

# healthy living for your brain and body

tips from the latest research



workbook

The *Healthy Living for Your Brain and Body: Tips from the Latest Research* program is based on the most current research in healthy aging. Our sincere thanks go to the following researchers who participated in an initial think tank meeting that addressed the research and messaging.

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## introduction

### How to use this workbook

Thank you for attending the *Healthy Living for Your Brain and Body: Tips from the Latest Research* program. We hope you learned about new research in healthy aging, as well as new strategies for aging well in each of the four areas — cognitive activity, physical health and exercise, diet and nutrition, and social engagement.

Now, it's time for you to apply some of these strategies to your lifestyle.

This workbook was designed to help you think through and outline a plan that will work best for you. It's organized into three main areas: (1) a brief introduction on making changes, (2) program review tips and action plans in each of the four areas, and (3) overall tips as you make changes.

You can use this workbook after the program to remind you of what you learned, and think through ways you can apply those learnings to your daily life. You can identify strategies in each area, and then outline short-term (one-month) and long-term (six months or more) goals. The workbook can serve as a reminder to track your progress and make adjustments long after the program is over.

Your presenter may also decide to use the workbook during the program for individual and group activities. These activities can help you think through your plans after each area of the program.

### Making change — it's not always easy

Anyone who has ever made a new year's resolution and broken it can appreciate the difficulty of change. Making a lasting change in our behavior is not a simple process, and often involves a commitment of time, effort and emotion.

There is no single solution that works for everyone. You may have to try several different strategies in order to achieve your goals. Often, it is during this period that many people become discouraged and give up on their goals. The key to maintaining your goals is to be realistic, try strategies that may work for you and find ways to stay motivated.

Also, go easy on yourself. Change is difficult and you may fail from time to time. Try something new and get yourself back on track. Also, get support from others.

According to one widely used theory, change occurs in five stages. Each stage is necessary before you can successfully move to the next, and stages can't be hurried or skipped. The entire process can take some time and may involve cycling back through earlier stages before moving on. The five stages are:

**Precontemplation:** You have no conscious intention of making a behavior change.

**Contemplation:** You know that the behavior is a problem, but you're not yet committed to taking any action.

**Preparation:** You make plans to change. Many individuals taking a class are in this stage.

**Action:** You are making changes now and gradually replacing old behaviors with new, healthier ones.

**Maintenance:** You are actively practicing your new behaviors and renewing your commitment to them regularly. Staying active in this stage will help you avoid falling back into old behaviors.

These stages may be helpful reminders as you deal with the challenges of making change.

Change is not easy, so don't be too hard on yourself. Take small steps, consider obstacles and solutions, and find support. And of course, celebrate your successes — both big and small!

**We hope you find this workbook helpful in your journey toward a healthier you.**

## physical health and exercise

- Do something you like
- Ask friends to join you
- Start out small
- Make it aerobic
- Move safely
- Stop smoking and avoid excess alcohol
- Get adequate sleep
- Avoid head injury and prevent falls
- Manage stress
- Visit your doctor regularly
- Monitor weight and blood pressure
- Work with your doctor to manage medications and any physical concerns

Things I Enjoy	1 Month Goal	6 Month Goal
Example: <i>Walking</i>	<i>Walk for 15 minutes twice a week.</i>	<i>Walk for 30 minutes three times a week, and ask a friend to join.</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		

### My plan: Staying healthy and active

My first steps will be: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Possible obstacles and solutions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Resources and support needed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## diet and nutrition

### What to EAT

- Fruits, like berries
- Vegetables, including green leafy
- Nuts, beans and whole grains
- Lean meats, fish and poultry
- Vegetable oils
- Proper portion sizes
- Adequate fluids

### What to AVOID

- Saturated and trans fats
- Processed foods
- Solid fat, sugar and salt
- Deep-fried foods
- Unhealthy fast foods

Consult reputable sources about dietary supplements and vitamins, and work with your doctor.

Things I Enjoy	1 Month Goal	6 Month Goal
Example: <i>Cooking</i>	<i>Eat green leafy vegetables several times a week.</i>	<i>Eliminate deep-fried foods from my diet.</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		

### My plan: Eating right

My first steps will be: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Possible obstacles and solutions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Resources and support needed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## cognitive activity

- Participate in mentally stimulating activities
- Read books and articles that challenge and inspire you
- Complete challenging puzzles
- Play games that are strategic in nature
- Learn new skills or hobbies, or join clubs focused on your interests
- Engage in ongoing learning

### My plan: Keeping my mind active

Things I Enjoy	1 Month Goal	6 Month Goal
Example: <i>Reading</i>	<i>Read a book on a topic of interest.</i>	<i>Read four books and join a book group.</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		

My first steps will be: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Possible obstacles and solutions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Resources and support needed: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_



## social engagement

- Visit with friends and family
- Engage with new friends
- Stay involved in the community
- Volunteer outside the home
- Join a group or club

### My plan: Staying connected with others

Things I Enjoy	1 Month Goal	6 Month Goal
Example: <i>Playing cards</i>	<i>Play cards with friends one time.</i>	<i>Start a monthly card group.</i>
1.		
2.		
3.		

My first steps will be: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Possible obstacles and solutions: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Resources and support needed: \_\_\_\_\_



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## resources

### Alzheimer's Association

- 24/7 Helpline  
800.272.3900
- Website  
[alz.org](http://alz.org)<sup>®</sup>
- Lifestyle habits to age well  
[alz.org/brainhealth](http://alz.org/brainhealth)

### Programs in community

- Local Area Agency on Aging
- Local senior centers
- Community park programs
- Local health clubs, YMCAs and YWCAs

### National Resources

- National Institutes of Health/ National Institute on Aging
  - "What's on Your Plate?"  
[nia.nih.gov/health/publication/whats-your-plate](http://nia.nih.gov/health/publication/whats-your-plate)
  - "Go4Life"  
[go4life.nia.nih.gov](http://go4life.nia.nih.gov)
- Administration on Community Living
  - "Brain Health as You Age"  
[acl.gov/Get\\_Help/BrainHealth](http://acl.gov/Get_Help/BrainHealth)
- U.S. Department of Agriculture: Cooperative Extension System
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The Alzheimer's Association is the leading voluntary health organization in Alzheimer's care, support and research. Our mission is to eliminate Alzheimer's disease through the advancement of research; to provide and enhance care and support for all affected; and to reduce the risk of dementia through the promotion of brain health.

Our vision is a world without Alzheimer's disease. ®



Alzheimer's Association

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