



Wellness Wednesday: Mental Health Tip

What is Brain Training? Brain training is a system of exercising the brain to improve aspects of cognition like memory, attention, focus, and brain speed. Researchers believe that playing what they call “brain training games” can help keep the mind active. They may not prevent a brain from normal aging, but they can help keep a brain healthy, alert and engaged.

People of all ages can benefit from including brain exercises into their daily life. While there are numerous exercises that can be done, below are a few that offer benefits.

FIVE BRAIN EXERCISES TO IMPROVE MENTAL HEALTH

1

Jigsaw puzzles - Working on a jigsaw puzzle is an excellent way to strengthen your brain. Research has shown that doing jigsaw puzzles recruits multiple cognitive abilities and is a protective factor for visuospatial cognitive aging.

2

Playing cards - A card game can lead to greater brain volume in several regions of the brain. Playing card games can improve short and long term memory. Games with varying difficulty levels such as: solitaire, bridge, gin rummy, hearts and crazy eights are good choices that will help keep your mind sharp.

3

Building vocabulary- Research shows that many regions of the brain are involved in vocabulary tasks, mainly in areas that are important for visual and auditory processing. When you read, write down one unfamiliar word. Learn the definition and try to use the word three times during the day.

4

Dancing - The Center for Disease Prevention and Control notes that learning new dance moves can increase your brain’s processing speed and memory. Try dancing at home by following along with a DVD or videos on YouTube.

5

Use your senses - Research suggests that using your senses may help strengthen your brain. To give your senses and your brain a workout, try doing activities that simultaneously engage all five of your senses.

Sources: CDC, Healthline