulate your brain to be more retentive, and how to avoid stress that can affect your brain's health. But there's one more thing you can do to assure a healthy brain that will stay sharp for a long time.

You must take special care of your physical health in order to insure a healthy brain.

Learning to keep your brain healthy begins with your diet. That's right, you need brain food. A starved brain will not get you far. Giving your brains the right foods provides the nutrients and chemicals you need to help develop your brain. Those brain cells need protection to resist damage.

The first nutrient you should consider adding to your diet, is Choline, a B-vitamin that will nourish the cells. It promotes brain health and can boost your memory. The best foods to in which to find this nutrient are eggs, nuts and meat. Omega-3 fatty acids, which are components of brain cell membranes, need to be replenished regularly with foods such as sardines, salmon, mackerel, and trout. You can also supplement your diet with fish oil tablets. This nutrient is especially important, since when you're learning anything new, it creates new connections between cells in your brain, and that requires new membranes to cover them. So, enjoy that fresh fish as often as possible.

Making the news today is the information about antioxidants, especially those found in vitamin C, vitamin E, and beta-carotene. These are necessary to protect healthy cells from the damage caused by free radicals, which attack cells at a molecular level. The best source for vitamin C is in any of the citrus fruits, as well as strawberries, cantaloupe, spinach, green peppers, and broccoli. For a

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good supply of vitamin E, eat whole grains, nuts, apricots, fish, and vegetable oils. As for beta-carotene, try milk, peaches, and egg yolks. Stock up on the strawberries, blueberries, and spinach, which contain phytochemicals and will help boost your memory.

Basically, by eating a lot of dark-skinned fruits and vegetables, you're giving yourself the highest levels of naturally occurring antioxidants.

Watching your diet and getting out to exercise several times a week will help keep your cholesterol down. This is important since studies have shown that high cholesterol can lead to unhealthy levels of beta-amyloid, a toxic substance that doctors have discovered which builds up in the brains of Alzheimer's patients, and kills healthy brain cells. The good news is that HDL or 'good' cholesterol can help protect your brain cells. Using olive oil to cook your food, instead of mono and polyunsaturated fats will help your body and your brain. Baking or grilling your food rather than frying is another way to build up your HDL levels and lower your LDL levels.

Equally important to your brain is carefully watching your blood pressure. Doctors found that those who had high blood pressure in their middle years were six times more likely to develop some form of dementia later in life than their healthier counter-parts. Seeing your doctor and treating that high blood pressure is essential for good memory, and to help prevent dementia later on in life.

Eating properly and reducing your consumption of high fat and cholesterol foods, plus adding some form of exercise to your life, even if it's just walking each day, will help you manage your body weight. Obesity is not just bad for your overall physical health, but it is also damaging to your brain. Once again, the doctors have discovered that adults who are overweight in their middle years were twice as likely to develop dementia later in life.

In order to have a healthy brain, it's important to have a healthy body. Illness not only slows the body, but can bring about depression, which affects the brain. Physical fatigue can cause mental fatigue as well. You've heard people say, "I'm so tired, I just can't think straight." And it's true, you need to be well rested and rejuvenated in order to be at the top of your game, physically and mentally. And remember, exercise also stimulates your brain. When you exercise, endorphins pump through your system, affecting your brain and making you feel good.

It's simple, without a healthy body, you can't hope to save your brain, your memory and your cognitive functions.

Chapter Four

Brain Wave Entrainment

“Brains well prepared are the monuments where knowledge is most surely engraved.” - Jean Jacques Rousseau

The History of Brainwave Entrainment

Years of research has shown that brainwaves not only provide insight into an individual's mind and body, but they can be stimulated to actually change that person's current state.

By causing the brain to produce or decrease specific types of brainwave frequencies, it is possible to bring about a large variety of mental states and emotional reactions.

The benefits of brainwave entrainment - the process of enhancing your normal brainwave state - has been known to many scientists and doctors for years.

These benefits include, but are not limited to, improvements in the following areas: Temporary Pain Relief, Temporary Stress Reduction, Sleeping Disorders, General Relaxation, and Meditation.

Up until the recent discovery of the more effective Isochronic tones, binaural beats were the most recognized form of brainwave entrainment.

Binaural beats were first discovered in 1839 by a German experimenter, H. W. Dove.

The human ability to “hear” binaural beats appears to be the result of evolutionary adaptation. Many evolved species can detect binaural beats because of their brain structure.

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In humans, binaural beats can be detected when carrier waves are below approximately 1000 Hz. Here's why: wave lengths below 1000 Hz are longer than the diameter of the human skull. Thus, these wave lengths actually curve around the skull by diffraction and are thus heard by both ears.

As the sound wave passes around the skull, each ear hears a different portion of the wave it's this difference that allows for the accurate location of sounds below 1000 Hz.

How Brainwave Entrainment Really Works!

"Entrainment" is a principle in physics, where 2 cycles synchronize naturally with each other in order to work more efficiently.

Entrainment is applied to chemistry, astronomy, electrical systems and much more - but can also be applied to the brain.

Here's how: When the brain is provided with a stimulus, through the ears, eyes or other senses, it emits an electrical charge in response. This is called a Cortical Evoked Response.

These electrical responses travel throughout the brain to become what an individual sees and hears.

When the brain is given a consistent, repeating stimulus, such as drum beats or flashes of light, the brain responds by synchronizing, or entraining, its electric cycles to the external rhythm.

This is commonly called the Frequency Following Response (or FFR), and it can be used to effectively alter the brainwave pattern of the audience.

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“Why Binaural Beats Are No Longer the Optimum Brainwave Entrainment Method!”

Binaural beats are the most recognized form of brainwave entrainment. With binaural beats, a slightly different tone is presented into each ear. The tones then combine in the brain to form a pulse or “beat”. The pulse heard by the listener is actually the difference between the two tones. For example, if the left ear is given a tone at 20 hertz and the right ear is given a tone of 30 hertz, then the listener will hear a beat of 10 hertz. And the brain will entrain to that rhythm.

For this reason, binaural beats require the listener to wear headphones. However, there are many new brainwave entrainment techniques being developed, such as Isochronic tones, that do not require the use of headphones and that have actually been proven to be two to three times more effective than binaural beats.

For example, Isochronic tones are a somewhat less well known form of entrainment that is much more effective than binaural beats.

Isochronic entrainment uses a single tone that is manually spaced, turning on and off in a precise pattern. This actually enhances the effectiveness of audio entrainment.

Here are three more reasons why Isochronic tones have replaced binaural beats as the brainwave entrainment technique of the future:

- 1) Binaural beats require the use of headphones or special speaker assignments. Isochronic tones do not rely on speaker assignments, and therefore can be used without headphones or any special speaker assignments.

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2) Binaural beats are incapable of entraining the brain's hemispheres individually (because they require both ears). Binaural beats are a disadvantage because many of the modern entrainment protocols used in clinical work currently requires the use of separate stimulation to each ear. This is useful for deep meditation, depression, ADD treatment and cognitive enhancement.

3) Studies have found that binaural beats are not as effective as isochronic tones due to the way brain processes the beats. Dr. Gerald Oster's, a pioneer in the field of brainwave technology, study of binaural beats concluded that the depth or intensity of the resulting "beat" is only around 3 desibels or $1/10^{\text{th}}$ the volume of a whisper.

Hear for Yourself at www.optimindnow.com