

20 Things You Can Do Starting Today to Think Better, Be More Productive, and Age Smarter



Presented By
Connie Ragen Green

The human brain has 100 billion neurons; each neuron connects to 10 thousand other neurons. Sitting on your shoulders is the most complicated object in the known universe.
~ Michio Kaku

We all want to live long, productive lives but sometimes we get so wrapped up in everyday life that we put our health on the back burner. Instead of ignoring our health, let's move it to the forefront of our minds and make some concerted efforts to make healthy lifestyle changes.

Here are 20 things we can add into our everyday lives to improve our brain health. A healthy brain will make good decisions which lead to having a healthy body. Aim for doing at least one each day. Don't make it complicated; all it entails is making time for yourself to do something enjoyable.



1. Learn something new. Your brain was meant to learn new things and challenging your brain makes it grow. So start those piano lessons you always wanted as a child or learn a foreign language (or any other challenge that excites you).

2. Get out of your comfort zone. Your comfort zone is a safe place which allows your brain to produce dopamine, which makes you feel happy. Taking on new activities and doing something that makes you nervous are what keep your brain growing. You'll also feel a sense of accomplishment and a boost of self-esteem when you complete that new task.

3. Meditate. Silencing your brain regularly allows grey matter to increase in the regions of the brain which control memory, focused attention, and deep thought. This same meditation also quiets the parts of the brain associated with depression, anxiety, and anger.

4. Read daily. Different parts of your brain work together to decipher the text and this process heightens brain connectivity. You also improve your focus and concentration as well as spark your imagination.

5. Sleep more. The brain needs sleep to consolidate learning and memory. Sleep also boosts productivity and improves concentration.

6. Exercise daily. Exercising every day increases the blood flow to the brain, which increases brain cell production. Intense exercising, such as running, produces more dopamine, which has an affect similar to that of antidepressants. Amazingly, the [brain can make new neural pathways and connections](#), and exercise helps that process.

7. Eat whole foods. With the onslaught of GMOs, preservatives, and pesticide use, finding organic whole foods and ditching the packaged foods will do wonders for improving your brain function. Lowering your intake of processed carbs will also help alleviate "brain fog."

8. Foster your relationships with family and friends. Loneliness is a real problem, especially among older adults whose children have moved out of their home. Elderly

patients in nursing homes also experience some depression and anxiety if they don't see regular visitors. Socialize in person when possible or spend at least 10 minutes a day in conversation to alleviate that lonely feeling.

9. Journaling. Keeping a journal teaches you how to prioritize your tasks and clarify your thinking but it also relieves anxiety. [Judy Willis MD](#), a neurologist, and former classroom teacher explains, "The practice of writing can enhance the brain's intake, processing, retaining, and retrieving of information... it promotes the brain's attentive focus ... boosts long-term memory, illuminates patterns, gives the brain time for reflection, and when well-guided, is a source of conceptual development and stimulus of the brain's highest cognition."

10. Unplug from electronics. Hard to do in this technological world but silence is a good way to refocus your brain to live in the moment. Blue light that emanates from these devices also adversely affects the quality of your sleep.

11. Eliminate sugar from your diet. Experts say sugar has the same level of addictive qualities as heroin. High sugar levels consumed daily adversely affect your blood sugar, insulin resistance, and the production of neurons in the brain.

12. Enjoy nature. Escape the big city or your stressful job and head toward a park, walking trail, or lake to reconnect with nature. If weather permits, take your shoes off and put your feet directly on the earth to feel grounded. Many people say this helps melt away their stress, along with taking deep breaths of fresh air.

13. Go on an adventure. Turn off the GPS and drive on new-to-you roads. Explore the countryside, visit quaint antique shops, grab lunch at a hole-in-the-wall diner. Getting out of your comfort zone helps your brain grow and you'll exercise your brain by relying on your sense of direction instead of GPS.

14. Find joy. In the hustle and bustle of everyday life, so often we lose track of our joyous moments or those hobbies or activities that bring us comfort and joy. It's time to disconnect from our work and find time to relax and find joy once again. Revisit an old hobby, join a local sports club, or become a member of a charitable organization.

15. Reconnect with your faith. Believing in a higher power can help alleviate anxiety attacks, helps you achieve an optimistic outlook on life, and helps you cope with medical problems more calmly. Socializing with others in your religious community also fosters a sense of belonging and combats loneliness.

16. Play mind games. Sudoku, crossword puzzles, logic puzzles, and jumble puzzles all help work the brain to keep it sharp. Even doing simple math problems in your head helps improve cognitive function.

Self-Assessment: How Optimized is Your Brain?

Answer the following questions to determine how well you care for your brain health and where you can start making improvements.

1. How long do you normally sleep each night?

- I'm a chronic insomniac
- Less than 5 hours
- 5-7 hours
- 7+ hours

2. How many times a week do you eat healthy fruits and vegetables?

- Never
- 1-3 times
- 3-5 times
- Everyday

3. How stressful is your life and/or job?

- I'm a bundle of nerves all day long
- I only feel stress at work
- I love my job but my personal life is stressful
- I rarely feel stress and love my life

4. How often do you exercise?

- Never
- 2-4 times a week
- 5+ times
- Every day

5. Do you suffer from “brain fog” or inability to concentrate?

- Never
- Sometimes
- Almost everyday
- Yes and it’s a real problem

6. How often are you “plugged in” to electronics or watching television?

- Never
- Only for work
- Everyday
- For hours on end, every single day

7. How much sunlight do you get in a day?

- Hardly any
- Some on my way to work
- Only on weekends
- Every day because I live in a warm, sunny climate OR work outdoors

8. Do you have an evening “de-stressing” routine?

- Never head of that
- No because I never made the time to create a routine
- Yes but I don’t follow it every day
- Yes and I wouldn’t know what to do without it

9. Do you have a support circle of close friends or family members?

- No, I’m an introvert
- No but I’d like to make new friends
- Yes but we rarely see each other because we’re so busy
- Yes and we go out to dinner once a month

10. Do you purposefully do puzzles or play games that stimulate your brain?

- No
- Only with my kids or grandkids
- Yes but not often enough
- Yes, every day

Now that you've answered each question honestly, go back through your answers and write down how you can improve your answers. There aren't any point values involved and no one will come check on whether you've made changes; but improving each of these answers toward the YES column will greatly help your brain stay healthy as you age. If you've already answered YES to these questions, then keep doing what you're doing because you're on the right path!

To Your Maximized Brain Health and Optimization!

Connie Ragen Green

I like nonsense. It wakes up the brain cells. ~ Dr. Seuss

About the Author

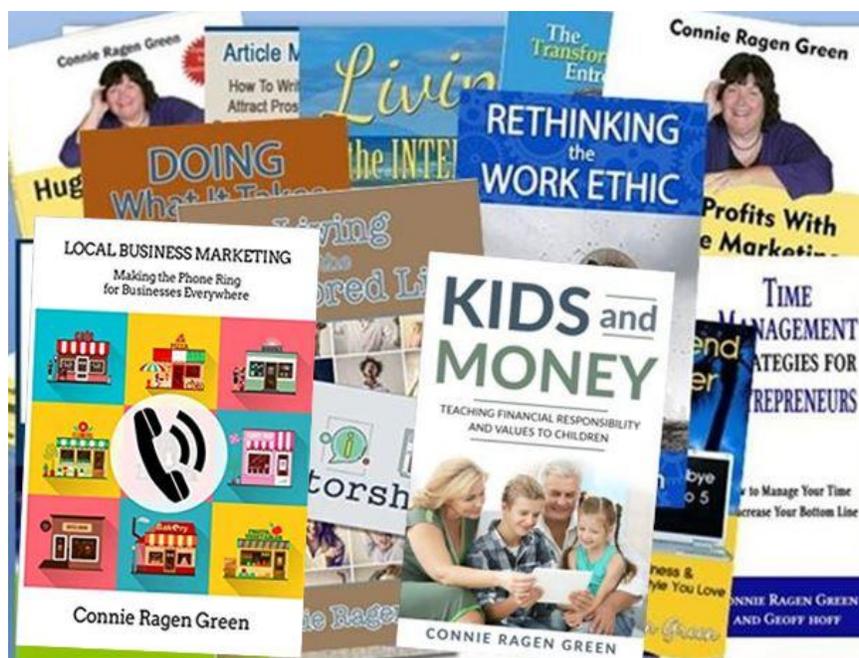
Connie Ragen Green is a bestselling author, international speaker, and online marketing strategist who is dedicating her life to serving others as they build and grow successful and lucrative online businesses. Her background includes working as a classroom teacher in the inner city of Los Angeles for twenty years, while simultaneously working in real estate as a broker and residential appraiser. In 2006 she left it all behind to come online, and the rest is history.

She makes her home in two cities in southern California; Santa Clarita in the desert and Santa Barbara at the beach. Connie also spends time in Finland with extended family members and has adopted this country as her second home.

In addition to her writing and work online, Connie consults and strategizes with several major corporations and some non-profits, as well as volunteering with groups such as the international service organization Rotary, the Boys & Girls Clubs, the Benevolent Protective Order of Elks, the women's business organization Zonta, SEE International, and several other charitable groups.

As the recent recipient of the Merrill Hoffman Award, presented to Connie by the Santa Barbara Rotary Club, being honored with this award has strengthened her resolve to serve others around the world in any way she is able to by using her gifts, talents, and experiences in a positive and sincere manner.

Take a look at [Connie's latest books](#) at:



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