

Taking a Brain Health approach to Mental Health

Practical Strategies to build a healthy brain and body

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How to use this resource

The purpose of this guide is to provide activities that compliment the “taking a brain health approach to mental health” seminar. The contents of this handout have been used with permission from Dr Daniel Amen's “6 weeks to overcome anxiety, depression, trauma and grief” programme.

Great companion books are Dr. Amen's ***You, Happier, Your Brain Is Always Listening*** and ***The End of Mental Illness***.

Objectives of this workbook are to:

- ✓ Reflect on what you learnt on the seminar and link this to the current health of your brain.
- ✓ Start a daily journal to help gather data of changes you are making along the way.
- ✓ Discover your brain type and strategies that help you thrive.
- ✓ Understand your BRIGHT MINDS risk factors.
- ✓ Utilise habit stacking to make changes that last.

DISCLAIMER

This seminar and accompanying workbook does not guarantee results as results are on an individual bases. This booklet is for educational purposes only and intended to supplement, not replace, the professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment of health conditions from a trained health professional.

Please consult your physician or other healthcare professional before beginning or changing any health or fitness program to make sure that it is appropriate for your needs—especially if you are pregnant or have a family history of any medical concerns, illnesses, or risks. If you have any concerns or questions about your health, you should always consult with a physician or other healthcare professional. Please do not disregard, avoid, or delay obtaining medical or health- related advice from your healthcare professional because of something you may have read or heard in this programme.

Brain Health Reflections

What are your takeaways from this seminar?

What are your most concerning symptoms you wish to work on?

If your brain worked the way you wanted it to, how might your life be different?

Brain Type Assessment

1. Go to brainhealthassessment.com
2. This assessment will reveal your Brain Type.
3. Click "Take the Quiz"
4. Select "Let's Get Started!"

The assessment will take approximately 5 minutes and your results will be made available by download or email.

BRAIN TYPE # _ _ _ _ _

What will I do to optimize my brain?

Journaling

Every day rate the most important symptoms you want to change on a scale of 1 – 10 (1 is very bad/10 is very good). This provides a basis for you to evaluate any changes you make.

Rate your symptoms on a daily basis during this course. Below is an example.

Day	Anxiety	Mood	Energy	Stress	Focus	Memory	Irritability	Motivation
Sunday								
Monday								
Tuesday								
Wednesday								
Thursday								
Friday								
Saturday								

Write in any other symptoms

Day								
Sunday								
Monday								
Tuesday								
Wednesday								
Thursday								
Friday								
Saturday								

Factor	Risks	Strategies
Blood Flow	Stroke, hypertension, or any form of heart disease Blood pressure too high or low Sedentary lifestyle Sleep Apnea Pre/diabetes Dehydration	Get treatment early Start prevention strategies Exercise (30 minutes a day) Stay hydrated Meditation Eat foods such as beets, cayenne pepper, cocoa Take supplements such as Ginkgo and Omega 3 Green tea
Retirement/Aging	No new learning In a job that does not require new learning Loneliness Social isolation Iron levels too low or high	Make new learning part of your everyday life Take a class Get involved with your family or church Volunteer to help others Keep iron levels monitored
Inflammation	Low levels of Vitamin D and Omega 3 Chronic stress, childhood trauma Gum disease Obesity, pre-diabetes or diabetes Insomnia Hormone imbalances Proinflammatory foods Compromised gut health High C-reactive protein (CRP) levels (blood test)	Test for inflammation Boost levels of Vitamin D and Omega 3 Get gut healthy Avoid sugar and other proinflammatory foods Take care of your gums Calm your nervous system Take supplements, such as fish oil, probiotics, and curcumins

<u>G</u>enetics	Family history of mental health issues or dementia	If you have a family history of mental health issues or dementia in your family, it is critical to be serious about brain health as soon as possible Get screened early
<u>H</u>ead Trauma/concussions	Head injury even without loss of consciousness	Protect your head Wear a helmet when biking, skiing, etc. Refrain from contact sports Wear your seat belt Avoid climbing ladders Hold handrails when going up or down stairs Never text while walking or driving Use the BRIGHTMINDS strategies to help recover from head trauma
<u>T</u>oxins	Smoking Drugs Alcohol Mold Pesticides Toxic products	Avoid toxic exposure and support the 4 organs of detoxification: <i>Kidneys – drink more water</i> <i>Gut – eat more fiber and choose organic foods</i> <i>Liver – quit smoking and drugs, limit alcohol, eat brassicas (cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, and brussels sprouts)</i> <i>Skin – sweat with exercise and take saunas</i> Get tested for mould exposure Download the 'Think Dirty' app to scan your personal products to know if they're toxic

<u>M</u>ind-Storms	Seizures or history of seizures Frequent complaints that things look, sound, taste, feel, or smell “funny” Visual or auditory changes	Ketogenic diets suit some brain types Neuro Feedback Stress-relief techniques Avoid video games and flashing lights Eliminate sugary foods, food dyes, or and food preservatives
Immunity/Infections	Low vitamin D level Lyme disease Asthma Autoimmune disorders, such as multiple sclerosis	Boost vitamin D intake and eat onions, mushrooms, and garlic Work with an integrative or functional medicine doctor who can properly diagnose and treat you
Neurohormone Deficiencies	Abnormal thyroid, DHEA, testosterone, estrogen, and progesterone in females	Test Use the BRIGHTMINDS strategies to optimize your hormones
Diabetesity	Diabetes (high fasting blood sugar) Being overweight or obese (high BMI)	Eliminate sugar Follow BRIGHT MINDS diet Eat calorie-smart
Sleep Problems	Insomnia Sleep apnea	Target 7-8 hours Get an evaluation for sleep apnea if you snore Practice good sleep hygiene

Habit stacking with tiny habits

Habit stacking is a very simple, science backed strategy to help make changes to achieve your goals. A tiny habit is like an easy first step. It is an achievable healthy action to take towards your goals. It can help boost your sense of confidence and competence and, over time, evolve into bigger changes. Tiny habits are anchored to something you do (or think or feel) every day – like get out of bed, brush your teeth, shower, get dressed, drive the car etc.

The habit stacking format is: “When I do X (or when X happens), I will do Y”

When I (X)	I will (Y)
When I finish my lunch	I will go for a walk outside.
When I get up in the morning	I will have a drink of water.
When I notice myself feeling anxious	I will take 5 deep breaths.
Before I go to sleep at night	I will think of 3 things that went well, breathe it in and let it land inside.
After I finish a task	I will stop, pause and turn this into a beneficial feeling.
After my feet hit the floor in the morning	I will say, “It’s going to be a great day”!
As I look at the menu to choose something to eat	I’ll ask if the items I choose are good or bad for my brain.