5 SEEDS

Essential Factors for Cultivating and Maintaining Mind-Body Health

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SEEDS: 5 Essential Factors for Cultivating and Maintaining Mind-Body Health

S

SOCIAL FACTOR -- Fifty years of psychological research has shown that people with a strong social support system live longer, are happier, and are more cognitively astute. In contrast, people who are cut off from social contact are emotionally starved, ill more often, and are more depressed. They also may be more vulnerable to certain types of dementia.

E

EXERCISE -- Exercise changes your brain's chemistry and boosts its longevity. One way that it does this is by stimulating the production and release of a magic tonic for the brain called Brain-Derived Neurotropic Factor (BDNF). BDNF serves as a sort of "miracle grow" for your brain and the birth of new neurons—called neurogenesis. Aerobic exercise also serves as a powerful antidepressant and anti-anxiety agent, not to mention an energy boost.

E

EDUCATION -- Engaging in learning activities on a regular basis boosts your brain's longevity. It has been widely shown that people with higher levels of education show symptoms of dementia much later than do people with less education. When applied to the brain, the maxim "use it or lose it" means that the less you use your brain for learning, the less it will be available to make learning possible. Alternatively, the more you use your brain for learning, the more "cognitive reserve" you will have for use later in life. Cognitive reserve represents structural changes to the brain, which will promote greater longevity.

D

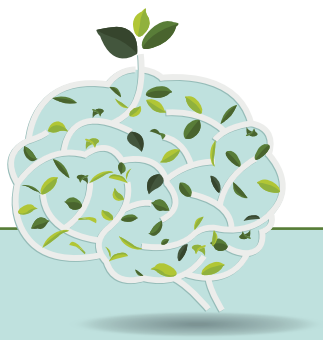
DIET -- What you eat can determine whether your brain is capable of learning and producing positive emotions. A balanced diet forms the foundation for generating the cornucopia of neurotransmitters. This foundation allows you to enjoy positive moods, be calm, and have a sharper focus.

S

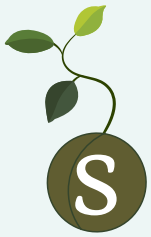
SLEEP -- Most people don't know that the amount and quality of sleep has a major effect on how their brain functions over the long term. For example, getting poor quality sleep or missing a few hours of sleep increases your stress hormones, including cortisol. Higher levels of cortisol affect your prefrontal cortex; you are less able to focus, make clear decisions, and remember what you are attempting to learn. Also, higher levels of cortisol are corrosive to your brain and are associated with atrophy in the hippocampus, the area critical for laying down new memories.

The SEEDS Checklist

	YES	NO
Do you sleep well most of the time?	❑	❑
Have you recently thought to yourself "I'm so sad, I'm depressed, I'm panicking, I'm anxious" or the like?	❑	❑
Would you say you eat fried/fatty food often?	❑	❑
In the last week have you exercised at 3 least times for half an hour?	❑	❑
Can you tell me something new you learned recently?	❑	❑
Have you, your parents, your grandparents or any other close family had to work with Child Safety before?	❑	❑
Do you have something to smile about today?	❑	❑
Do you know how to relax?	❑	❑
Do you relax?	❑	❑
Do you often drink caffeine, Red Bull or other high caffeine drinks after 1pm?	❑	❑
Do you or anyone in your family have diabetes type 2/ Alzheimer's/dementia?	❑	❑
Would you say you spend a lot of time watching TV, on your phone with social media or the like?	❑	❑



It is an evolutionary imperative to nurture our SEEDS



Socialize

- ↑ Calms nervous system
- ↑ Oxytocin (feel good)
- ↓ Cortisol (less stressed)
- ↑ Sense of connection
- ↑ Problem solving
- ↑ Attention
- ↑ Humor and fun
- ↑ Energy

Exercise

- ↑ Calms nervous system
- ↑ Serotonin & Dopamine
- ↑ GABA (calm)
- ↑ Energy levels
- ↑ Growth of new brain cells
- ↑ Sleep
- ↑ Alertness and thinking
- ↑ Attention
- ↑ Chance to socialize
- ↑ Cardiovascular strength
- ↑ Physical strength
- ↑ Flexibility & endurance

Education

- ↑ Brain power
- ↑ Serotonin & Dopamine
- ↑ Growth of new brain cells
- ↑ Thinking ability
- ↑ Working memory
- ↑ Challenge to learn
- ↑ Novelty – try new things
- ↑ Social connection
- ↑ Interest in life
- ↑ Ability to focus
- ↑ Sense of achievement

Diet

- ↑ Calms nervous system
- ↑ Brain chemistry
- ↑ Brain clarity
- ↑ Mood
- ↑ Sleep
- ↑ Energy
- ↑ Alertness
- ↑ Concentration
- ↑ Ability to focus

Sleep

- ↑ Hippocampus activity
- ↑ Memory
- ↑ Brain cell growth
- ↑ Serotonin
- ↑ Immune system
- ↑ Mood
- ↑ Energy
- ↑ Alertness
- ↑ Concentration

…AND MUCH MORE…

(Adapted from John Arden (©2010) *Rewire Your Brain*)

SEEDS Activity Log

	Social	Exercise	Education	Diet	Sleep Hygiene
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					