

Good Mental Health

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As we age, we tend to be forgetful. The fear of losing brain capacity & memory looms large for the 14 million plus baby boomers in Canada.

Many of us worry about Alzheimer's disease, but statistics show 80% of us will never get Alzheimer's. Regardless of genetics or family history, the choices we make in lifestyle can slow the progression of age-related cognitive decline.

A decade ago, many believed that the brains of older adults could not grow or develop. In fact, our brains grow and change throughout life. Research suggests that learning a new skill, such as playing bridge or chess, speaking a foreign language, learning to play a musical instrument, or even dancing, creates new pathways in the brain. These new neural pathways improve cognitive function.

Our attitudes, lifestyle, and relationships can also improve our brain and memory function. Here are some tips:

- Think positive thoughts and focus on solutions to your problems.
- Reach out to your network of friends and family.
- Exercise to release endorphins and improve blood flow to the brain.
- Eat right.
- Learn to relax, and stop worrying.
- Smile – a smiling person releases feel-good hormones.
- Hug a lot. It has been proven to reduce stress.



Bridge is an intellectually stimulating game that keeps your mind sharp. It is a game for people who seek intelligent diversions in a social setting. It is both fast-paced and mentally challenging. Each hand takes 5 to 10 minutes to play, and each hand presents a new mystery to solve. It is a great activity for social reasons too – bridge players are happy. When you're happy, you're a healthier person.

We can maintain and even improve our brain health as we age. An active mind boosts the body's immune system and keeps you healthy and wise. We do not cease to play because we grow old. We grow old because we cease to play.

About the Author

Gim Ong is a free lance writer. He holds graduate degrees in business, counseling and theology. He is also the Chairperson of the Canadian Bridge Federation Charitable Fund.