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Grow Your Brain

By Stephen Bucaro

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Grow Your Brain

By Stephen Bucaro

In the past, scientists believed that we were each born with about 100 billion brain cells, and that after we reached adolescence our brain started dying at a rate of about 10,000 per day, and these cells could not be replaced.

New research has proven that the brain CAN produce new cells and that we can grow our brain throughout our lives. We can improve our mental alertness and master new skills no matter how old we are. But to grow your brain you must take the steps described in this article.

Recently it was discovered that the brain grows during sleep. Most of the growth occurs between the sixth and eighth hour of sleep. This illustrates the importance of getting eight hours of sound sleep each night.

The most important step to ensure sound sleep is to maintain a regular schedule of when you go to sleep and when you rise. Staying up late on weekends is not good for your brain. Studies have found that people who receive eight or nine hours of regular sound sleep each night are more mentally sharp.

Blood flow is another important factor effecting brain growth. Blood carries oxygen and nutrients to the brain's cells. Exercise is the way to increase blood flow to the brain. Aerobic exercise like walking briskly, bicycling, and jogging are the best exercises for growing your brain. A University of Illinois study found that people who

walked briskly for 45 minutes three times a week improved their cognitive speed by 15 percent.

The brain functions by communicating between cells through branches called dendrites. Nerve impulses are relayed across the gaps between dendrites, called synapses, by chemicals called neurotransmitters. When your brain is challenged with new information or new concepts, synaptic activity increases. A brain that is constantly challenged grows new dendrites.

The way to grow more dendrites is to learn new information and new concepts. The best way to learn is to take up a new challenging activity like computers, music, or learning a new language. You can also challenge your brain by working puzzles, solving brainteasers, playing strategy games, or by teaching others.

It is now known that stress takes a heavy toll on your brain. When you are under stress your body experiences the "fight or flight" syndrome. When ancient cave man was being chased by a Saber Toothed Tiger, the last thing his body needed was to allocate resources to grow more brain cells. In response to a threat, real or imagined, your body produces hormones that stop the growth of brain cells.

To avoid stress, make an honest assessment of the things that are causing your stress. Are they really life threatening, or are they merely an annoyance? Most of the time an impending event that we are stressing over never comes to pass.

Eliminate the things in your life that are causing stress. If you can't eliminate something that is causing stress; find a more constructive way to deal with it. They say "stress kills". I believe that. Even if stress doesn't kill you, we now know that it WILL decrease your mental sharpness.

It is now known that the old idea "fish is food for the brain" is actually true. Scientists have discovered that omega-3 fatty acids found in fish are an important component of neurotransmitters. Other sources of omega-3 fatty acids include avocados, olive oil, and walnuts.

Omega-3 fatty acids work in conjunction with vitamin E. The best sources of vitamin E include seeds, nuts, whole grains, and brightly colored vegetables.

Avoid fatty foods that increase your cholesterol level. Cholesterol stiffens the walls of arteries, restricting the flow of blood. And you now know that good blood flow is required to grow your brain.

Age is NOT a factor in decreasing mental sharpness. Loss of mental alertness is caused by lack of regular sound sleep, lack of exercise, stress, and mental laziness. Take the steps described in this article and you will do what until now scientists thought was impossible. You will grow your brain.

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None

Are You a Wildflower?

By David Leonhardt

Grow Your Brain

Wildflowers grow from mere dust to reach their full potential.

Wildflowers grow well, even in adverse soil conditions.

Wildflowers don't require late nights at the office to grow.

Wildflowers grow thick and stick together.

Wildflowers grow strong and tall.

Wildflowers display their brilliant personalities for all to see.

Wildflowers withstand drought and grow all the more beautiful when watered.

Wildflowers withstand frost and hale.

Wildflowers last late in the season, when other flowers have given up.

Are you a wildflower?

David Leonhardt is the Happy Guy, speaker, author, and publisher of "Your Daily Dose of Happiness" at

where this poem first appeared.

Are You a Wildflower?

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