

BRAINWORKS

Simple Solutions
For Staying Sharp

Introduction

Matters of the Mind

Daily mental multitasking and our constant state of “busyness” can create a chronic level of stress on our brain, causing us to be unfocused, distracted and less productive. What’s more, research suggests that age-related cognitive decline — characterized by a decrease in the brain’s ability to perform regular functions like judgment, reasoning, memory, learning and language — begins in healthy, educated adults in their 20s and 30s.

We Have More Control than We “Think”

While cognitive decline may be an inevitable part of the aging process, studies show that we can prevent, or at least postpone its development through intervention. Our brain is actually radically adaptable if we train it appropriately — like we do our bodies. The “fitter” our brain is, the more energy efficient it becomes, and the easier it is to do important mental tasks such as focusing attention and being creative. Janus Henderson Labs™ created BrainWorks with this in mind.

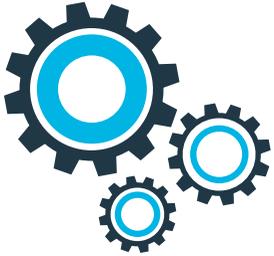
Learn How to Train Your Brain:

1. Set the right foundation
2. Build your brain fitness
3. Develop your training program

Heidi Hanna, Ph.D.

This workshop was developed in partnership with Dr. Heidi Hanna and her SHARP book series. Heidi is an author, performance coach, keynote speaker and nutritionist who specializes in applying the science of personal energy management, health and wellness to improving business performance.

How the Brain Works



Making Connections

With approximately 100 billion brain cells and trillions of possible connections between them, we begin our lives with an extraordinary number of options for shaping our brain. As we age and clear more pathways (i.e., build connections), the ones we ignore “grow weeds,” making the pathways more difficult to clear in the future. Our options may decrease in number, but our ability to create new pathways is still there. What’s more, we have the ability to use more effective tools as we get older that may help clear paths more quickly and effectively.

Memory Test: What do you remember?

?	?	?	?	?	?
?	?	?	?	?	?
?	?	?	?	?	?

The Brain Health Fab Five

A critical component of any cognitive training program is establishing a foundation of healthy habits. Just like you wouldn't attempt strength training with a broken bone, you want to ensure that your mental training efforts will bring you the biggest return on investment. A healthy brain provides the optimal environment for brain training to be the most effective.

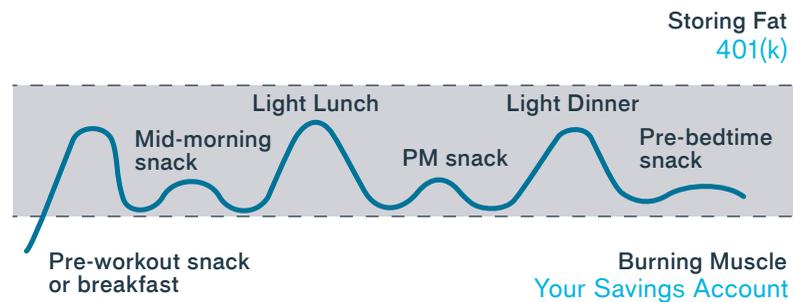


Food is Fuel



Eat Light and Often

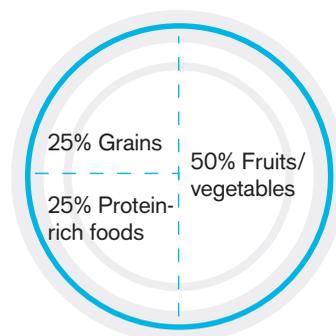
Keeping glucose levels steady throughout the day provides consistent energy to cells in the body and the brain. When we go too long without eating, we signal to the body that there is an emergency situation and we have run out of fuel. Our brain interprets this as a time of famine or starvation, and stimulates the release of energy from stored glucose in muscle and fat. While in survival mode, the body will not provide adequate energy to all cells, just the most essential ones. Any time our glucose is too high, the brain signals the body to store the excess away to keep blood sugar from staying high (which can lead to stress on insulin, high blood pressure, circulatory issues and organ damage).



- + Eat every 3-4 hours
- + Never go longer than 4 hours without food
- + Approximately 4 handfuls of food at meals, 100-150 calorie snacks

Eat Balanced Meals

In addition to eating regularly during the day, it's important that the fuel we eat provides us with the right balance of nutrients to take care of our energy needs, protects our brain/body from damage and repairs and rebuilds cells. A brain-healthy meal is one that not only balances the glycemic impact of food, keeping glucose from being broken down too quickly, but also contributes healthy nutrients such as lean protein, healthy fat, whole grains, antioxidants, vitamins and minerals. The brain-healthy plate shown here increases the amount of beneficial nutrients by providing approximately 50% of food from vegetable and fruit sources.



- + Approximately 4 handfuls of food
- + Fruits and/or vegetables: 2 handfuls
- + Grains: 1 handful
- + Protein: 1 handful/palm of hand size serving

Did you know?

A study of 2,000 Manhattan residents averaging 76 years of age found that those eating a Mediterranean diet had a 68% lower risk of developing Alzheimer's.¹

Brain "Power" Foods

Power foods are those containing specific nutrients that add value to the brain. These nutrients are found in lean protein, complex carbohydrates and healthy fat. Aim for a plant-based, "Mediterranean" diet, and limit saturated and trans fat, refined carbohydrates and added sugar.

- + Fish
- + Poultry and other lean meats
- + Beans and legumes
- + Eggs (include yolks)
- + Low-fat milk, cheese and yogurt
- + Nuts and seeds: almonds, cashews, walnuts, hazelnuts, Brazil nuts, peanuts, sunflower seeds, sesame seeds, flaxseed, peanut butter, almond butter
- + Olives, olive oil, avocado (in moderation)
- + Whole grain bread, cereal and pasta
- + Fruits (especially berries), dark-colored fruit juices (such as grape and pomegranate)
- + Vegetables (especially leafy greens like spinach and lettuces, red bell peppers, broccoli and broccoli sprouts)
- + Wine (in moderation)
- + Coffee and tea (in moderation)
- + Spices, especially turmeric, ginger, cinnamon, saffron and garlic

Additional nutrients:

Be sure to take a multivitamin supplement and any other supplements necessary to bring your body into balance, as directed by your physician (such as vitamin D, calcium, magnesium, folic acid, etc., as needed).

Activity is Activating



Research has confirmed that physical activity and exercise are good for brain health and cognitive functioning. This connection has to do with several factors based on the ability of physical exercise to augment brain plasticity. This includes enhancing circulation of glucose and oxygen to the brain, increasing blood vessels, stimulating the production of hormones that strengthen brain cells/neurons and improving the body's ability to utilize insulin.

Best Practices:

Daily Movement

- + Every 30-45 minutes: small movements (stretch, stand up)
- + Every 90-120 minutes: large movements (walk, climb stairs)

Aerobic Training

- + Minimum of 3 cardiovascular workouts per week
- + 30-60 minutes
- + Alternate between levels of high and moderate intensity

Resistance Training

- + Minimum of 2 days per week (non-consecutive)
- + 20-45 minutes
- + 1-2 sets per exercise; 8-12 repetitions using a challenging weight

Flexibility Training

- + Minimum of 2-3 days per week
- + 5-10 minutes after each exercise session

Did you know?

Aerobic exercise just two times a week could lower your risk of Alzheimer's disease by more than 60%.²

Balanced Stress is a Balanced Life



The human system is well equipped to handle a fair amount of stress, and actually needs stress in order to perform at its best. Growth within the body and mind only happens when there is a stimulus that causes us to adapt and get stronger. For example, flu shots give us a small amount of the flu to trigger our immune system to fight off the invader and build up its defenses for future attacks. Cardiovascular exercise challenges us to be more efficient at using oxygen and glucose for energy and as we become more fit, we can better adapt to increasing needs for physical energy. But without recovery, the body and brain are unable to put the pieces into place that are needed to repair and rebuild the system, which can lead to system-wide breakdown.

Recovery Strategies:

- + Practicing mind/body activities like yoga and meditation
- + Doing deep breathing exercises
- + Participating in hobbies that you enjoy
- + Sticking to a consistent exercise routine
- + Taking movement breaks during the day
- + Getting adequate sleep
- + Listening to music
- + Journaling in the evening, after work
- + Spending time with friends and/or family
- + Serving others – volunteering in the community

Did you know?

Experts estimate that 75% to 85% of all health care costs are stress related.³

Resting is Working



Did you know?

According to a study by the Better Sleep Council, sleep deprivation impairs quality and accuracy of work (31%), clear thinking or judgment (31%), and memory of important details (30%).⁴

Sleep improves memory by enabling the brain to replay, consolidate and store information that was encountered earlier in the day. When scientists analyzed brain images taken during deep sleep, they found that the neural pathways that were active during the learning period were reactivated during sleep. The re-firing of neurons during sleep strengthens the neural pathways that retain new information. Sleep also improves memory by allowing the reduction of stress hormones, which can be toxic to the brain.

How much sleep is enough?

According to research by the National Institutes of Health, the average person requires eight hours of sleep during the 24-hour day. However there are individual differences that make it possible for some individuals to function well on seven hours, while others to do better with nine or 10.

Tips for Sleeping Well:

- + Go to bed early.
- + If you have trouble falling asleep, get out of bed and do something relaxing until you feel sleepy.
- + Only use your bed for sleep — don't study, read, watch TV or talk on the phone in bed.
- + Limit naps — if you take a nap, keep it brief. Nap for less than an hour and before 3 p.m.
- + Keep your schedule consistent — go to bed and wake up at the same times on the weekend as you do during the work week.
- + Avoid caffeine in the afternoon and at night. It stays in your system for hours and can make it hard for you to fall asleep.
- + Adjust the lights — dim the lights in the evening and at night so your body knows it will soon be time to sleep. Let in the sunlight in the morning to boost your alertness.
- + Take some time to “wind down” before going to bed. Get away from the computer, turn off the TV and the cell phone and relax quietly for 15 to 30 minutes.
- + Never eat a large meal right before bedtime. Enjoy a healthy snack or light dessert so you don't go to bed hungry.

A Social Life is Life Support



Did you know?

Recent studies show that a lack of social connection is as harmful to your health as smoking cigarettes.⁵

Strong social support helps people feel they're better equipped to handle challenging situations, which can cause the body and brain to respond to stress in a more positive way. The key to increasing social support is to take time out of your busy schedule to be around people you care about. Maintaining a sense of connection takes a time and energy investment. Why not boost your social support while also enhancing your energy in other dimensions, such as:

- + Go for a walk with someone for a quick work break
- + Call home to connect with family at a scheduled time each day
- + Start or join a sports team or club
- + Join a training team for a charity walk, run, cycle or triathlon
- + Establish a date night and put it in your calendar as a priority

What are some ways you could improve your sense of social connection throughout the day?

Write down one person with whom you'd like to have a stronger relationship. What will you do to facilitate the growth of this relationship?

Strength: Building Mental Muscle



Just like we require consistent physical training to keep our body strong and performing at its best, the brain must also be exercised to be kept in top shape. Similar to physical fitness, our cognitive fitness can be developed through exercises that focus on building strength, flexibility and endurance over time.

#1 Mental Rehearsal

Just thinking about what you want to do can build strength in the areas of the brain that support the desired behavior. What is something you'd like to improve upon now, and how might you use mental rehearsal to become better prepared? Difficult client conversations or meetings, client seminars or presentations?

Situations where you could use mental rehearsal include:

Did you know?

Mental rehearsal can train the brain. In a study by neuroscience pioneer Alvaro Pascual-Leone, two groups of people who had never studied piano were given a series of notes to play and told which fingers to move to hit specific keys. One group sat in front of a keyboard for two hours a day for five days, imagining playing the piano and hearing the correct tones. The second group actually practiced playing the piano for the same amount of time.

Brain scans were done before, during and after the experiment and a computer was used to measure the accuracy of their performances. By the end of the study, brain change and accuracy were the same in both groups.⁶

#2 Making Memories

Have you ever taken time to notice what types of things are easy for you to remember and which things you're quick to forget? When people start to worry about losing their memory, experts will evaluate specifically what someone is struggling to remember and any particular circumstances that might impair memory such as stress, poor nutrition or lack of sleep. By analyzing what we retain and what we don't, we can see patterns that can help us make new memories more sustainable. What do you notice about the things you remembered in the memory test? Common characteristics include current relevance, understanding, meaning, and emotional connection. To build stronger memories, it's important that we not only create meaning around what we want to remember, but that we practice recalling the information regularly.

Maintaining Memory

Maintaining memory is training your brain to capture information, store it and retrieve it when needed. What do you need to remember? If it's something you can write down and refer to, don't bother trying to remember it. Organizing thoughts and creating systems to have easy access to important information saves us real estate in the brain to retain only what we need to remember. Names, faces, client family members' names — what else do you need to remember? Can you develop criteria for what needs to be remembered and what doesn't so that you don't overwhelm your brain with too much information?

What's in your database?

In business, relationships are critical and remembering names and family information about your client can demonstrate engagement and value. Can you list your top 10 clients, and their spouse's or significant other's name? How about their children's or pet's names?

1. Client: _____
Spouse/Family: _____
2. Client: _____
Spouse/Family: _____
3. Client: _____
Spouse/Family: _____
4. Client: _____
Spouse/Family: _____
5. Client: _____
Spouse/Family: _____
6. Client: _____
Spouse/Family: _____
7. Client: _____
Spouse/Family: _____
8. Client: _____
Spouse/Family: _____
9. Client: _____
Spouse/Family: _____
10. Client: _____
Spouse/Family: _____

Strength: Building Mental Muscle



#3 Distraction Resistance

Complete focus requires filtering out what we don't want to pay attention to, or resisting distractions. Mindfulness training (being aware and intentional with our mental energy) trains us to be fully engaged when we want to be. A noisy brain is not able to give its full and best attention.

Exercise

In order to maximize your ability to focus, identify some common distractions, eliminate what you can eliminate and then practice tuning out unnecessary noise. Try this exercise the next time you're mentally preparing for an important client conversation, meeting or seminar.

- + Turn off: computer monitor, harsh lighting, music or other excess noise, television, cell phone, etc.
- + Tune out: background noise, other conversations, distracting thoughts – keep a notepad handy to write down things you want to remember and turn off the need to retain excess information that is not necessary in the moment.

Did you know?

Too much sugar can cause “brain decay.” According to studies at New York University School of Medicine, people who are unable to manage their glucose effectively throughout the day achieved lower scores on short-term memory tests than people with normal blood sugar.⁷

I will turn off:

I will tune out:

Did you know?

In studies on training animals, when the animals performed tasks automatically - without paying attention - they changed their brain maps, but the changes did not last. In his book, *The Brain That Changes Itself*, Norman Doidge states, "We often praise the ability to multitask. While you can learn when you divide your attention, divided attention doesn't lead to abiding change in your brain maps."⁹

Practicing mindfulness in daily life

Mindfulness exercises can help you focus on the here and now, training your brain to be fully present in the moment. You can practice mindfulness at any time, doing any task as simple as eating or walking, or as critical as playing with a child or meeting with a client.

Here is a simple step-by-step mindfulness exercise:

- + Start by bringing attention to how your body feels. Do a quick scan from head to toe, and try to relax.
- + Breathe in through your nose, allowing the air to expand your lower belly, expanding your abdomen fully. It may help to count slowly as you inhale to a number that feels comfortable to you (~six seconds).
- + Next, breathe out through your mouth. As you exhale, try to relax your body. Drop your shoulders and release the tension in your back and neck. Gently roll your shoulders and/or neck to help reduce tight muscles.
- + Repeat deep breathing at least three times, and then proceed with the task at hand slowly, with full deliberation. Engage your senses fully, noticing each sight, sound, smell and touch to engage your full awareness and attention.
- + When you notice that your mind has wandered from the task at hand, just let it go without judgment and bring your attention back to a full awareness of the moment.

Flexibility: The Mindset Makeover



Did you know?

People who keep a daily gratitude list feel more optimistic, exercise more frequently and report fewer physical complaints. They also experience more positive emotion, fewer negative emotions, and exhibit more helpful behavior toward friends and neighbors.⁹

#1 Positive Thinking

Believe it or not, our perception is more critical to brain functioning than our actual experiences. The more we practice thinking in an optimistic way, the more we train our brain to see life through a positive lens, and increase our brain's flexibility to adapt. There are many strategies that can be used to train our brain to think more positively, including having a more positive perspective on life. This includes writing down things you are grateful for or journaling about negative experiences in order to reflect on positive outcomes.

Exercise

Begin each morning by writing down three things for which you're grateful. In the evening, share three positive experiences during your day with a friend or family member.

What are three things you are grateful for **right now**?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

Top 10 Quick Positivity Trainers:

1. Daily gratitude list (30 seconds)
2. Create a meaningful life vision (5-10 minutes)
3. Acts of service (5-60 minutes)
4. Laughter (as much as possible)
5. Journaling (2-5 minutes)
6. Deep breathing practice (2-5 minutes)
7. Massage (30-90 minutes)
8. Visualization (2-10 minutes)
9. Count your blessings (1-2 minutes)
10. Physical activity (20-60 minutes)

Did you know?

In school and work environments, creativity "killers" include

- + working under surveillance
- + restricting choices
- + working for inappropriate extrinsic rewards
- + fearing failure, judgment, or appearing foolish
- + having to find the "right answer"
- + being evaluated
- + working under time pressure
- + competing¹⁰

#2 Creativity

Our mind is often rigid around what we believe to be the truth, when there may be an unlimited number of possibilities that have yet to be explored. In science, we often consider something impossible until proven to be possible, but who's to say it couldn't be the other way around. Training our brain to be more flexible allows us to see possibilities beyond what we believe to be true, to explore new ideas and opportunities and to think outside of the box.

How might boosting creativity benefit you in your business and life? What are some ways you might challenge yourself to think outside of the box in order to train your mental flexibility? How do you foster creativity?

How Creative is Your Office/Team?

	Not Creative			Very Creative
Do you surround yourself with people who have a mix of viewpoints (e.g., interests, experiences, expertise and thinking styles)?	①	②	③	④
Do the people in your work environment have a strong sense of shared purpose?	①	②	③	④
Do you have strong professional contacts outside of the office?	①	②	③	④
Is the layout of your workplace conducive to casual interaction?	①	②	③	④
Are you aware of the personal and professional interests of others on your team?	①	②	③	④
Is an atmosphere of humor, playfulness and friendliness encouraged in your office?	①	②	③	④
Do you and your team members feel that they can express themselves openly and authentically without worry?	①	②	③	④
If mistakes are made, do you deal with them in a constructive way?	①	②	③	④
Do you have enough time to reflect on your work?	①	②	③	④
Do you feel you have access to the professional advice you need to do your job effectively?	①	②	③	④

Flexibility: The Mindset Makeover



Did you know?

As proposed by Barbara Fredrickson's "broaden-and-build" theory, experiences of positive emotions during times of stress prompt individuals to pursue novel and creative thoughts and actions. By trying different coping strategies you can create an arsenal of resources that help buffer the physical and emotional impact of negative life experiences.¹¹

#3 Resilience (Bouncing Back)

Cognitive resilience is key to being a successful advisor, often a battering profession, especially in the last several years. Bouncing back quickly during the day is critical in order to maintain your performance.

You just had a review with Mr. Crabtree, a "platinum" client who is none too pleased with the performance of his portfolio. The meeting concludes late, and a top prospect is waiting for his meeting.

How do you bounce back?

- a) Put Mr. Crabtree in a headlock
- b) Keep changing the subject to more positive things, ignore his questions, and cut off the conversation quickly
- c) Tell Mr. Crabtree you have better things to do right now

OR, try one of these bounce back strategies:

- + Take 30 seconds – 2 minutes to do some deep breathing exercises
- + Go outside for a brisk walk
- + Spend a minute doing some stretches in your office
- + Close your eyes and imagine your next conversation going just the way you want it to
- + Write down three things you're grateful for
- + Call a friend/spouse/partner/child or other support person for a quick chat (let them know you just have a minute or two)
- + Journal about your experience with Mr. Crabtree to clear your mind and focus on the present
- + Do a few simple office exercises or climb the stairs to boost endorphins
- + Set a timer for 2 minutes and visualize yourself somewhere relaxing; use a picture if it's helpful
- + Read the comics, a funny story, or motivational message to boost positive emotions

Endurance: Healthy Aging



Did you know?

According to James Pennebaker at the University of Texas, there is a link between physical and psychological issues associated to holding in and holding onto negative emotions. "Holding on" creates stress in the body, which can cause health problems. What you hold back plays a role in how detrimental it is to your health — the more traumatic or negative your thoughts and feelings are the more they will affect your health.¹³

In addition to practicing healthy habits, exercises that target brain endurance are those that also continue to develop strength and flexibility over time. In order to get the biggest return on your time and energy investment, aim for activities that incorporate both strength and flexibility exercises such as journaling, meditation and simple yoga.

#1 The Power of Purpose

According to Dan Buettner, author of Blue Zones, people who know why they wake up in the morning live up to seven years longer than those who don't.¹² In one of the five "Blue Zones," Okinawa, this concept is known as "ikigai," which has been translated as "believing that one's life is worth living," "something important one lives for," or "a reason for being." This can be especially important as we advance toward new stages in our life, such as retirement. For many, retirement can be a difficult time as it represents a dramatic shift in focus. The toll it takes on us emotionally and physically can be intense. In fact, the two biggest spikes in mortality come at birth (when there is more of a risk of illness or complications) and at retirement (when people can lose a sense of purpose). We often talk about the power of purpose, but can easily find ourselves slipping back into survival mode when we feel overly stressed or crunched for time. Simple writing exercises can help us tap into our passion in life, which can fuel our efforts and give us a clearer sense of direction.

What is your ultimate mission in life?

How do you connect to it on a regular basis?

#2 Writing/Journaling Idea

Your retirement party: Imagine that the important people in your life are hosting a party in your honor, sometime in the future. During the gathering, the people you care about take time to tell the group about the type of person you were, and the ways you impacted their lives. What would you most want to hear them say? Be specific as you imagine these individuals speaking. Close your eyes and try to see and hear them speak the words that would make you most proud.

Brain Health Assessment

Use this assessment to identify key areas of focus for your own training program. Check any of the following that are true for you and total the number of checkmarks at the end of each section:



Food is Fuel

- I eat something every 3-4 hours during the day
- I eat balanced snacks and meals (approximately 25% protein, 25% whole grains and 50% produce)
- I do not drink more than 2 servings of alcohol on any given day (not an average)
- I very seldom consume portions that are larger than what would make me feel physically satisfied
- I regularly consume high nutritional value foods (veggies, fruits, fish, nuts, seeds)
- I eat fatty fish at least 2 times per week or take a fish oil supplement
- Total**



Activity is Activating

- I never sit for longer than 90 minutes at one time
- I get at least 60 minutes of general activity each day
- I am able to get outside for fresh air and/or sunshine on a daily basis
- I get at least 30 minutes of moderate intensity cardiovascular activity a minimum of 3x a week
- I do full body strength training exercises a minimum of 2x a week
- I stretch regularly after exercise
- Total**



Balanced Stress is a Balanced Life

- I balance my stress levels in a healthy way
- I regularly practice relaxation strategies (meditation, yoga, massage, etc.)
- I very seldom feel frustrated, angry or irritable
- My emotions are usually positive and opportunity based, rather than being in survival mode
- I enjoy challenges at work and do not feel threatened by failure
- When work is over I am able to turn it off and focus on other things
- Total**



Resting is Working

- I sleep at least 7 hours each night
- I wake up feeling rested in the morning
- I do not feel sleepy or lethargic during the day
- I wake up in the morning when I want, without setting an alarm clock
- I fall asleep within 30 minutes of going to bed
- I sleep soundly throughout the night
- Total**



A Social Life is Life Support

- I have enough friends to feel well connected socially
- I seldom feel lonely
- I maintain intimate emotional connection with others
- I find time to participate in hobbies I enjoy just for fun
- I have social interactions outside of work or family
- I laugh often, and experience joy throughout the day
- Total**



Specific Brain Training

- I seldom find myself multitasking
- I maintain focus during the day
- I feel mentally challenged on a daily basis
- I have recently learned a new skill (language, art, etc.)
- I actively seek out challenging conversations with others
- I have a strong sense of purpose in my life that I connect to regularly during the day
- I am currently doing specific brain training exercises
- Total**

Sections with the least amount of checkmarks should be considered areas of focus for your personal action plan.

A Day in the Life of a Brain Booster

-
- | | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 6:30 am: | Breakfast — oatmeal with blueberries, chopped walnuts and cinnamon OR omelet with peppers, mushrooms and other spices |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 am: | Morning gratitudes — write down 3 things I'm grateful for |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 am: | Focus exercise — look at daily training log, think about my purpose and goals for the day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 7:30 am: | Time blocking — block out specific times for specific projects, and email-free blocks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 9:30 am: | Morning snack — 10 almonds or Greek yogurt with berries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 10 am: | Mid-morning walk break — get outside if possible, or climb stairs 5–10 mins |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Noon: | Lunch — Leafy green salad with lean protein or ½ sandwich with tomato soup |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 2 pm: | Afternoon workout — outside and with a friend or group if possible |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 5 pm: | Evening download — look at training log, score or check off new strategies, organize for tomorrow |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 7 pm: | Counting blessings — connect with friend or family member to talk about gratitudes from the day |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | 9:30 pm: | Sleepy tea, warm bath or relaxation exercise to prepare for good night's sleep |
-

Sample Plan

My Focus Phrase/Mantra: Clear and Present

Brain Health Areas of Focus

More high-nutrient foods

Consistent physical activity/exercise routine

Brain Training

Positive mindset

Build more creativity

Strategies

	Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<u>Morning check-in, 3 gratitudes</u>							
<u>Mid-day mental break, get outside if possible</u>							
<u>60 minutes of physical activity/exercise</u>							
<u>Add at least one power food to each meal</u>							
<u>Evening download, 5 minutes journaling before bed</u>							

Sample Brain Health Strategies

- + Eat something every 3-4 hours during the day
- + Eat balanced meals; 25% protein, 25% whole grains, 50% fruits/veggies
- + Eat fatty fish at least 2x week or take a fish oil supplement
- + Regularly consume high-nutritional value foods (veggies, fruits, fish, nuts)
- + Get at least 60 minutes of general activity each day
- + Take regular stretch and/or walk breaks during the day
- + Get 30 minutes of cardiovascular exercise at least 2x a week
- + Do full body strength training at least 2x a week
- + Regularly practice relaxation strategies (meditation, yoga, massage, etc.)
- + Get at least 7 hours of sleep each night
- + Volunteer in community 1x a month
- + Call home to connect with family at a scheduled time each day

Sample Brain Training Strategies

- + Daily gratitude list each morning
- + Journal each night before bedtime
- + Use mental rehearsal techniques before important events
- + Take a mid-day mental break (get outside if possible)
- + Practice mental focus exercises daily
- + Connect to purpose or vision each morning
- + Read a challenging book every month
- + Practice mindfulness with family, friends, clients
- + Try a new hobby or sport
- + Practice memory techniques for client names, birthdays, etc.
- + Utilize online brain-training games or programs

My Plan

My Focus Phrase/Mantra: _____

Brain Health Areas of Focus

Brain Training

Strategies

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat

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- + Daily gratitude list each morning
- + Journal each night before bedtime
- + Use mental rehearsal techniques before important events
- + Take a mid-day mental break (get outside if possible)
- + Practice mental focus exercises daily
- + Connect to purpose or vision each morning
- + Read a challenging book every month
- + Practice mindfulness with family, friends, clients
- + Try a new hobby or sport
- + Practice memory techniques for client names, birthdays, etc.
- + Utilize online brain training games or programs

Additional Resources

Brain Games

- + happy-neuron.com/games
- + lumosity.com/brain-games
- + mybrainsolutions.com
- + positivscience.com/braingames

Brain Research Sites:

- + Brain Resources: brainresource.com
- + Sharp Brains: sharpbrains.com
- + Society for Neuroscience: sfn.org
- + The Dana Foundation: dana.org

Endnotes

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