



better brain
FRIDAYS

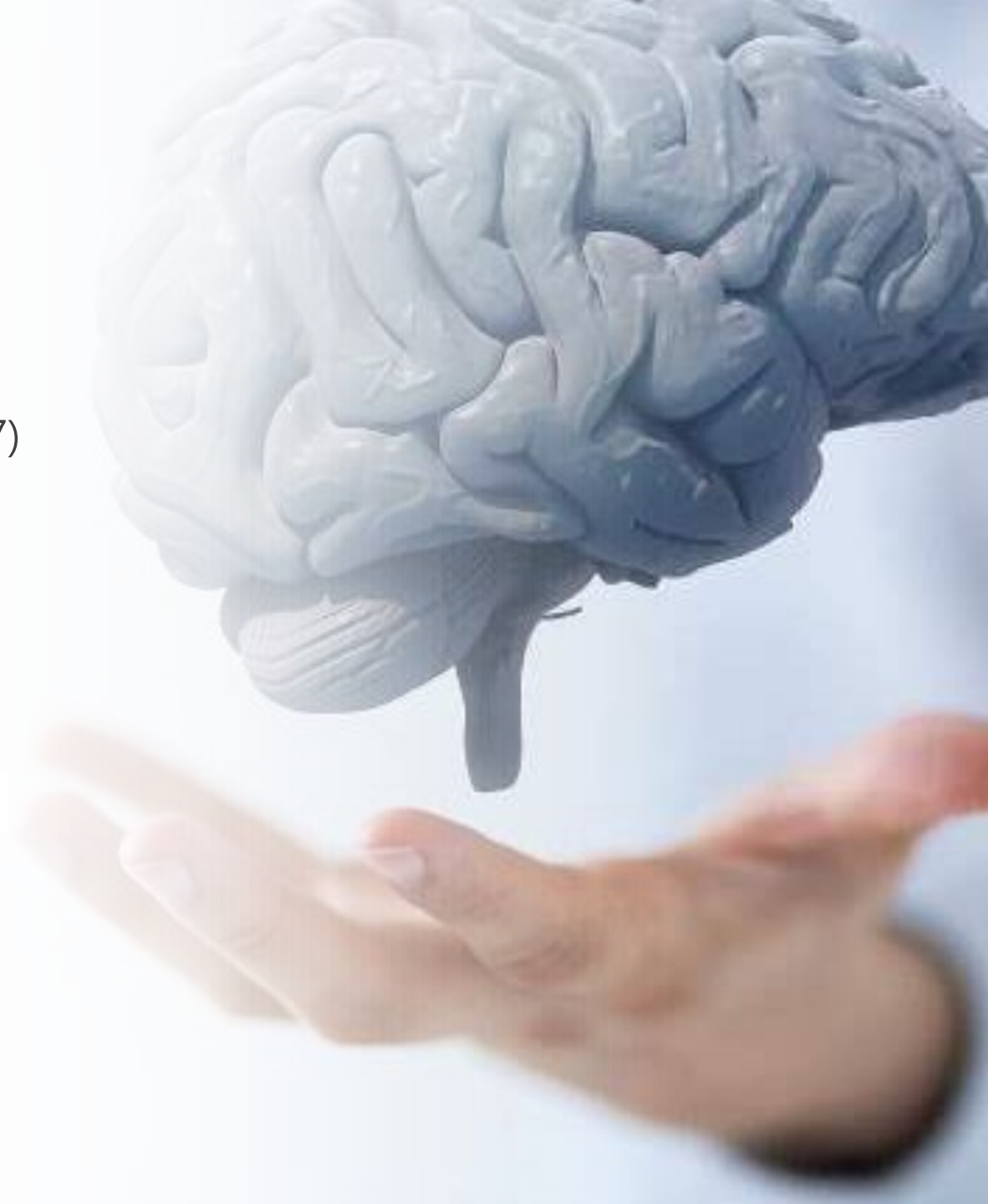
It's a
Wrap!

Lisa Wells, MA, CDP
Dementia Care Specialist
Aging & Disability Resource Center
of Eau Claire County
August 25, 2023



Overview

- Review of Each Seminar (7)
 - Take-Aways
 - Discussion
- 2024 “**Brain**” Storming
- 2023 Evaluation
- Upcoming Events





Normal Age-Related Memory Loss vs Dementia

Joan Hamblin, M.D.
Prevea Health

May 19, 2023

Normal Brain Aging vs Disease

Age-associated memory impairment are things such as:

- Forgetting which day it is and remembering it later
- Sometimes forgetting which word to use
- Losing things from time to time
- Missing a monthly payment
- Making a poor decision once in a while
- Processing of information slows down
- Vocabulary, general intelligence and ability to learn are not affected
- You can learn and remember...just takes a little longer!

Not so normal:

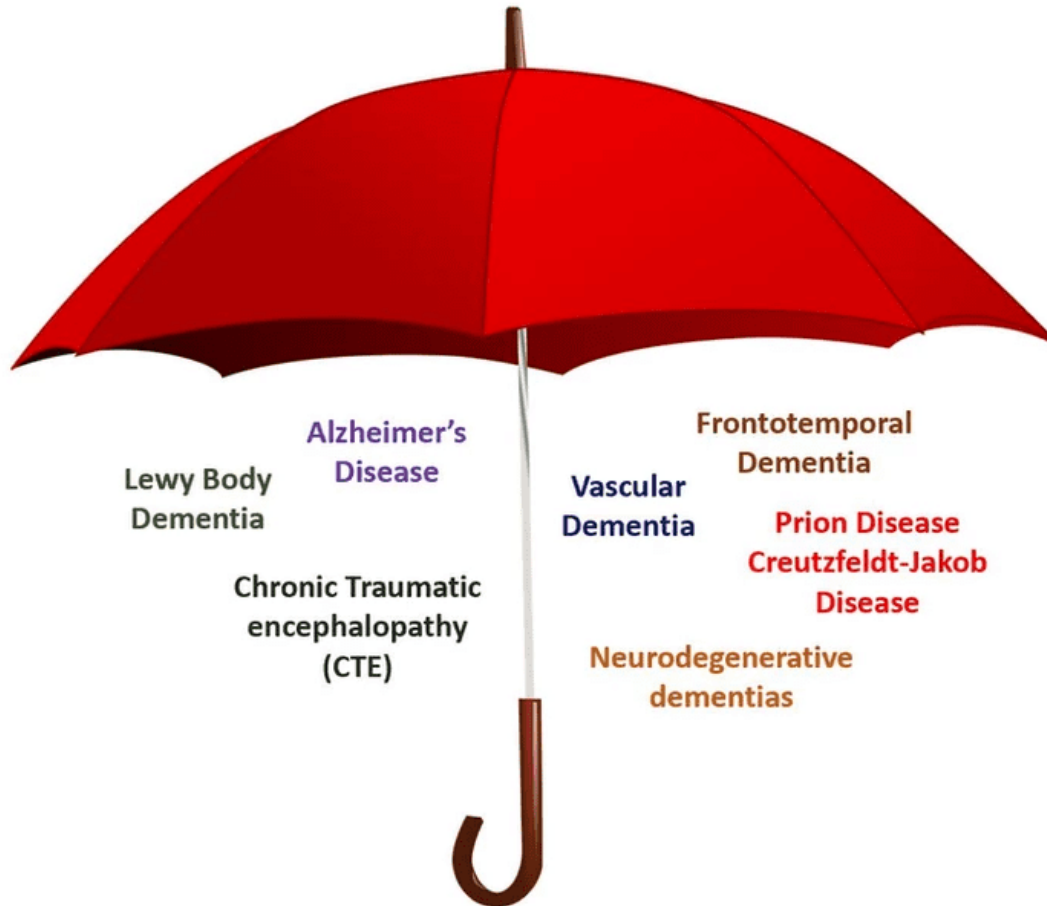
- Asking the same questions over and over again
- Getting lost in places a person knows well
- Having trouble following a recipe or directions
- Becoming more confused about time, people, and places
- Misplacing things often and being unable to find them
- Trouble having a conversation
- Not taking care of oneself – poor hygiene, eating poorly, behaving unsafely

What Else Could it Be?

- Infections
- Medication combinations/interactions
- Depression
- Dehydration
- Chronic pain
- Vitamin B12 deficiency
- Thyroid problems
- Problems with hearing
- Fluctuating blood sugar
- Alcohol abuse
- Delirium
- Carbon monoxide poisoning
- Head trauma
- Obstructive sleep apnea
- Normal pressure hydrocephalus
- Distractions/multi-tasking

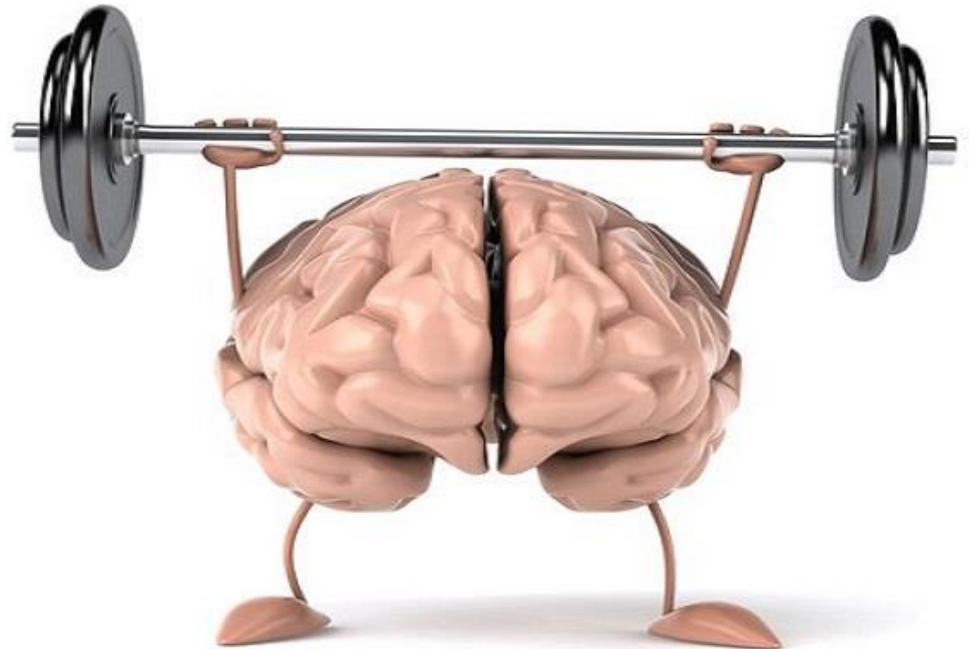
Dementia is...

A syndrome that describes a group of symptoms associated with a decline in memory and other thinking skills



What Can You Do?

- Some medications, new FDA-approved meds are controversial
- Genes: Pick your parents well
- Make healthy brain choices
- Talk to your doctor about your memory concerns
- Get a brain health check-up through the ADRC





Group Discussion

Take-Aways

- Our brain changes as we age...good news is we still grow new neurons
- Important to make healthy brain choices
- Don't wait to speak to your doctor if having memory changes



Non-Medication Approaches to Ensuring Better Brain Health

Donn Dexter, MD
Consultant in Neurology, Chair of Education, Retired

June 2, 2023

Risk Factors

- Age
- Family History
- Poor Heart Health (high cholesterol, high blood pressure, uncontrolled diabetes)
- Race/Ethnicity
- Down Syndrome
- Brain Injury
- Obesity
- Alcohol





Strategies for Brain Health



Avoid Gimmicks

- No evidence of benefit in peer-reviewed studies
- No oversight from FDS
- Prevents people from doing the things that do work





Group Discussion

Take-Aways

- You can't prevent dementia, but you can decrease your risk
- Save your money on gimmicks and incorporate brain health strategies in every day life

June 9, 2023

**Live Smart. Not Hard.
Tools and Strategies for
Making Life Easier**

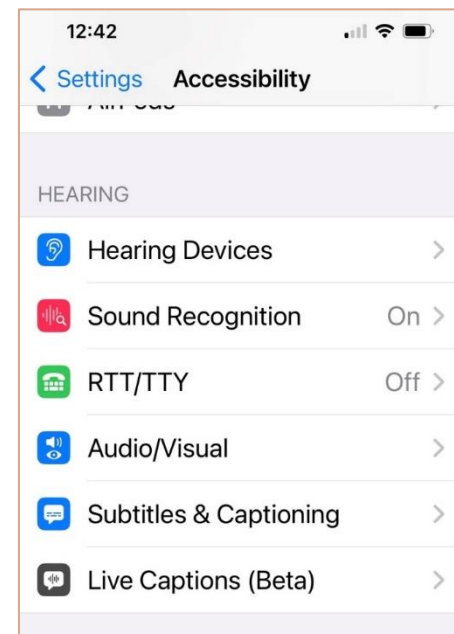
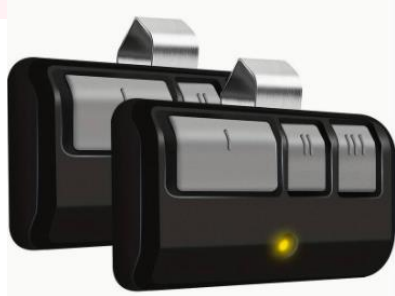
Laura E. Plummer, MA, CRC, ATP
AT Program Coordinator






What is AT

- Assistive Technology is any produce or piece of equipment used to maintain or improve your independence
- AT is literally ANYTHING that makes life easier
- People of all ages can benefit



Making Life Easier

- Hear
- See
- Communicate
- Do and move
- Home and life management
- Have fun
- Get places
- Safety

- 
- High tech
 - Low tech
 - No tech

Reason We Still Work Hard

- Not aware of the options
- Limited financial access to the solutions
- Limited broadband access
- Little or no help in obtaining, setting up, and training
- Digital illiteracy
- Limited willingness to use or learn new things
- Updates and maintenance

What Can You Do

- Wisconsin Independent Living Centers
 - <https://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/disabilities/physical/ilcs.htm>
 - <https://cilww.com/>
 - 715-233-1070
- Wisconsin Assistive Technology for All
 - <https://wisconsinat4all.com>
 - Laura Plummer, 608-514-2513 or laura.plummer1@dhs.wisconsin.gov
- ICanConnect
 - <https://www.icanconnect.org/>
- Generations iPad and iPhone Tutorials
 - <https://www.gol4apple.org/index2020.html>
- Broadband Assistance
 - <https://www.fcc.gov/broadbandbenefit>
- Occupational Therapists



Group Discussion

Take-Aways

- There is A LOT of information out there
- What are some ways you would like to live easier, what equipment might be helpful....
- Don't wait, call or do your research

Mind Over Matter: Strategies to Manage Negative Thoughts and Self Talk

Jean Jirovac
Retired Marriage and Family Therapist

July 7, 2023



Mind Over Matters

Depression

- Mood disorder
- Not permanent
- The brain can reorganize itself by creating new neural pathways....neuroplasticity

Anxiety

- A normal reaction to a perceived threat
- Most common mental illness in the US
- The result of brain circuitry stuck in fight or flight

Obsessive Thoughts

- Unwelcome thoughts, images, urges and doubts
- Triggered by stress and anxiety, biological, shifts in hormones

Overthinking

- Going over and over in your mind, second-guessing, imagining the worse possible worst-case scenario
- It's a habit
- Overthinking is something you can choose to change

Listen To Your Emotions

Disappointment

- Shows that you tried for something, that you did not give in to apathy, or give up, and that you still care.

Guilt

- Shows that you are deserving blame, from a sense of inadequacy. Not living up to other people's expectations of what you should do.

Anger

- Shows you what you're passionate about, where your boundaries are, and what you believe needs to change about your situation or the world.

Shame

- Shows that you're internalizing other people's beliefs about who you should be (or who you are) and that you need to reconnect with yourself.

Bitterness

- Shows you where you need to heal, where you're still holding judgments on others and yourself. Forgiveness is a gift you give yourself not because it is necessarily deserved by others.

Sadness

- Shows you the depth of your feelings, the depth of your care for others and the world.

Anxiety

- Shows you that you need to recognize the present moment and that you are either stuck in the past or living in fear of the future.

Resentment

- Shows you where you're living in the past and not allowing or accepting the present to be as it is. Or a feeling of discontentment aroused by someone else's possessions, qualities, or good fortune.

Fear

- Shows that you believe something is dangerous, painful, or threatening. The question that needs to be asked is, "Is this real or imagined?"

6 deceptive little habits that sabotage your life!

- 1 Worrying about things you can't change
- 2 Blaming someone else for your results
- 3 Expecting perfection from others
- 4 Telling yourself that you can't
- 5 Jumping to conclusions
- 6 Procrastinating

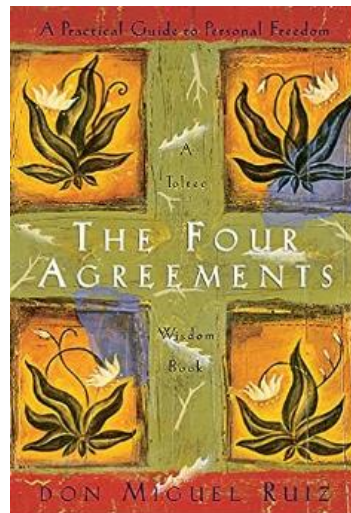
What I can control and what I can't



CODE OF CONDUCT

The Four Agreements by Don Miguel Ruiz:

1. Be impeccable with Your Word
2. Don't Take Things Personally
3. Don't Make Assumptions
4. Always do your best



- **Secrets of Resilient People**

They stay connected
They're optimistic
They're spiritual
They're playful
They stay healthy
They find the silver lining
They pick their battles
They give back





Group Discussion

Take-Aways

- Your mind has the power to change the way you think
- Choose to focus on the things you can control vs the things you cannot control



Sugar Awareness and Better Brain Health

Pam VanKampen, RDN, CD, GWAAR
July 21, 2023

Scary Facts

- Two hundred years ago the average American ate only 2 pounds of sugar a year
- Today, the average American consumes almost 152 pounds of sugar in one year
- This is equal to 3 pounds (or 6 cups) of sugar consumed in one week



More Scary Facts

- Diets high in sugar increase the risk of dementia, AD, stroke, impaired cognitive function, mood disorders and depression, impulsivity, and generalized anxiety disorders.
- Sugar's negative effects can cause poorer memory performance, problems with attention, increased anxiety, higher risk for depression
- Addictive
- Scary facts go on and on....



A Few Notes About Sugars

Added Sugars:

- Sugar that is not in food naturally
- Include sugars and syrups added to products like soda, cereal, ketchup, yogurt
- Sugar you add yourself

Natural Sugar

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Milk
- The sugars in these foods are not added

Refined vs Raw

- Raw sugar is light brown because it is less refined and contains more natural molasses present in sugar cane
- Refined sugar comes from cane/beets
- Low-fat foods often have high sugar content to add flavor lost by reducing fat

Artificial Sweeteners

- Sweet N Low, Equal, Splenda, Truvia
- Damaging to the microbiome
- Causes leaky gut syndrome

Types:

- Fructose – found in fruits
- Glucose – found in honey, fruits, and vegetables
- Lactose and galactose – found in milk/dairy products
- Maltose – found in barley
- Sucrose – table sugar, a combination of glucose and fructose found in plants

An easy tool to help you figure out how much added sugar is in your food

g

grams of sugar

find grams of sugar on the nutrition label then match it to the same number in the spoons

teaspoons of sugar

the number under the spoon is the number of teaspoons of sugar in that food.

tsp



- Women: No more than 6 tsp (25 grams) of sugar per day
- Men: No more than 9 tsp (38 grams) of sugar per day

Tips for Reducing Added Sugar Intake

- Choose plain yogurt with no added sugar, stir in fresh or frozen fruit or unsweetened applesauce or pumpkin puree and add a dash of cinnamon.
 - Choose cereals with <5% DV of added sugar and add fresh fruit.
 - Add fruit or veggies to water, seltzer, herbal tea or coffee to boost flavor.
-
- Try $\frac{1}{4}$ cup unsweetened fruit, 1 cup fresh fruit or 1 oz square of 75% dark chocolate.
 - When baking, reduce the amount of sugar by $\frac{1}{4}$ to $\frac{1}{2}$. OR substitute half the amount with unsweetened applesauce or mashed ripe bananas.
 - Use a baby spoon to savor small bites of a small portion.

Dietary Patterns to Follow

Mediterranean-
style diet

DASH-style diet

Anti-
Inflammatory
diet

Flexitarian-style
diet

Plant-based
diet

Prebiotics and Probiotics

- **Prebiotics** are food, ingredients, supplements, products, and more that support the wanted beneficial bacteria in our microbiome by providing an ideal nutritional source for the bacteria.
- Artichokes, asparagus
- Bananas, barley, berries
- Chicory, garlic, green vegetables
- Legumes, linseed, oats, onions
- Tomatoes, wheat.

Probiotics are food, ingredients, supplements, products, and more that contain the wanted beneficial bacteria.

- Kefir, kimchi
- kombucha , miso
- Pickles, sauerkraut
- sourdough bread, tempeh
- yogurt

<https://www.canr.msu.edu/news/probiotics-prebiotics-foods>



Group Discussion

Take-Aways

- Focus on reducing added sugars – check the labels
- Eat a variety of foods with minimal processing and sneak in nutrients



Nature and Plants for Better Brain Health

**Margaret Murphy, Horticulture Educator
UW-Madison Extension
August 4, 2023**

Benefits of Nature...Ahhh

- More studies are showing the benefits in the past 30 years
- Evidence points to lower prevalence of:
 - High blood pressure
 - Depression and anxiety
- Improved cardiovascular health
- Increased social well-being
- Helps boost cognitive functions and elevate mood
- Better concentration and the ability to focus
- Brings a feeling of security and relaxation
- Flowers make us happy 😊



What YOU Can Do

- Garden
- Porch/Patio
- Head into nature
- Forest Bathing





Group Discussion

Take-Aways

- Benefits are endless
- Just get out and enjoy it!

**Normal Age-Related
Memory Loss vs Dementia**

**Non-Medication Approaches
to Ensuring Better Brain
Health**

**Live Smarter, Not
Harder: Tools and
Strategies for Making
Life Easier**



**Sugar Awareness and Better
Brain Health**

**Mind Over Matter: Strategies
to Manage Negative
Thoughts and Self Talk**

**Nature and Plants for Better
Brain Health**

Brain Health 2023



2024 Brainstorming

What topics are you interested in for 2024?

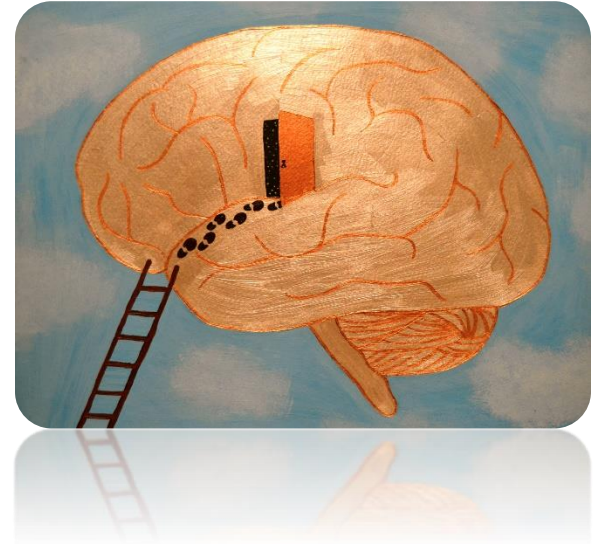
What would you like to learn more about?

What topics are missing?

Do you know of excellent speakers?

2009 – 2023 Presentations:

- Nutrition
- Supplements
- Exercise/Physical Activity
- Mental exercises/brain strategies
- Diabetes
- Stress
- Sleep
- Music and singing
- Writing
- Spirituality
- Art
- Leaving a living legacy
- Herbs and spices
- Pain
- Learning a new language
- Decluttering/organization
- Mental health
- mindfulness
- Heart Health
- Technology/Facebook
- Gut Bacteria
- Hearing Loss
- Cognitive behavioral therapy
- Brain games
- Concussions
- Medications
- Dehydration
- Blue Zones
- Having a positive attitude
- Memory and dementia
- Happiness and brain health
- Trauma
- Intermittent fasting
- Assistive technology and social isolation
- Spiritual well-being
- Other dementias
- Grief and Loss
- Tools and strategies for making Life Easier
- Managing negative thoughts and self-talk
- Sugar awareness
- Nature and plants







Thank you!

See You Next Year!

~Lisa and Angela