



THE  
**BRAIN**FLEX®  
Workbook

The Whole Person Approach

to  
*aging* Well™

## Positive Words Can Change Your Brain



Our words have more impact on our emotional and physical well-being than most of us realize. As a matter of fact, the words we hear, (and speak), have the power to influence the brain on many levels. For instance, the right words can improve the brain's capacity to learn. (Dr. Andrew Newberg, 2014) When we're intentional about choosing words of hope along with words that inspire and motivate, we actually stimulate the activity in the brain's frontal lobe.

With that being said, negative words can have the opposite effect on the brain. Hearing, (and speaking), negative words causes the release of cortisol, which is a neurochemical designed to help us stay sharp and focused during threatening situations. In these situations, cortisol is released quickly, and only as needed. However, if we live in an environment that is 'hostile' or if we surround ourselves with negative, pessimistic people, cortisol is released slowly and continually, which can lead to the destruction of brain cells, thereby creating deficits in the brain.

Newberg and Waldman, authors of the book, *'Words Can Change the Brain'*, discovered through their research, that one negative word had the power to increase activity in the amygdala, which is referred to as the brain's fear center'. When this happens, stress-producing hormones are released, making it difficult for the brain to process information completely. One reason for this is the negative influence these 'stress-producers' have on the brain's 'logic and reasoning' centers, located in the frontal lobe.

This is why we so often discuss the importance of maintaining a positive attitude, staying optimistic, and continually looking for the silver lining during difficult times.

**Bottom line:** Speak positively about yourself and others. In addition, never allow other people to speak to you with words that tear you down, rather than build you up. If someone does happen to speak to you inappropriately, tell them it's not acceptable, then say to yourself, (out loud), the exact opposite of whatever it was they said...and as always, share your wisdom by telling others why having a positive attitude is so important.

*(Always keep in mind... 'hurting people' hurt people.)*

### Works Cited

Dr. Andrew Newberg, M. M. (2014). *Words Can Change Your Brain*. Brilliance Audio. Retrieved from <https://psychcentral.com/blog/words-can-change-your-brain-2/>

## Self-Affirmations

The self-affirmations included in our workbooks are built on a healthy love of self, not an egotistical kind of love. This portion of the Aging Well program is about self-respect, knowing that you are worthy... that you are good enough...just the way you are.

It's important to say each affirmation several times out loud, even if you aren't sure you believe what you're saying. Over time, your mind's eye will begin to see the world, (this includes YOU)...in a more positive light. We believe that we're all God's creation and that it's important we love and appreciate the unique design of every person, (this includes YOU).

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I am beautiful...just the way I am

I respect myself

I am confident in who I am

I let go of all negative thinking

I will replace negative thoughts with positive ones

I have a strong body and a healthy brain

I free myself of all bitterness and unforgiveness

I can see my true beauty...within and without

I choose to assume and believe the best about others

I choose to believe what God says about me

I am loved and accepted by those I love

## Brain Warm-up Exercise 1: General Knowledge

1. What language is primarily spoken in Mexico? \_\_\_\_\_
2. In relation to time, what is 'Post Meridian'? \_\_\_\_\_
3. Transparent ice crystals in unique tiny structures that fall from the sky in winter are called \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_.
4. A vacation for newlyweds is called a \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_.
5. A small recorder that takes messages if someone calls is referred to as an \_\_\_\_\_.
6. How many blackbirds were baked in a pie? \_\_\_\_\_ in \_\_\_\_\_.
7. What famous building has the address of 1600 Pennsylvania Ave.? \_\_\_\_\_
8. Where does the Pope live? \_\_\_\_\_
9. What two chemicals make up water? \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_
10. Write the name of each state next to its abbreviation.  
OK - \_\_\_\_\_  
MO - \_\_\_\_\_  
FL - \_\_\_\_\_  
CA - \_\_\_\_\_  
MI - \_\_\_\_\_  
OH - \_\_\_\_\_  
KY - \_\_\_\_\_

## Warm Up Exercise 2: Long-Term Memory-Language-Thought Processing

All in \_\_\_\_\_ time.

\_\_\_\_\_ springs eternal.

Don't \_\_\_\_\_ waves.

Don't get all \_\_\_\_\_ of shape.

He drives \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ one in a \_\_\_\_\_.

Better \_\_\_\_\_ than \_\_\_\_\_.

Don't make a \_\_\_\_\_ out of a

They say love is \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

Fighting like \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

He really knows how to  
push \_\_\_\_\_.

Just in the \_\_\_\_\_ time.

To make a long \_\_\_\_\_.

Don't blow a \_\_\_\_\_.

The \_\_\_\_\_ doesn't fall \_\_\_\_\_

He's just spinning his \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ the \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ built in a day.

Everything happens \_\_\_\_\_.

There's a glimmer of \_\_\_\_\_.

What \_\_\_\_\_ goes  
around.

There's no time \_\_\_\_\_.

That really gets my \_\_\_\_\_.

She really knows how to rattle your  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Too much \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ hands.

\_\_\_\_\_ is the best medicine.

He gets under \_\_\_\_\_.

You can't \_\_\_\_\_ a book by  
its \_\_\_\_\_.

She's \_\_\_\_\_ at straws.

He rubs me the \_\_\_\_\_.

Actions \_\_\_\_\_  
than \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ all wounds.

Better to be \_\_\_\_\_ than  
\_\_\_\_\_.

You only live \_\_\_\_\_.

## Exercise: Long-Term Memory ~ The Amazing U.S. Military

1. As of 2018, about how many veterans were living in America?
  - a. 22 million
  - b. 40 million
  - c. 100 million
2. Veterans Day was originally known as...
  - a. Armistice Day
  - b. Veteran Honorarium
  - c. Veteran's Salute
3. Veteran's Day is celebrated on November 11 because...
  - a. It is the day most wars started
  - b. It is the day of our nation's birthday
  - c. None of the above

4. The motto of the Department of Veterans Affairs is

*"To care for him who shall have borne the battle."*

Who originally wrote these words and in which song was it written?

- a. "God Bless America," by Irving Berlin
  - b. "How Great Thou Art," by Francis Key
  - c. "America the Beautiful", by George Alas
5. Name the Branches of the U.S. Military.

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6. Also consider those who commit to service as needed, often spending one weekend a month away to train. This is called 'The \_\_\_\_\_'.

7. During President Trump's first four years as President, the United States added another branch to the military, called the U.S. \_\_\_\_\_ force.

# BrainFlex Trivia

## Life-Long Learning and Long-Term Knowledge

### TRIVIA NOTES

1.) \_\_\_\_\_

2.) \_\_\_\_\_

3.) \_\_\_\_\_

4.) \_\_\_\_\_

5.) \_\_\_\_\_

6.) \_\_\_\_\_

7.) \_\_\_\_\_

8.) \_\_\_\_\_

9.) \_\_\_\_\_

10.) \_\_\_\_\_

11.) \_\_\_\_\_

12.) \_\_\_\_\_

13.) \_\_\_\_\_

14.) \_\_\_\_\_

### Exercise: Word Problems [Left Brain]

NASA has decided to develop a space station on which people can live while exploring several planets within our galaxy. The station can provide living quarters for 20 people. The first passengers added to the manifest were the captain, the first officer.

What other professionals should be included on the manifest.

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NASA's new plasma injectors will only last 180 days, after that, everyone will need from evacuate the space station. This means the crew will need to begin their exploration of Mars and Mercury right away. NASA has provided two space shuttles, each designed for travel between planets. As the crew prepares for their 57,000,000 mile journey to Mars, they make sure they have double the space fuel, which is required per NASA.

*(Both space shuttles can travel 1000 miles on 10 gallons of space fuel.)*

The trip to Mercury will be approximately 32,250,000 miles from the station. For this mission, the crew will be taking the largest space shuttle, and due to its size, they're concerned it may use more fuel. Because of this, they've been instructed to carry three times the amount of space fuel.

1-How many total miles will the crew have traveled once they return to the station after their observation of Mars? \_\_\_\_\_

2--How many total miles will the crew have traveled once they return to the station after their observation of Mercury? \_\_\_\_\_

3-How many total miles will the crew have traveled after completing their itinerary? (Two round trips, one to Mars and one to Mercury?) \_\_\_\_\_

4-How many months, approximately, will the crew be living in space? \_\_\_\_\_

5-How many miles the shuttle can travel on 10 gallons? \_\_\_\_\_

A. How many gallons of space fuel are needed for the Mars trip? \_\_\_\_\_

B. How many gallons of space fuel are needed for the Mercury trip? \_\_\_\_\_



**CHERRY  
CHIA  
CHOCOLATE  
SNACK**

**INGREDIENTS**

2-3 TBSP-pure maple syrup (use only pure syrup)  
1/4 cup-chia seeds  
1/4 cup-cherries (pitted and sliced in half)  
1/4 unsweetened cocoa powder  
1 1/4 cup almond milk  
1/4 cup-whipped cream (vegan)

## Instructions

1. In a medium size bowl, mix all recipe ingredients.(except whipped cream)
2. Pour mixture in individual serving cups.
3. Cover and place in fridge for at least 5 hours.
4. When you're ready to eat, add whipped cream and ENJOY!

## Health Benefits of Chia Seeds

Chia seeds are a plant-based source of healthy omega 3 fats in the form of ALA (linolenic acid).

These plant-based fats provide both the heart and brain with healthy omega 3 fats.

## **Health Benefits of Cherries**

When the cherry tree is cut, a liquid is released which is often used as a natural inhalant for chronic coughs.

When cherries are heated, a liquid is formed. This warm liquid has been shown to be helpful in the treatment of edema, bronchial issues and anemia.

Cherries have also been used as a natural astringent for the skin.

## **Health Benefits of Almond Milk**

One 8-ounce glass of almond milk contains 30% of the recommended daily allowance of Calcium.

Because we lose bone density as we age, it becomes increasingly important to include Calcium in our diet every day.

One 8-ounce glass of almond milk provides 25% of the recommended daily allowance of Vitamin D.

This vitamin is important to our bone structure as well. In addition, Vitamin D is essential to a healthy immune system.