

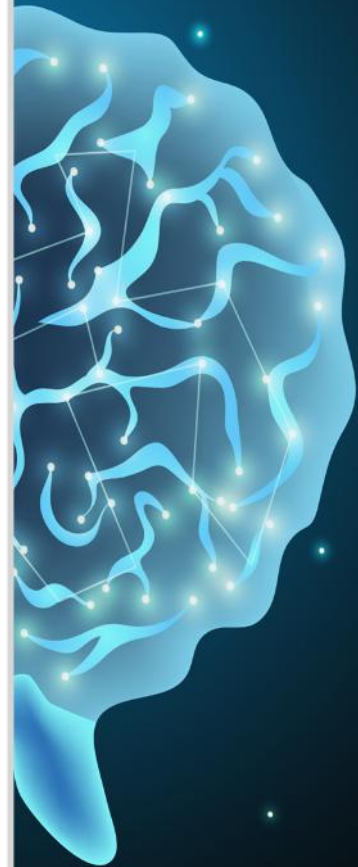
BRAIN PERFORMANCE

UNLOCK YOUR BRAINS MAXIMUM POTENTIAL



PERFORMANCE

MAXIMUM POTENTIAL



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Introduction

When many of us think about improving brain health, what we are really interested in is boosting our intelligence. If we become more intelligent, then we can solve problems, work more efficiently and generally become more adept at pretty much any kind of challenge.

But increasing intelligence is no simple feat. And this is particularly true when you consider that intelligence is actually a very abstract concept.

What even is intelligence? Is intelligence actually just 'one thing' or is it multiple 'things'? Let's take a closer look...

A Modular Approach To Intelligence

If you take the stance that intelligence is in fact 'lots of things,' then that would mean you took a 'modular' approach to it.

In other words, this means that you view intelligence not as a single thing but rather as many separate things, independent of one another.

This seems to make sense when you consider that someone can be fantastic verbally but not so good at math. Or when you think that some people have a lot of knowledge (called 'crystallized intelligence') whereas others are better at abstract puzzles ('fluid intelligence').

Psychologist Howard Gardner subscribed to this view and described us as having 'multiple intelligences'. It may even be that there are some negative correlations between types of intelligence – in other words, being smarter in one domain might actually make you less smart in another!

Overall Smarts

But this is a somewhat frustrating answer because it suggests that there may be no singular way to become more intelligent. One

approach then might be to prize one form of intelligence over the others – what cognitive ability will bring you the best results across the board? If you were to try and mimic the brain of Einstein, then you might focus on your special reasoning.

Einstein actually had particularly large inferior parietal lobes, which could have meant he had better spatial intelligence – which is reinforced with his explanations of how he came up with ideas.

Brain Connectivity

But Einstein also had another interesting feature in his brain. He had a particularly thick 'corpus callosum,' which would have meant that his left and right hemispheres were better at communicating with one another.

Many psychologists have theorized that the best way to see overall global intelligence is to increase connectivity between different brain regions – that this allows you to come up with more novel ideas and to manipulate information in different ways.

Now the question becomes: how do you get a big parietal lobe? How do you increase your connectivity?

And the answer is probably a combination of the correct training and learning (particularly at younger age), along with a more plastic brain.

Brain plasticity is the ability we have to adapt our brains to any given situation like a muscle and this could be what allows us to quickly learn a new task and to grow the specific brain regions and connections that we need at any given time!

The good news? It is possible to train brain plasticity!

Benefits Of Exercising Your Brain?

You may have heard plenty about the fact that you should exercise your brain. There are many benefits of doing so that you need to be aware of. When you have all of the facts you will likely be more motivated to take part in such activities.

First of all, exercising your brain keeps it healthy. This is one of the best ways to rejuvenate your brain and to help stimulate it at the same time.

Stress is a huge problem for many people, and it affects the brain in many negative ways. While we can't get rid of all the stress in our lives, most of us can use exercising our brain to reduce a great deal of it.

As a person gets older it is natural for their cognitive abilities to decrease. This isn't something that any of us really want to admit but it is true.

However, you can help to keep your mind sharp by keeping it active. Experts have proven the brain has the ability to continue learning and changing no matter how old you happen to be.

That means it doesn't matter what you have been doing up to right now – you have the power to make your brain activity better than ever.

Do you sometimes find it hard to pay attention to what is going on around you? Perhaps you read a chapter in a book but at the end of it, you don't remember many of the details about it at all? This is because your brain is having a hard time focusing on what you are doing.

People that multi-task all the time find that when they do want to concentrate on one thing it is almost impossible. They have programmed their brain to take on many things at one time.

By engaging in various types of exercise for the brain though you will be able to focus your attention on it. This is a valuable skill that you will be able to use for many aspects of your life as well.

It can be hard at first so don't give in to frustration. Simply remind yourself of what you are going to accomplish once you get past these hurdles.

As you work on exercising your brain, you will notice that your processing speed improves as well. It won't take you as long as it once did to complete certain tasks. You will find you comprehend materials you read the first time so you don't have to read them again.

Things that you struggled with in the past may seem as if someone flicked a light switch because now you can see it all very clearly.

It really is important to exercise your brain so that you can keep all of these benefits. You don't want to lose the skills you already have so keep them sharp. Strive to learn more as you get older because there is plenty out there in this world for you to understand.

If there are many things you wish to explore, make a list of them. Find ways to learn them as you exercise your brain so that you will get twice the benefit from your efforts.

In no time at all, you are going to notice some significant changes in your thought process. You are going to remember more, process information faster, and be able to focus your attention where it should be. All of these benefits are going to make your life more enjoyable regardless of what you take part in.

Now that you are aware of the many great benefits of exercising your brain, I hope you will find some activities to take part in. You can do many of them alone at home or you can play games online. There are many that you can do with someone else too.

The key is to find plenty of brain exercises that you find intriguing. Then commit to do them often.

Eating Can Improve The Way That You Think

It is often said that we are what we eat, but did you know that pertains to your brain activities as well? What you eat can improve the way you think as long as you choose the right types of foods.

First, it is very important to remember not to skip breakfast. Too many people do so including children. It results in the brain not being able to perform at its optimum level for the morning.

Your diet needs to consist of foods that contain plenty of Omega 3 fatty acids. They are going to increase your stamina on an intellectual level. The main sources of Omega 3 fatty acids include fish, flax seed, and hemp seed.

When you need a pick-up of energy and brain power during the day, reach for a handful of nuts. They are going to give you the burst of energy and creativity that you need to get through the rest of the day.

Consuming large amounts of fresh fruits and vegetables is a great way for your mind to be able to process information. They offer plenty of antioxidants that will remove toxins from your body.

Replace those drinks that are full of sugar with plain water or green tea as well. The way that you will feel both physically and mentally when you make such changes is unbelievable.

There are certain types of foods that you want to avoid as well. They will slow down your brain's ability to function as well as it could. Two of them that many people consume large quantities of include alcohol and caffeine. Do your very best to either avoid them or to only consume them in moderation.

Avoid consuming too many processed foods as well. They may taste good but they are full of ingredients that really aren't good for your body. Make sure you take the time to read labels.

Find out what certain words on the packaging means so you can identify what it really is. For example, there are many different terms used to mean sugar so make sure you know what is in the food that you consume.

Taking a daily multivitamin is a good idea as well. This can help to ensure you get the daily recommended intake of various types of Vitamins. These Vitamins are necessary for your brain to function at its very best.

Should you find that you crave foods that aren't good for you, at least try to cut back on them. Then you won't feel deprived and at the same time, your mental well-being won't be compromised.

When your body is lacking essential vitamins and nutrients it is harder for you to stay focused. It is also going to affect your mood and the actions you take throughout the day.

When you eat the right foods your mind will be very healthy. You will have less stress and be able to concentrate on what needs your attention.

It is never too late to take an inventory of what you eat. Chances can be made that don't result in you feeling like you are starving or missing out on great-tasting foods. There is no reason why eating healthy has to taste terrible either.

There are plenty of great recipes online that you can try out. A certified nutritionist can also help you to get on the right track.

Improve Your Memory With Brain Exercises

Our memories are a very precious part of us because they remind us of the good times and the bad times that we have experienced. Not everyone has a memory that is as good as they would like.

Sure, we all laugh when we forget what we were going to say or we walk into a room to do something and then have no idea what it is when we get in there.

Your memory isn't something that you want to see weaken so it is important for you to engage in a variety of brain exercises. They will help you to improve your ability in this department.

There are basic memory games where you have to match two things. You can do this with a deck of cards or you can buy a memory game. Turning over two of them, if they are a match you get to remove them from the pile. If they don't match you turn them face down again. Then you turn over one more card.

The objective is to remember what you see where so you can match up pairs with those cards that have been exposed so far. You can even play such games online by clicking your mouse to show what you want to turn over.

Association is a great way to improve your memory. This type of scenario allows you to connect something new with something familiar. For example, you can associate a person's name when you are introduced with something familiar to you.

Then when you see them again that familiar thing will be triggered by your brain and you will remember their name as well as where you met them. This is a handy tool when you are continually meeting new individuals for business or socially.

Most of us really like some form of music, and so you can use what you are interested in to improve your memory. As you sing along to

the songs at home or in the car you would seem to know all of the lyrics right? Now try to write them down on a piece of paper without hearing the song. Changes are that key parts of it such as the chorus will be the most to stand out in your mind.

Try to play the song in your mind from start to finish and to write down as many of the lyrics as you can. This is a fun way to improve your memory as well as to discover how much you really do know about the music you listen to.

The key to being successful is to find those types of brain exercises that you find to be challenging and fun at the same time. This way you will be looking forward to doing them each day instead of avoiding them. The more you work at it the more you will see that brain exercises do improve your memory.

This of these strategies is a workout for your mind. There is always room for improvement no matter how old you are or what your recalling level is right now.

It is important to remember that after about the age of 30 the mind can start slowing down on a cognitive level. Don't wait until then to start exercising your brain. Do it at an early age so that you are very on top of things as you do get older.

It can be a challenge to improve our memory with brain exercises. At the same time though it can really be a great deal of fun. Try to fit such activities into your daily schedule for at least 15 minutes. You will be surprised at how much more you remember.

That will be a very good feeling for you at any age. The loss of memory can be short-term in nature but it can still be frustrating. Give yourself every opportunity to have an exceptional memory that doesn't forget those things that are important.

Stimulating Your Brain Activity

There are many different ways that people choose to stimulate their brain activity. One of them that seems to be getting a great deal of attention these days is called aromatherapy. This involves lighting candles or heating oils with various types of scents on them.

These scents will trigger a variety of reactions from the brain that are positive in nature. Not everyone is a follower of such methods though because they are skeptical about such capabilities. There are other people though that will tell you that aromatherapy has changed many things in their thinking process for the better.

When it comes to the use of aromatherapy for increased brain activity, you need to do your homework. You need to be aware of what the different scents can offer. It is also important to note that you don't need very much to get the job done.

A few drops of essential oils are very potent and that will do the job. Don't mix scents either as you don't know how they will affect your brain when they are in a mix versus each one separately.

If you want to energize your brain such as when you are studying for a test or trying to write a paper you need to avoid turning to caffeine. Instead, you should try peppermint, cypress, or lemon.

When you feel that your brain is in overload it is important to relax and to reduce stress levels. You won't be able to make good decisions until you can think clearly about a topic. Some great aromatherapy scents for this include geranium, lavender, and rose.

You will have to decide for yourself if aromatherapy is something that stimulates your brain or not. There is certainly nothing negative about the use of aromatherapy so you don't have anything to lose by trying it.

Many people have done so to curb their own curiosity on the topic. Discovering if there are any such benefits firsthand means that you have taken on a role of discovery. That in itself is also a great way to continue to increase your brain activity.

What may surprise you though is that your brain may already be reacting to aromatherapy around you. Many businesses already know the value of it so they use it to their advantage. They use scents that rejuvenate the brain so that you will feel good while you are in their business.

This is important because when you leave there your mind will associate that location with positive experiences. It is very likely that you will return to that retailer again and again because of the positive influence it has on your brain activity.

Some employers have experimented with aromatherapy as well. Some of the studies indicate that production levels are higher than in the past with certain types of scents that rejuvenate the mind and to help reduce stress. Common mistakes also are reduced because the employees are in a better frame of mind.

The world of aromatherapy is very fascinating and one you should explore in further detail. It is one of the most natural ways to evoke positive responses relating to your brain activity.

Many people burn candles of a given scent in their home to help give it a warm and inviting feeling for all that enter it. They also feel that it helps keep the harmony within the family because everyone is exhibiting healthy brain activities.

Sleeping Better For Improved Cognitive Performance

If you want to see an immediate upgrade to your physical and mental performance, then there is an incredibly simple and easy way to do so, improve your sleep.

A lot of people don't recognize just how important sleep is for their brain function, their mood, or even their physical strength. Sleep is when the body repairs from the damage caused during the day though and it is when your brain rejuvenates neurotransmitters and strengthens new connections.

If you sleep well, then you will be more focused, more alert, happier, and more creative all at once.

So how can you go about enhancing your sleep for better cognitive performance?

Have a Set Bedtime

This isn't easy to enforce but if you can try to get to bed at least roughly the same time every day, then you'll find that it has profound benefits for your brain function, mood, and more. This is because the brain and body are designed to work in rhythms.

We are beholden to our 'circadian rhythm' for example, which helps us to feel tired at the right time (before bed) and to wake up at the right time (when the sun rises).

This is based not only on external cues (technically called 'external zeitgebers') but also on our internal biology (called 'internal pacemakers') such as the build-up of adenosine in the brain.

If you can get into a rhythm then, your brain will be ready for bed when you hit the sack, resulting in a better night's sleep and less 'sleep inertia' the next day.

Regulate Temperature

Getting your temperature right when you sleep is very important and can have a big impact on your quality of sleep. One thing that helps a great deal, for example, is to take a warm bath just before bed.

This will help to relax the muscles and the brain due to the warmth but it also encourages the body to better regulate its temperature as you sleep, preventing you from getting too hot or too cold.

To get the best night's sleep, it is recommended that the environment around you be slightly cool. Open a window a jar and this will help to ensure that this is the case!

Have Some Downtime

Most important of all is to allow yourself to 'wind down' at the end of the day before you get to sleep. This means that you should try to spend at least about half an hour without using your smartphone for example and that you should avoid television and computer games as well.

These things all produce light of a certain spectrum that will make the brain more alert and awake, while also triggering a stress response.

Instead, try reading for half an hour with a dim light. This will help you to start calming down and will encourage the production of the sleep hormone melatonin. Meanwhile, the reading will cause your eyes to get tired making it hard to keep them open!

Nutrients To Strengthen Brain Health

Looking for a boost in performance and brain power? Then the answer might just lie in your diet. By getting the right nutrients in your diet, it's possible to greatly enhance your brain health in the short term, as well as to reinforce it for the long term – ensuring that you can still perform well as you get older.

So what are the best nutrients for enhancing brain power? Let's take a look at some of the most important additions to your diet if you want to bring your 'A Game' every single time.

Omega 3 Fatty Acid

Omega 3 fatty acid has tons of amazing health benefits that impact on pretty much every aspect of your health. In the brain, the big advantage of omega 3 is that it can improve something called 'cell membrane permeability.

This is because the brain will use omega 3 to formulate cell walls – and your cell walls are what neurotransmitters, nutrients, and currents need to pass through. In other words, when you consume omega 3 fatty acid, you can improve communication across the brain to get a little more speed from your thoughts.

Amino Acids

Amino acids are the constituent parts that makeup proteins. When you consume protein in the form of meat, eggs, or anything else, your brain will break it down into the raw amino acids that can then be recombined.

This is important for general health because amino acids are what the body uses to rebuild tissue–like muscle. They're also important for your brain in particular though because they're what are used to make many of the all-important neurotransmitters that are used to help you

remember things, to improve your mood, and generally to change your cognitive 'state' at any given time.

Some of the most useful include l-tyrosine, which increases dopamine, and tryptophan which is used to synthesis serotonin.

Eggs

Eggs are an incredibly important thing to get in your diet for your brain because they're rich in amino acids. In fact, eggs are the only 'complete protein', meaning that they contain 100% of the essential amino acids that the body needs to perform every function.

What's more though, is that eggs are also high in something called choline. Choline is mega important because it is what the brain uses to make 'acetylcholine' – one of the key excitatory neurotransmitters in the brain.

Beetroot Juice

Beetroot juice can give you an instant upgrade in mental performance by acting as a vasodilator. This means that it will increase the diameter of your blood vessels (veins and arteries), thereby enabling more blood to flow around your body.

Perhaps the best example is vinpocetine, which is a vasodilator that acts primarily on the brain, helping to bring more oxygen and blood there to improve your performance.

Cognitive Metabolic Enhancers

Finally, a cognitive metabolic enhancer is something that increases the energy efficiency of your brain cells. A great example of this is lutein, which has been shown to increase the performance of your mitochondria, thereby giving your cells just a little more energy to keep going throughout the day.

Improving The Way You Think

Changing the way that you think isn't always an easy process. You may have been following the same process for years or decades. That isn't necessarily a bad thing but it just means that you need to give the changes plenty of time to occur.

Should you fall back into old habits, try to remind yourself why you are working to improve the way that you think. Then get back into that structure as soon as you can. The more you work at it the faster you will complete that transformation process.

You may become frustrated due to the fact that it hasn't been an easy road to follow. View that as part of the challenge. In fact, it is supposed to be hard and that part of all of it is going to help you to create a mind that is stronger than it was before.

The fact that your brain can learn new things at all stages of life gives you the upper hand. Try to break your overall goal down into steps that are easier to manage. Keep that list in a place where you can see it often.

Then you can identify how far you have already come to reaching your final goal. When the going gets tough that type of motivation is going to keep you strong.

The steps you take should increase in difficulty as you move along. This is important to remember. If you put the hardest things to accomplish out there at first you will most likely fail.

However, when you have the harder things to accomplish further down the road you will have more of a vested interest in seeing it through to the end. Your early accomplishments will serve as a solid foundation that you get to build on as you move each step forward.

Make sure that you incorporate a good variety of methods to improve the way that you think. The progress you make will be more obvious

when you have more than one tool that you are using. Have fun with these tools as well including reading or games. Don't pursue activities that you get no enjoyment out of. This is because improving the way you think is a positive thing and you don't want the road to getting there littered with negativity.

It is a good idea to set a time frame for accomplishing your goals to improve the way that you think. Saying that you will do it simply isn't good enough. Have a detailed plan of how you are going to do it.

This way you can motivate yourself to follow that plan and those guidelines. Periodically evaluate how that plan is working. If you need to modify it then do so.

Your attitude towards changing the way you think is also something you need to keep in perspective. Being patient is a virtue that too many of us simply don't have. When you are able to take a deep breath, relax, and stay on track things will fall into place for you.

Don't rush the transformation or assume it won't happen because it is taking a while. Remember that it did take you a long time to think the way you do right now. Therefore it is reasonable to expect it to take time for that to all change as well.

Experience New Things For a Healthier Brain

Most people feel very comfortable with their daily routine. They know what will be taking place for the most part because it is so similar day after day. While it can feel comfortable to live like that your brain may be on autopilot for much of it.

If you want your brain to be healthier then you need to start experiencing new things. It can be as simple as taking a different route to get to work in the morning then you have for the past 7 years.

If you always read romance novels, pick up a good mystery and see how well you like it. You just might find that you have found a passion for something like this that you didn't even know existed before. Turn your favorite radio station to a channel that plays another type of music for a week.

In that span of time, you may have a new found appreciation for it. You may have learned the lyrics to some top hits as well that are in heavy rotation on that radio station channel.

A chemical called dopamine is produced in the brain. This is a natural substance that helps with moods. The more dopamine you produce the happier you will be.

Research has shown that when the brain is exposed to new images and new experiences that it will begin to make more dopamine. As a result, the ability to retain information about such events both in the short term memory and the long term memory is improved upon.

You can offer yourself some new challenges as well. For example, instead of renting the newest movie on the top ten list rent a documentary on a subject you aren't familiar with. There will likely be a great deal of learning by the time you are done viewing it.

You may have some questions as well that trigger your desire to find out more information about the subject.

New social experiences are a good idea too if you want a healthier brain. For example, if you usually go to casual restaurants get dressed up and go out to one that is fancy.

If you usually drive in the city take a cab or ride the bus. Allow your mind and your eyes to take in everything around you including the people and the scenery.

Since you won't have to keep your eyes on the road the brain is going to be more receptive to things you likely overlooked on that same commute before.

As we experience new things our brain is learning and it is processing. This awakens a part of it that may have been dormant for a long time based on your same old routine. You will also find that you look forward to each new day when you have some adventure to look towards.

You can experience new things on a small scale at first to get yourself comfortable with them. Then you can move on to larger ones like traveling to a foreign country or learning a new language.

The fact that your brain can continue to change and build new neurological paths is very interesting. Don't waste the ability you have though to allow it to experience more than it has.

Life is really too short to spend it doing the same things day after day. You will find you are happier overall when you add some adventures to your life.