



BRAIN HEALTH
PROFESSIONAL

CERTIFICATION COURSE



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INTRODUCTION

TRANSFORM YOUR PRACTICE, TRANSFORM LIVES

Welcome to the Amen Clinics Brain Health Professional Certification Course! This workbook is designed to be a helpful companion as you go through the course. Within these pages, you'll find highlights of the course lessons as well as tools to help you incorporate brain health coaching into your own life and into your business.

Whether you're a physician, psychiatrist, psychologist, social worker, marriage and family counselor, addiction counselor, or other medical or mental health professional, you know that some of the people you serve have trouble following through on the valuable recommendations you share. They may lack motivation, are too distracted, can't stay organized, have too many self-doubts, and so on. In most cases, the problem lies in their brain.

Brain dysfunction is the number-one reason why people fail to reach their goals. Coaching them to better brain health to address underlying dysfunction is the final pivotal key needed for them to be able to follow through on your suggestions and reach their potential. The materials here can help you lead people to better brain health.

With a better brain, they can achieve their goals at work, in school, on the field, in their physical or mental well-being, or in their relationships. And when your patients or clients are more successful, you're more successful.

With a better brain comes a better life. The time is now for a brain health revolution, and it starts with you!

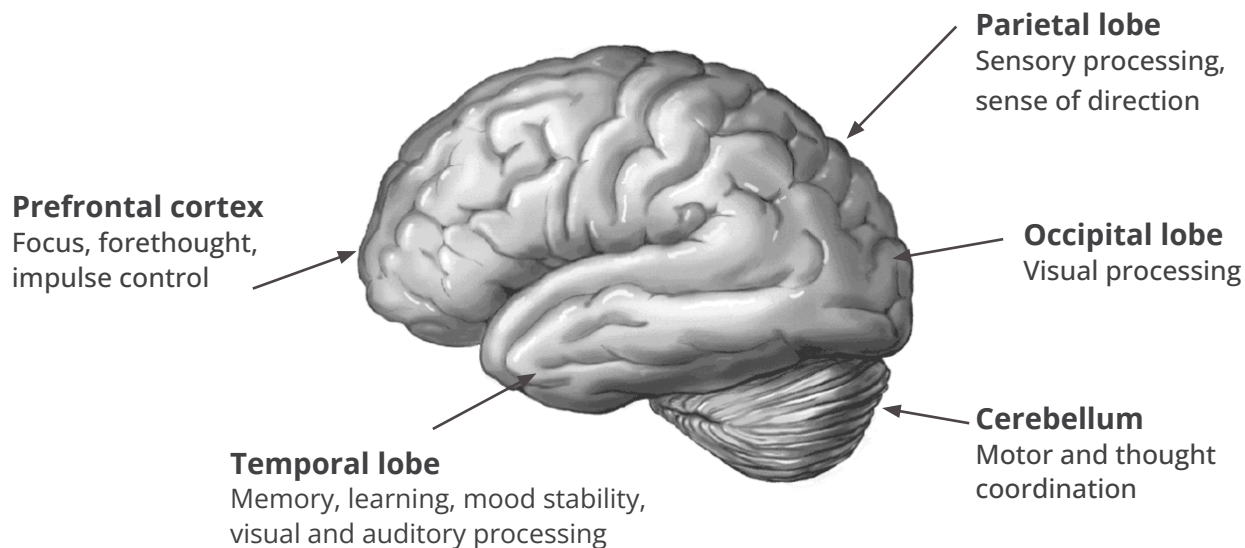
Let's get started!

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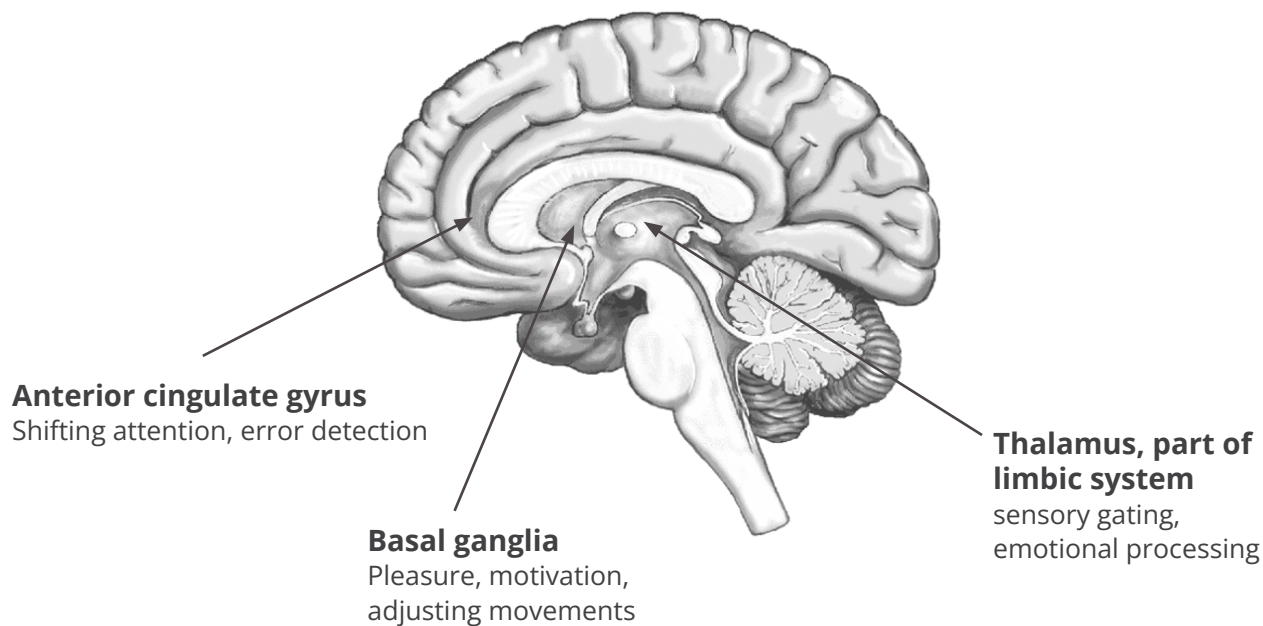
Daniel G. Amen, MD

YOUR BRAIN: A BRIEF PRIMER

OUTSIDE VIEW OF THE BRAIN



INSIDE VIEW OF THE BRAIN





PART 1

HOW OPTIMIZING YOUR BRAIN WILL IMPROVE EVERYTHING IN YOUR LIFE

CHAPTER 1

7 BRAIN PRINCIPLES

Love your brain to get the life you want.

Dr. Amen has spent over 3 decades studying the brain and creating solutions to help his patients have healthier and more resilient brain function. These 7 principles will increase your awareness of what the brain needs to stay healthy, along with what can cause problems.

1. Your brain is involved in everything you do and everything you are.

It is involved in how you think, how you feel, how you act, and how you interact with others. Your brain is the organ behind your intelligence, your character, your personality, and every single decision you make.

Write down 10 specific things your brain does:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
8. _____
9. _____
10. _____

2. When your brain works right, you work right; and when your brain is troubled, you are much more likely to have trouble in your life.

List the areas of your life that are going well:

List the areas of your life that are not going so well:

3. Your brain is the most complex organ in the universe.

Here are some amazing facts about the supercomputer between your ears:

- 100 billion neurons (nerve cells)
- 100 billion support cells
- More connections than there are stars in the universe
- Only 2% of your body's weight, yet it uses 20-30% of the calories you consume
- And it uses 20% of the oxygen and blood flow in your body
- Storage capacity of 6 million years of The Wall Street Journal
- It is the most expensive real estate in your body!

4. Your brain is soft, and it is housed in a very hard skull with many sharp, bony ridges.

Your brain is about the consistency of soft butter, and it floats inside your head in a bath of cerebrospinal fluid. Inside your skull there are sharp bony ridges that can easily damage your brain.

You must protect your brain. Undiagnosed brain injuries are a major cause of:

- Depression
- ADD/ADHD
- Panic attacks
- Addictions
- Homelessness
- Suicide

Have you had a brain injury?

Write down all the various ways you may have injured your brain, even if it seems insignificant. Consider all types of head trauma, including (but not limited to):

- Concussions
- "Seeing stars"
- Feeling momentarily dazed
- Motor vehicle accidents
- Whiplash
- Contact sport collisions
- Bicycle, ski, snowboard, or skateboard crashes
- Falling out of bed
- Falling down the stairs
- Falling out of trees
- Falling off a ladder

Note: Many people forget past head injuries, so ask a loved one if they remember any incidents you don't.

5. Brain health is 3 simple strategies.

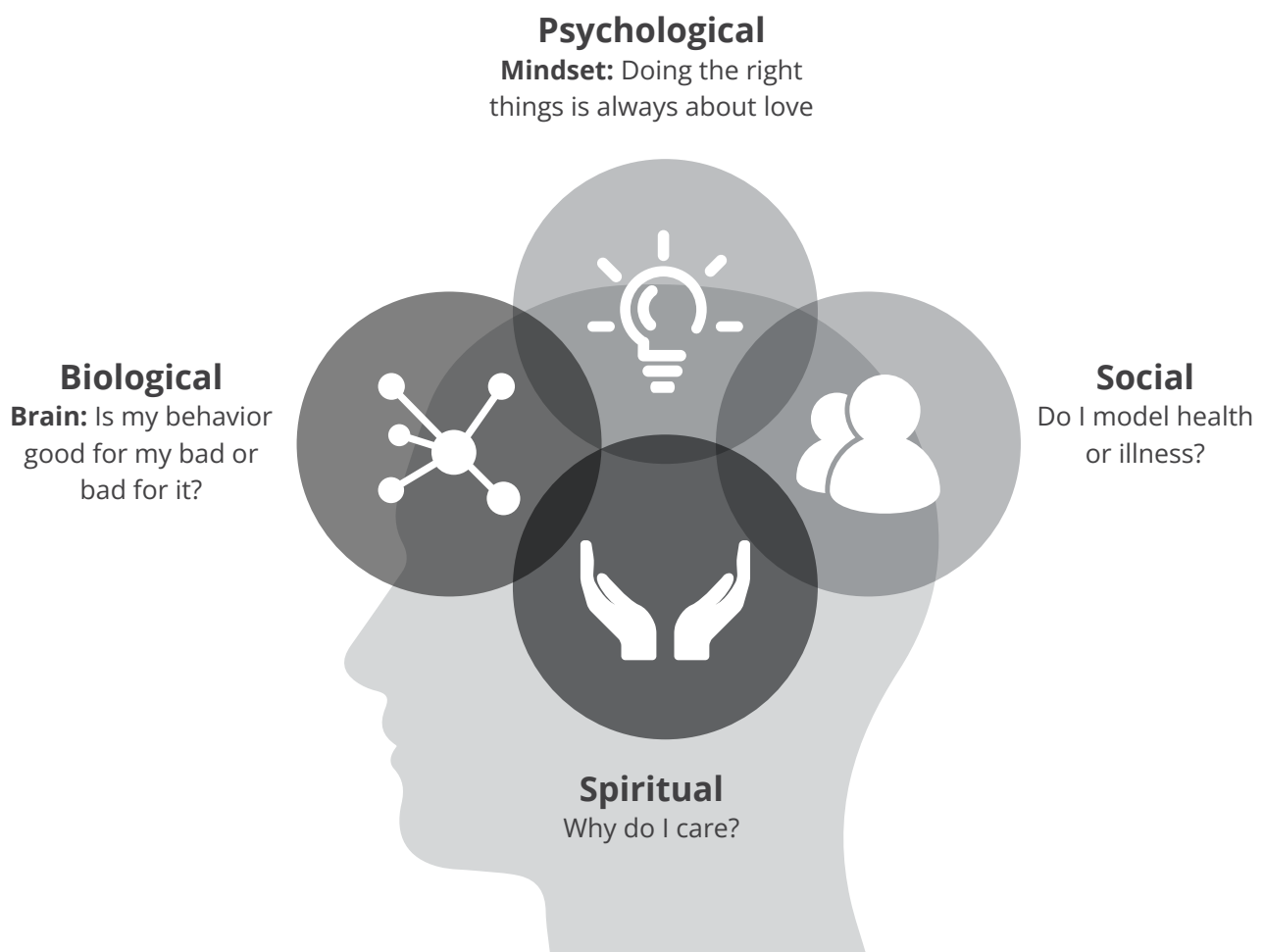
- Brain envy
- Avoid anything that hurts your brain
- Engage in regular brain healthy habits

6. There are 4 Circles of wholeness and healing.

At Amen Clinics, we take a balanced, comprehensive approach to assessment and healing by using 4 Circles of wholeness and healing to really understand our patients. Once you understand these principles, they can help you heal in the most balanced way possible.

The 4 Circles are:

- **Biological:** how the physical aspects of your brain and body function (see **Know Your Important Health Numbers** on page 40 for the 10 physical health numbers you need to know and a **Suggested Lab Panel** you can take to your healthcare provider)
- **Psychological:** developmental issues and how you think
- **Social:** your current life situation and social support
- **Spiritual:** having (or finding) a sense of meaning and purpose



CHAPTER 2

PRACTICAL NEUROSCIENCE

4 Key Brain Systems: Functions, Problems, and Solutions

Know and heal the brain systems that run your life.

Certain parts of the brain tend to do specific things, and problems in these systems tend to cause symptoms that can benefit from targeted solutions. The following chart introduces you to 4 key brain systems; the feelings, thinking, and behaviors they are involved in; the problems that can arise when there is either too much activity or too little activity in these systems; and strategies to optimize these brain systems.

4 KEY BRAIN SYSTEMS

Brain System	Involved in...	Problems when activity is abnormal	Strategies to optimize
Prefrontal Cortex (PFC)	Focus Forethought Judgment Impulse control Organization Planning Problem solving Learning from experience Ability to feel/express emotions Empathy	Short attention span Distractibility Lack of perseverance Impulsivity Hyperactivity Chronic lateness Disorganization Procrastination Unavailability of emotions Misperceptions	Physical exercise Green tea Rhodiola Ginseng Higher-protein, lower-carb diet Neurofeedback One Page Miracle (see page 48) Meditation Ask "Then what?" Organizational tools Focus on what you like Find your purpose
Anterior Cingulate Gyrus (AC)	Ability to shift attention Cognitive flexibility Adaptability Movement from idea to idea Ability to see options Ability to "go with the flow" Ability to cooperate Error detection	Worrying Holding on to hurts from the past Getting stuck on thoughts (obsessions) Getting stuck on behaviors (compulsions) Oppositional behavior Argumentativeness Uncooperativeness; tendency to say no automatically Addictive behaviors (alcohol or drug abuse, eating disorders) Chronic pain Cognitive inflexibility Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD) OCD spectrum disorders Eating disorders Road rage	Physical exercise Green tea Rhodiola Ginseng Higher-protein, lower-carb diet Neurofeedback One Page Miracle (see page 48) Meditation Ask "Then what?" Organizational tools Focus on what you like Find your purpose

Brain System	Involved in...	Problems when activity is abnormal	Strategies to optimize
Basal Ganglia (BG)	Integrates feeling and movement Shifts and steadies fine motor movements Suppresses unwanted motor behaviors Helps to set the body's anxiety level Forming habits Motivation and drive Mediates pleasure/ecstasy	Anxiety or nervousness Physical sensations of anxiety Tendency to predict the worst Conflict avoidance Risk averse Tourette's syndrome/tics Muscle tension, soreness Tremors Fine motor problems Low/excessive motivation Sensitivity to rejection Social anxiety, interpersonally more inhibited	ANT Therapy (see chapter 4) Meditation Hypnosis Diaphragmatic breathing Hand warming Vitamin B6 Magnesium GABA Saffron Don't let yourself get too hungry Psychotherapy EMDR
Deep Limbic System (DLS)	Sets the emotional tone of the mind Filters external events through internal states (creates emotional coloring) Tags events as internally important Stores highly charged emotional memories Modulates motivation Controls appetite and sleep cycles Promotes bonding Directly processes the sense of smell Modulates libido	Sadness or clinical depression Increased negative thinking Negative perception of events Flood of negative emotions, such as hopelessness, helplessness and guilt Appetite and sleep problems Decreased or increased sexual responsiveness Social isolation Pain	ANT Therapy (see chapter 4) Physical exercise Omega-3 fatty acids Vitamin D S-adenosylmethionine (SAMe) Saffron Neurofeedback EMDR Acupuncture Repetitive transcranial magnetic stimulation (rTMS) Cranial electric stimulation (CES) Practice gratitude and appreciation Surround yourself with positive people

CHAPTER 3

KNOW YOUR BRAIN TYPE

Understanding your brain type is the first step to optimizing it.

In our brain imaging work at Amen Clinics, we began by looking for patterns that could help us diagnose and treat mental health conditions, such as ADHD, depression, bipolar disorder, and anxiety. But as we studied more and more scans, we also realized that certain brain patterns corresponded to personality types.

Based on our research, we have identified 16 brain types (5 primary brain types and 11 combination brain types) that influence who you are, how you behave, and how you relate to others. Knowing your brain type helps you know more about how you interact with the world and what brain health risks you may face. Even more importantly, it can also help you understand how to optimize your brain with the right diet, the best supplements, and the most effective exercise for your brain type.

5 PRIMARY BRAIN TYPES

Brain Type	Findings on brain SPECT imaging	Common traits	Uncommon traits	General strategies to optimize
Balanced	Full, even, symmetrical blood flow in most areas	Focused Good impulse control Conscientious Flexible Positive Resilient Emotionally stable	Short attention span Impulsive Unreliable Worried Negative Anxious	Multiple vitamin Omega-3 fatty acids Optimizing vitamin D levels
Spontaneous	Front part of the brain is lower in activity compared to others	Spontaneous Risk taking Creative “out of the box” thinking Curious Wide range of interests Likes surprises Restless Easily distracted Needs to be highly interested to focus Struggles with organization Late or in a rush to meetings Tendency to be diagnosed with ADHD	Hates surprises Rise averse Prefers routine Likes sameness Plays by the rules Practical Good attention to detail Good impulse control Settled	Physical exercise Higher-protein, lower-carbohydrate diet Green tea Rhodiola Ginseng

Brain Type	Findings on brain SPECT imaging	Common traits	Uncommon traits	General strategies to optimize
Persistent	Front part of the brain is much more active than average	Persistent Strong-willed Likes routine Suspicious Can get “stuck” on thoughts Holds on to hurts Tends to see what is wrong Oppositional or argumentative Tends toward obsessive-compulsive disorder	Ever-changing Timid Spontaneous Trusting Lets go of negativity easily Lets go of hurts easily Tends to see what is right Non-critical Cooperative	Physical exercise 5-HTP St. John’s wort Saffron Avoid high-glycemic carbohydrates
Sensitive	Limbic (emotional) brain is more active than average	Sensitive Deeply feeling Empathic Struggles with moods Prone to pessimism Lots of ANTs (automatic negative thoughts) Tends toward depression	Emotionally reserved Superficial Consistently happy Little empathy Positive thoughts Few ANTs	Physical exercise ANT therapy Omega-3 fatty acids Vitamin D Saffron s-adenosyl-methionine (SAME)
Cautious	Amygdala and basal ganglia are more active than average	Prepared Cautious Risk averse Motivated Reserved Busy mind Temperamental Difficulty relaxing Tends toward anxiety	Unconcerned about being fully prepared Risk taker Calm Relaxes easily Quiet mind Even-tempered secure	Meditation Hypnosis Vitamin B6 Magnesium GABA Saffron

Brain Types 6–16 are a combination of Types 2–5.

6. Spontaneous-Persistent
7. Spontaneous-Persistent-Sensitive
8. Spontaneous-Persistent-Sensitive-Cautious
9. Persistent-Sensitive-Cautious
10. Persistent-Sensitive
11. Persistent-Cautious
12. Spontaneous-Persistent-Cautious
13. Spontaneous-Cautious
14. Spontaneous-Sensitive
15. Spontaneous-Sensitive-Cautious
16. Sensitive-Cautious

Discover Your Brain Type

Take the FREE brain health assessment at BrainHealthAssessment.com to discover your Brain Type and Brain Fit score. You will receive individualized information on how to improve your brain health. Your answers and results are completely confidential.

CHAPTER 4

DEVELOP MENTAL DISCIPLINE

Use ANT Therapy and Tame the Dragons from the Past to Master Your Rational Mind

ANT THERAPY

One of the most effective techniques we use with our patients at Amen Clinics is what we call ANT Therapy, or learning how to kill the ANTs (automatic negative thoughts). First, get to know the 9 different types of ANT species that can infect your mind, steal your happiness, and keep you from achieving what you want in life.

9 Types of ANT Species:

1. All-or-Nothing ANTs: Thinking that things are either all good or all bad.
2. Less than ANTs: Where you compare and see yourself as less than others.
3. Just the Bad ANTs: Seeing only the bad in a situation.
4. Guilt Beating ANTs: Thinking in words like should, must, ought, or have to.
5. Labeling ANTs: Attaching a negative label to yourself or someone else.
6. Fortune Telling ANTs: Predicting the worst possible outcome for a situation with little or no evidence for it.
7. Mind Reading ANTs: Believing you know what other people are thinking even though they haven't told you.
8. If Only and I'll Be Happy When ANTs: Where you argue with the past and long for the future.
9. Blaming ANTs: Blaming someone else for your problems.

Learn How to Kill the ANTs

The ANT-killing formula is simple. Whenever you feel sad, mad, nervous, or out of control:

1. Write down your negative thought.
2. Figure out which ANT species it is.
3. Talk back to it.

ANT KILLING EXAMPLES

ANT	ANT Species	Kill the ANT
My colleagues never listen to my ideas.	All-or-Nothing	That's not true. They often listen to me. Today, they were just distracted.
Everybody on Instagram has a more exciting life than mine.	Less Than	I probably have many things in my life that they would envy.
I only came in second place in the ranking. I'm worthless.	Just the Bad	Coming in second place out of 300 is a great accomplishment, and I should be proud.
I should stay late at work tonight.	Guilt Beating	I want to finish this project tonight because it's important to me.
I'm an idiot.	Labeling	Okay, so I made one stupid mistake, but I usually make good decisions, and I can learn from my mistake.
This year's finances are going to be terrible.	Fortune Telling	I can't predict this without having some proof.
My boss looked bored during my presentation. She must have hated it.	Mind Reading	I can't know what she is thinking. For all I know she might be constipated.
If only I would get promoted to the Project Manager position, then I would be happy and could start really living my life.	If Only and I'll Be Happy Whe	I can be happy now and can live my life fully now.
It's your fault that I failed.	Blaming	I need to look at my part in the problem and learn what I can do better next time.

Now write down 3 of your most common negative thoughts. Identify the species of ANT in the thought and then challenge it.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

ANT	ANT Species	Kill the ANT

Find more Kill the ANTs exercises on BrainFitLife (mybrainfitlife.com).

TAME THE DRAGONS FROM THE PAST

Your History Is Not Your Destiny

Based on our life experiences, all of us create stories about ourselves that influence:

- How we think
- How we feel
- How we behave
- How we interact with others

These stories create the movies that are constantly playing in your head—“you’re a good mother ... a bad father ... an alcoholic ... a success ... a victim ... a fool.”






My friend Dr. Sharon May, a world-renowned relationship psychologist, calls the stories that interfere with our lives “Dragons from the Past” that are still breathing fire on your amygdala (the almond-shaped structure on the inside of your temporal lobes involved in emotional reactions), driving anxiety, anger, irrational behavior, and automatic negative reactions.






I have identified 13 Dragons from the Past, and all of us have more than one type driving our behavior. Take note, our Dragons from the Past are always interacting with the Dragons from the Past of others, causing both internal and external battles—a modern-day Game of Thrones.




The following chart introduces you to the following:

- The 13 Dragon types
- The origins of how they develop
- The things that trigger them
- The kinds of reactions they cause
- The ANTs they are associated with
- Strategies to tame them

DRAGON TYPES, ORIGINS, TRIGGERS, REACTIONS, ANTS, AND TAMING STRATEGIES

Types	Origins	Triggers	Reactions	ANTs	Taming
Abandoned, Invisible or Insignificant 	Abandoned, not seen, lonely, unavailable or incompetent parents, siblings or children of high achievers	Others ignore or belittle you	Loneliness, worthlessness, feeling small, abandonment or commitment issues	Less than	Know your purpose Become part of group Make a difference for others Volunteer
Flawed or Inferior 	Felt less than others in ability, looks, money, relationships	Comparing self to others, looking in mirror	Inferiority, jealousy, BDD, perfectionism, helplessness, depression	Less than	Work hard to stop comparing yourself to others
Anxious 	Often afraid, world was scary and unpredictable	Anything that vaguely reminds of past anxieties	Panic attacks, feel powerless, sense of impending doom, physical stress symptoms	Fortune Telling	Breathing Hypnosis Meditation 5 senses
Wounded 	Past physical, emotional, or sexual trauma	Anything at all vaguely reminds of past trauma	Flashbacks, nightmares, feeling numb, survival guilt	Mind Reading	EMDR Bridging Journaling from adult perspective
Should and Shaming 	Raised in culture of guilt, past humiliation, embarrassed, belittled, judged, or criticized by yourself or others,	Disapproval from self, others, or perceived higher power	Feel guilty, foolish, distressed, exposed, wanting to hide or withdraw, self-harmful behaviors in secret, such as addictions, pornography, overeating	Guilt Beating	Replace "I should" with "I want" Know when these are helpful and when they are not

Types	Origins	Triggers	Reactions	ANTs	Taming
Responsible 	<p>Felt powerless to help someone you cared about, such as a parent or sibling</p>	<p>Perceive others in need.</p>	<p>Fixer, caretaker, codependent, causing you to do too much for others, can breed entitlement</p>	<p>Guilt Beating</p>	<p>Replace "I should" with "I want"</p> <p>Know when these are helpful and when they are not</p>
Special, Spoiled, or Entitled 	<p>Golden child, favored one, may be oldest, youngest, or only child. Parents wanted you so much that they could never tell you no.</p> <p>Becoming famous at a young age</p>	<p>When you don't get your way or feel as though you are not treated as special</p>	<p>Tantrums, anger, rudeness, needing attention, a sense of injustice and outrage, you often say, "You owe me ..." "I deserve ..." or "It's their fault ..."</p>	<p>Blame</p>	<p>Doing too much can create dependency</p>
Angry 	<p>Hurt, shamed, or disappointed by others, others modeled angry behavior</p>	<p>When anything reminds you of the hurts, shame, or disappointments in the past</p>	<p>Irrational rage, irritability, easily frustrated, rude, and inconsiderate</p>	<p>Blame</p>	<p>Promote the success of others</p>
Judgmental 	<p>Grew up where you perceived there was a lack of fairness; people played favorites, inconsistent in how rules were applied</p>	<p>Whenever you feel injustice to yourself or others</p>	<p>Condescending, critical, moralizing, telling people what they should and should not think or do</p>	<p>Guilt Beating Blame</p>	<p>Ask yourself if you are judging in the present or fixing something in the past</p> <p>Easy to judge, harder to ask why</p>
Grief and Loss 	<p>Loss of loved one, job, reputation, friends, peer-group</p>	<p>Anything that reminds you of the loss</p>	<p>Sadness, anxiety, loneliness, physical stress symptoms</p>	<p>Just-the-bad</p>	<p>Balanced view</p> <p>Kill the ANTs</p> <p>Brain health strategies</p>

Types	Origins	Triggers	Reactions	ANTs	Taming
Death 	Fear of death	When you see your mortality, such as in a near miss accident, illness, or when someone you care about dies	Fear, pervading sense of doom, denial	Fortune Telling	Replace "I should" with "I want" Know when these are helpful and when they are not
Hopeless or Helpless 	Overwhelmed by stress or conflict, inability to change your circumstances despite trying	Situations that remind you of feeling overwhelmed or powerless	Depression, social withdrawal, gives up easily, a high negativity bias	Blame (self and others)	Doing too much can create dependency
Ancestral 	Being a child or grandchild of trauma survivors (the Holocaust, 9/11, genocide, massacres, slavery, war, abandonment)	Being the age of a parent or grandparent when they had their trauma Cultural expectations (often unknown)	Anxiety for little to no reason, unexplainable fears, feeling guilty, rebellion, reluctant compliance	Less than Guilt beating Blame (self and others)	Promote the success of others

CHAPTER 5

GROW YOUR BRAIN

Know, prevent, and treat the 11 BRIGHT MINDS risk factors that steal your mind.

Based on our brain imaging work and more than 30 years of clinical practice, we have identified the 11 major risk factors that harm the brain and steal your mind. We developed the mnemonic BRIGHT MINDS to help you remember them. The following chart introduces you to the 11 risk factors, things that increase your risk, and strategies to prevent or minimize your risk.

BRIGHT MINDS RISK FACTORS & STRATEGIES

FACTORS	RISKS	GENERAL STRATEGIES
B is for Blood Flow	Stroke Hypertension Any form of heart disease Little to no exercise	Get treatment early Start prevention strategies Eat foods such as beets and cayenne pepper Take supplements such as ginkgo Exercise (30 minutes a day)
R is for Retirement/Aging	No new learning In a job that doesn't require new learning Loneliness Social isolation	Make new learning part of your everyday life Take a class Get involved with your family or church Volunteer to help others
I is for Inflammation	Standard American Diet (SAD) filled with fast and processed food Low omega-3 levels High C-reactive protein (CRP) levels	Eat an anti-inflammatory diet Increase dietary omega-3 fatty acids Take supplements, such as fish oil, probiotics, and curcumins
G is for Genetic Vulnerabilities	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
H is for Head 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

FACTORS	RISKS	GENERAL STRATEGIES
T is for Toxins	Smoking Drugs Alcohol Mold Pesticides Toxic products	Avoid toxic exposure and support the 4 organs of detoxification: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Kidneys – drink more water ▪ Gut – eat more fiber and choose organic foods ▪ Liver – quit smoking and drugs, limit alcohol, eat brassicas (cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower and Brussels sprouts) ▪ Skin – sweat with exercise and take saunas ▪ Get tested for mold exposure Download the ‘Think Dirty’ app to scan your personal products to know if they’re toxic
M is for Mental Health	Depression Anxiety disorders Posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) Chronic stress ADD/ADHD	Adopt brain healthy habits ANT Therapy (see chapter 4) Exercise Increase omega-3 fatty acids
I is for 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
N is for Neurohormone Issues	Abnormal thyroid, DHEA, testosterone, estrogen and progesterone in females	Test and optimize your hormones
D is for Diabetes	Diabetes (high fasting blood sugar) Being overweight or obese (high BMI)	Eliminate sugar Eat calorie-smart Follow BRIGHT MINDS Diet (See chapter 6)
S is for Sleep Problems	Insomnia Sleep apnea	Target 7.5 hours Get an evaluation for sleep apnea if you snore Practice good sleep hygiene

CHAPTER 6

NUTRITION AND NUTRACEUTICALS

Follow the 11 BRIGHT MINDS rules of brain healthy eating.

The Standard American Diet (SAD) is filled with pro-inflammatory, allergenic foods laced with artificial chemicals that will damage and prematurely age your brain and increase your risk for depression, ADD/ADHD, anxiety disorders, diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, cancer, and dementia.

The real weapons of mass destruction are foods that are:

- highly processed
- pesticide sprayed
- high glycemic (spikes blood sugar)
- low fiber
- food-like substances
- artificially colored and sweetened
- laden with hormones
- tainted with antibiotics
- stored in plastic containers

To optimize your brain and body, follow these 11 BRIGHT MINDS rules.

Rule #1: Go for “high-quality calories” (and not too many of them).

Be mindful of your caloric intake and make sure you are consuming high-quality foods you love that love you back.

What low-quality foods—think high-fat, high-glycemic, pesticide-laden, processed foods—do you currently eat? Which ones are you willing to ditch from your diet?

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Rule #2: Water your brain.

Drink half your weight in ounces of water a day to stay properly hydrated. Your brain is comprised of 80% water and being even mildly dehydrated can negatively impact your moods—making you feel more anxious, tense, depressed, or angry—in addition to sapping your energy levels and lowering your ability to concentrate. Based on your weight, how many ounces of water do you need each day? _____

What dehydrating beverages are you willing to give up now and replace with water?

_____	_____
_____	_____

Rule #3: Eat high-quality lean protein throughout the day.

As much as possible, make sure your protein sources (and the rest of your foods) are clean, which means organic, hormone-free, antibiotic-free, free range, and grass fed. The best sources of protein are:

- Eggs
- Fish (wild, not farmed)
- Lamb
- Turkey or chicken
- Raw nuts
- High-protein vegetables such as broccoli and spinach

Rule #4: Eat smart carbohydrates (low glycemic, high fiber).

Low Glycemic: Generally speaking, you should eat foods on the lower end of the Glycemic Index (G.I.) to lower your blood glucose levels, decrease cravings and help with weight loss. This should include vegetables, fruits, legumes, and nuts.

Unfortunately, many popular foods in the Standard American diet are on the high end of the G.I., including white bread, baked potatoes, and bagels. Go online to obtain a list of the Glycemic Index and list of high-glycemic foods currently in your diet that you will replace with low-glycemic foods:

High G.I. foods I currently eat

I will replace with these low G.I. foods

Note: Be sensible about this. For example, just because peanut M&Ms have a lower G.I. than steel-cut oatmeal doesn't mean they are better for you!

High Fiber: These foods can help you lose weight! Dietary fiber helps regulate your sense of hunger, helps you feel fuller longer, and slows the absorption of food into your blood stream, which helps keep your blood sugar balanced.

Experts recommend adults eat 25 to 35 grams of fiber each day. Take a few minutes to calculate how much you have been getting on average each day, and if it falls below the recommended level, make a conscious effort to increase your fiber intake.

Write down 4 high-fiber foods you will add to your diet.

Rule #5: Focus your diet on healthy fats.

Once the water is removed from it, your brain is about 60% fat, so fat is an important nutrient everyone needs. But we are talking about good fats, not unhealthy ones like trans fats.

Which of these unhealthy fats are in your diet?

- Trans fats: Also known as “hydrogenated” vegetable oils, trans fats are in many processed foods and baked goods
- Lard
- Marbled meat
- Full-fat dairy
- Fried foods

News Flash: You need to omit all of these completely from your diet. They are unnatural, very unhealthy, increase cholesterol, and can cause weight gain.

Replace unhealthy fats with healthy fats such as:

- Avocados
- Flax seeds
- Cold-water fish such as salmon
- Nuts
- Oils: coconut oil, grapeseed oil, olive oil

Rule #6: Eat from the rainbow.

A healthy diet includes natural foods in a rainbow of colors. Write down your favorite fruits and vegetables that are:

Yellow _____
Red _____
Green _____

Blue _____
Purple _____
Orange _____

Rule #7: Cook with brain-healthy herbs and spices to boost your brain.

Expand your repertoire of cooking using these brain healthy spices and herbs:

- Turmeric (found in curry) has been shown to decrease the brain plaques associated with Alzheimer’s disease.
- Saffron can help with depression.
- Rosemary, thyme, and sage help boost memory.
- Cinnamon can help attention and blood sugar. It’s also an antioxidant and an aphrodisiac.
- Garlic and oregano boost blood flow to the brain.
- Ginger, cayenne, and black pepper boost metabolism and have an aphrodisiac effect.

Rule #8: Make sure your food is as clean as possible.

Like rule #3 says, it’s best to eat food that is organic, hormone-free, antibiotic-free, free range, and grass fed. Furthermore, eliminate food additives, preservatives, artificial dyes, and sweeteners. Follow these guidelines:

- Read labels!
- If you can’t pronounce it, don’t eat it.
- If you don’t know what is in something, don’t eat it.

Rule #9: Check out food allergies.

If you're having problems with your mood, energy, memory, weight, blood sugar, blood pressure, or skin or other health problems with no apparent cause identified by your doctor, you should consider eliminating wheat and any other gluten-containing grain or food, as well as dairy, soy, and corn.

Talk to your healthcare professional about an elimination diet to see what foods might be causing you problems.

Rule #10: Eat for your Brain Type.

Have you ever wondered why some people do well on high-protein diets while others feel irritable and can't stick with it? It depends on your brain type.

- **Balanced:** People with a balanced brain typically do well with a balanced diet.
- **Spontaneous:** People who are spontaneous or impulsive tend to do better on a high-protein diet.
- **Persistent:** People with the persistent brain type respond better to a diet that's higher in smart carbohydrates.
- **Sensitive:** People who are sensitive or sad typically do well on a balanced diet.
- **Cautious:** People who are cautious or anxious can eat a balanced diet.

Rule #11: Follow these tips.

Add these brain-healthy foods to your diet. Place a check next to the brain healthy foods below that you love or that you will add to your diet.

Brain-Healthy Fruits

- Apples
- Avocados
- Berries (acai, blueberries, blackberries, goji berries, strawberries)
- Cherries
- Grapefruit
- Kiwi
- Oranges
- Peaches
- Plums
- Pomegranates

Brain-Healthy Veggies

- Asparagus
- Beets
- Bok choy
- Broccoli
- Brussels sprouts
- Cabbage
- Cauliflower
- Celery
- Garlic
- Kale
- Leeks
- Onions
- Red bell peppers
- Seaweed
- Spinach

Brain-Healthy Nuts/Seeds

- Nuts (raw)
- Cacao
- Almonds
- Brazil nuts
- Cashews
- Walnuts

Seeds

- Chia
- Flax
- Hemp
- Sesame

Roots

- Maca
- Shirataki noodles - wild
- Yam

Brain-Healthy Oils

- Avocado
- Coconut
- Macadamia
- Olive

Brain-Healthy Animal Products

(grass fed, hormone free, antibiotic free, free range, harvested humanely)

- Eggs
- Fish
- Lamb
- Chicken
- Turkey
- Beef

Brain-Healthy Beverages

- Water
- Coconut water
- Sparkling water with lemon and stevia
- Spa water with fruit

Brain-Healthy Sweeteners

- Stevia
- Xylitol
- Erythritol
- Honey – small doses

Sample 2-Day Brain-Healthy Menu

The Amen Clinics 11 Rules of Brain-Healthy Eating will help to heal your brain, improve your health, achieve or maintain a healthy weight, and feel more energetic. To help you get started, here is a sample 2-day menu of delicious brain-healthy meals for breakfast, lunch, and dinner—plus 2 satisfying snacks for in between meals!

Day 1

Breakfast: Brain-Balancing Smoothie

- 1/2 cup organic berries or cherries
- 1/8 avocado
- 1 cup spinach
- 1 cup kale or chard
- 1 scoop dried greens
- 4-8 ounces coconut water or almond milk
- 15-20 grams Omni Protein Powder
- drops of stevia
- superfood: aloe vera, bee pollen, or cocoa

Mid-Morning Snack

- Hardboiled egg
- Green tea

Lunch: Salad

- 2-3 cups raw chopped veggies
- 2-3 Tbsp. hummus, baba ganoush, or salsa
- 2-3 ounces lean protein (tuna, salmon, shrimp)
- 1 Tbsp. raw almonds or walnuts

Mid-Afternoon Snack: Apple Cinnamon Chicken Salad

- 1-2 ounces chicken
- 1/2 apple, chopped
- Handful of pecans
- Lettuce
- Cinnamon

Dinner

- 1 1/2 cups shredded spaghetti squash
- 2-3 ounces lean protein ground turkey
- Large green salad with 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- 1-2 cups steamed broccoli

Day 2

Breakfast: Vegetable and Avocado Omelet

- 2 eggs
- 1-2 cups vegetable variety: kale, mushrooms, peppers, onions, tomato, spinach
- 1/4 avocado

Mid-Morning Snack

- 2 ounces smoked salmon
- 1/4 avocado, sliced
- 1/2 cup sliced red onion and tomato
- 3 large lettuce leaves for wraps

Lunch: Salad

- 2-3 cups raw chopped veggies
- 2-3 Tbsp. guacamole
- 2-3 ounces lean protein (chicken, turkey)
- 1 Tbsp. raw sunflower seeds or pumpkin seeds

Mid-Afternoon Snack

- 2 Tbsp. of almond butter
- 1/2 apple

Dinner

- 1 cup grilled asparagus
- 2-3 ounces fish (salmon, mahi mahi, etc.)
- Large green salad with 1 Tbsp. olive oil and fresh squeezed lemon
- 1 cup steamed Brussels sprouts

BRIGHT MINDS Diet

The following chart makes it so easy to understand what to eat—and what to skip or limit—to minimize your individual BRIGHT MINDS risk factors.

BRIGHT MINDS	EAT THIS	SKIP OR LIMIT THAT
Blood Flow	Herbs and spices: cayenne pepper, cinnamon, parsley, rosemary, turmeric Beets, beet juice, celery, radishes, green leafy and colorful vegetables Pumpkin seeds, almonds, hazelnuts, and sunflower seeds	Caffeine Sugary sodas Baked goods Fried foods in vegetable or animal fat Powdered coffee creamers Alcohol
Retirement/Aging	Antioxidant-rich herbs and spices: cloves, oregano, thyme, cinnamon, rosemary, turmeric Antioxidant-rich foods: cocoa, acai, berries, artichokes, pomegranates, olive oil, green tea Choline-rich foods to support memory: shrimp, eggs, scallops, chicken, turkey, beef, cod, salmon, shiitake mushrooms, chickpeas, lentils, collard greens	Low quality omega-6 fatty acids, corn, soy, processed foods
Inflammation	Anti-inflammatory spices: turmeric, cayenne, ginger, cloves, cinnamon, oregano, pumpkin pie spice Omega-3 foods: salmon, sardines, avocados, flaxseeds Prebiotic-rich foods: asparagus, chia seeds, beans, cabbage, artichokes, raw garlic, onions, leeks Probiotic-rich foods: sauerkraut, kimchi, kefir, miso soup, pickles, spirulina, kombucha tea	High-glycemic foods with lots of saturated fat—think fast-food pizza, ribeye steak and mashed potatoes, pancakes with syrup and bacon Processed cheeses and microwave popcorn
Genetics	Polyphenol rich foods: chocolate, green tea, blueberries, kale, onions, apples, cherries, cabbage	High-glycemic foods with lots of saturated fat—think fast-food pizza, ribeye steak and mashed potatoes, pancakes with syrup and bacon Processed cheeses and microwave popcorn

BRIGHT MINDS	EAT THIS	SKIP OR LIMIT THAT
Head Trauma	Spices to support brain healing: turmeric, peppermint Choline-rich foods: shrimp, eggs, scallops, sardines, chicken, turkey, tuna, cod, beef, collard greens, Brussels sprouts Omega-3-rich foods	Alcohol Caffeine Sugar Fried foods Processed foods
Toxins	Liver-nourishing foods: green leafy vegetables, brassicas (any color cabbage, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, broccoli, kale), oranges and tangerines Kidney-nourishing foods: water, nuts and seeds such as cashews, almonds, and pumpkin seeds for magnesium, green leafy vegetables, blueberries Skin-nourishing foods: green tea, colorful fruits and vegetables, avocados, olive oil, wild salmon	Foods that inhibit detoxification Processed meats, such as bacon, smoked turkey Conventionally raised produce (pesticides and herbicides), dairy (hormones and antibiotics), meats (hormones, antibiotics, grain-fed), farmed fish (grain-fed, PCBs) Excess phosphates (processed cheeses, canned fish, processed meats, flavored water, sodas, nondairy creamers, bottled coffee drinks and ice teas)
Mental Health	Spices to support mental health – saffron, turmeric (curcumin), saffron plus curcumin, peppermint (attention), cinnamon (attention, ADHD, irritability) Dopamine-rich foods – for focus and motivation: turmeric, theanine from green tea, lentils, fish, lamb, chicken, turkey, beef, eggs, nuts and seeds (pumpkin and sesame), high-protein veggies (such as broccoli and spinach), protein powders Serotonin-rich foods – for mood, sleep, pain and craving control: Combine tryptophan-containing foods, such as eggs, turkey, seafood, chickpeas, nuts and seeds (building block for serotonin), with healthy carbohydrates, such as sweet potatoes and quinoa, to elicit a short-term insulin response that drives tryptophan into the brain. Dark chocolate also increases serotonin. GABA-rich foods – for anti-anxiety: broccoli, almonds, walnuts, lentils, bananas, beef liver, brown rice, halibut, gluten-free whole oats, oranges, rice bran, spinach Choline-rich foods – see Head Trauma Fruits and vegetables – for mood: eat up to 8 a day Green tea Maca – this root vegetable/medicinal plant, native to Peru, has been shown to reduce depression Omega-3-rich foods – to support nerve cell membranes and serotonin; see Inflammation Antioxidant-rich foods – see Retirement/Aging Magnesium-rich foods – for anxiety; see Blood Flow Zinc-rich foods – see Immunity Vitamin B6, B12 and folate-rich foods – see Blood Flow Prebiotic-rich foods – see Inflammation Probiotic-rich foods – see Inflammation	Pro-inflammatory foods – see Inflammation Alcohol Aspartame Caffeine

BRIGHT MINDS	EAT THIS	SKIP OR LIMIT THAT
<p>Immune/Infections</p>	<p>Immunity-boosting spices—cinnamon, garlic, turmeric, thyme, ginger, coriander Allicin-rich foods raw, crushed garlic, onions, shallots Vitamin C-rich foods—oranges, tangerines, kiwifruit, berries, red and yellow bell peppers, dark green leafy vegetables (such as spinach and kale), broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, cabbage, tomatoes, peas Vitamin D-rich foods—fatty fish, including salmon, sardines, tuna; eggs; mushrooms (maitake, shiitake); beef liver, cod liver oil Zinc-rich foods—oysters, beef, lamb, spinach, shiitake and cremini mushrooms, asparagus, sesame and pumpkin seeds Mushrooms—shiitake, white button, portabella Selenium-rich foods—nuts (especially Brazil nuts), seeds, fish, grass-fed meats, mushrooms</p>	<p>Western diet—including fast foods and processed foods Sodas—including diet sodas Alcohol Simple sugars—including table sugar and honey High omega-6s—found in most vegetable oils (corn, soybean, sunflower, safflower) Fried foods Pesticide-laden foods—choose organically grown/raised food whenever possible Dairy Gluten</p>
<p>Neurohormones</p>	<p>Fiber-rich foods—containing lignin - green beans, peas, carrots, seeds, and Brazil nuts (Lignin binds harmful estrogens in the digestive tract, so they can be excreted in the feces instead of being reabsorbed. Dietary fiber also improves the composition of intestinal bacteria, so that harmful estrogen metabolites can be excreted from the body. It also decreases the conversion of testosterone into estrogens, maintaining a healthy testosterone level.) Hormone-supporting spices: turmeric, ginger, garlic, sage, parsley, anise seed, red clover, hops Eggs: many hormones are made from cholesterol, so make sure you have enough cholesterol in your diet Testosterone-boosting foods: pomegranate, olive oil, oysters, coconut, brassicas (including cabbage, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower), garlic Estrogen-boosting foods: soybeans, flaxseeds, sunflower seeds, beans, garlic, yams, foods rich in vitamins C and Bs, beets, parsley, anise seed, red clover, licorice, hops, sage Thyroid-boosting foods (selenium-rich): seaweed and sea vegetables, brassicas, maca</p>	<p>Sugar and simple carbohydrates Protein from animals raised with hormones or antibiotics Processed foods Gluten Soy protein isolate Excitotoxins: Substances that can kill neurons, including MSG, aspartame, hydrolyzed vegetable protein, sucralose, “natural flavors” (these often contain MSG) Foods/drinks that lower testosterone levels: spearmint tea, soy, and licorice</p>
<p>Diabetes</p>	<p>Spices: cinnamon, sage, nutmeg Fiber-rich foods: to balance blood sugar—raspberries, broccoli, spinach, lentils, green peas, pears, winter squash, cabbage, green beans, avocados, coconut, figs, artichokes, chickpeas, hemp, and chia seeds Best vegetables: low-glycemic, such as celery, spinach, broccoli, brassicas (Brussels sprouts, cauliflower) Best fruits—low glycemic, such as apples, oranges, blueberries, raspberries, blackberries, strawberries</p>	<p>High-glycemic, low-fiber foods: such as white and wheat bread, pasta, white potatoes, rice Sugar—no nutritional benefit, depletes chromium and other valuable vitamins and minerals Corn Processed foods Dried fruits—prunes; dried apricots, figs, cranberries; raisins; dates High-glycemic fruits—such as pineapple, watermelon, ripe bananas</p>

BRIGHT MINDS	EAT THIS	SKIP OR LIMIT THAT
<p>Sleep</p>	<p>Sleep-enhancing spices—ginger root Melatonin-rich foods—the hormone of sleep: tart cherry juice concentrate, sour cherries, walnuts, ginger root, asparagus, tomatoes Serotonin-rich foods—combine tryptophan-containing foods, such as eggs, turkey, seafood, chickpeas, nuts, and seeds (building block for serotonin), with healthy carbohydrates, such as sweet potatoes and quinoa, to elicit a short-term insulin response that drives tryptophan into the brain Dark chocolate also increases serotonin Chamomile or passion fruit tea</p>	<p>Alcohol, including wine—hard liquor is worse for your brain; snoring is worse with alcohol Caffeine—including dark chocolate (which also contains theobromine) Energy drinks Spicy foods—especially at night Grapefruit—due to acidity may cause heartburn at night Foods that contain diuretics—celery, cucumbers, radishes, watermelon (they will keep you up going to the bathroom) Foods that contain tyramine—it increases norepinephrine, a stimulating neurotransmitter: tomatoes, eggplant, soy, red wine, aged cheeses Unhealthy fatty foods—such as burgers, fries and cheese pizza, which all have harder-to-digest saturated fats Black bean chili—it will keep your GI tract rumbling High-protein foods—they are harder to digest</p>

SUPPLEMENT YOUR BRAIN WITH NUTRACEUTICALS

At Amen Clinics, we believe in using the least toxic, most effective treatments. In many cases, this includes nutraceuticals, which I like to think of as supplements with medicine-like health benefits, and often without the side effects. We tell all our patients the following:

- Don't start something that will be hard to stop.
- Medications should never be the only thing you do.
- Think nutrition and skills, not just pills.

We recommend that everyone:

- Take a multiple vitamin/mineral
- Take omega-3 fatty acids (or eat more fatty fish)
- Check and optimize vitamin D

Beyond these recommendations, choose nutraceuticals for your individual needs. See the chart below, which shows nutraceuticals with A-level evidence ratings (the highest rating available) for specific brain health issues.

Scientific Evidence for Common Symptoms and Nutraceuticals

SYMPTOMS	A-LEVEL EVIDENCE
Anxiety and Stress (anxious, tense, worried, nervous, obsessive thoughts, panic, OCD, PTSD)	Ashwagandha (OCD) Theanine Omega-3 fatty acids EPA+DHA
Attention, Focus, and Energy	EPA omega-3s Phosphatidylserine (PS)
Mood	EPA omega-3s St. John's wort Saffron SAmE
Memory	Ginkgo PS Alpha GPC (also called Choline Alfoscerate)
Psychotic symptoms	Sarcosine
Sleep	Melatonin (jet lag)

CHAPTER 7

COACHING YOURSELF AND OTHERS TO SUCCESS

Get it. Give it away. Keep it forever.

Personal brain health is important, but so is the brain health of our society and organizations. Whether it's you and your family, coworkers, patients, or clients, having healthier brains can help produce a more positive, productive environment where everyone is happier, less stressed, and primed for success in every aspect of life. In addition, getting healthy as a group doubles your chances of success.

9 Steps to Create a Brain Health Revolution in Yourself and Others

	STEP	NOTES
1.	Live the message	Authenticity
2.	Help people decide what they truly want	Know your motivation
3.	Make it easy	Science of change and tiny habits
4.	Rethink failure	Be curious, not furious and turn bad days into good data
5.	Know important numbers	You can't change what isn't measured
6.	Assess friends and accomplices	Control your space, build fences
7.	Understand the neuroscience of decision-making	Self-control, "Then what?"
8.	Kill the ANTS	Eliminate the little lies that steal success
9.	Never give up	SPECT may uncover hidden barriers



PART 2

HOW TO PERFORM A BRIGHT MINDS EVALUATION

YOUR GUIDEBOOK TO PATIENT/CLIENT EVALUATIONS

The Steps and Tools to Find the Best Solutions for the People You Serve

Performing a BRIGHT MINDS evaluation helps you and your patients or clients understand the issues that might be holding them back from achieving their goals. To evaluate people (or to identify your own personal risk factors), use the following tools and assessments. At the end of this checklist, you'll find all the corresponding materials and handouts you can use with them.

- Use the One Page Miracle.** To help people stay focused, it is important to identify their goals. Have them fill out the One Page Miracle worksheet to help them understand what is important in key areas of their life and will help you stay on track with your goals. Be sure to write down what you want, not what you don't want. Place your One Page Miracle somewhere that you will see it every day. Some people like to put it on the bathroom mirror so it's the first thing they see in the morning.

- Identify 5 reasons why they want to get healthy.** Help others pinpoint what's motivating them to get healthy. Is it because they want to set a good example for their children? Is it because they want to have more energy to put into building their business? Is it because they want to be a better leader?

- Ask them to create 5 anchor images.** Did you know that 50% of the brain is dedicated to vision? Visual cues are powerful reminders of motivation. Have people pick 5 images they can use to remind themselves every day why they must get healthy. For example:
 - My wife
 - My children
 - My grandchildren
 - My parents
 - My dog

- Do an inventory of friends vs. accomplices.** Accomplices are people who encourage or are complicit with a person's negative behaviors. Friends, mentors, and coaches are those who support positive behaviors. Have people identify their 5 most powerful friends who will support their good habits and the 5 accomplices who make it more likely they will not succeed in changing their behavior. Spend more time with friends and less time with accomplices. Adding friends improves a person's chances for success up to 40%.

- Identify barriers to success.** Help your patients or clients understand the issues that are preventing them from making the changes they need to in order to achieve their goals. Some common barriers include:
 - Don't know motivation—if they don't know their "why" they're less likely to succeed
 - Never say "Then What?"—not thinking about the consequences of their actions
 - Low blood sugar—skipping meals can lead to indecision or poor judgment
 - Poor sleep—the brain undergoes important processes during sleep; don't skimp!
 - Alcohol—drinking lowers overall blood flow to the brain, which lowers function
 - ANTs and "little lies"—believing every stupid thought enters their head

- Identify vulnerable times.** Help others understand the times when they may be most likely to slip back into their old bad habits. Is it during the holidays or when things get stressful at work? If they know to anticipate potential setbacks, they can prepare for them and have a plan to overcome them.
- Know their Brain Type.** Have people take the free Brain Health Assessment at [BrainHealthAssessment.com](https://www.brainhealthassessment.com).
- Know their important health numbers.** Maintaining overall physical health is critically important to brain health. This evaluation includes 10 important numbers everyone should know and optimize. If the people you serve don't have these numbers available, there is a Suggested Lab Panel they can take to a healthcare provider so they can have the necessary tests performed to obtain them.
- Have them take the BRIGHT MINDS Risk Assessment.** This assessment helps identify risk factors so you can coach others (or yourself) on the best strategies to reduce those specific risks. Once you have identified a person's risks, you can use the materials in this workbook to make specific recommendations to minimize those risk factors. To help others (and yourself) stay focused on the strategies to follow, have them take a look at the **BRIGHT MINDS** Sample Profile and then fill out the **My BRIGHT MINDS Profile** form and keep it somewhere they can see it every day.

ONE PAGE MIRACLE

What do I want in my relationships with my:

Partner _____

Children _____

Extended family _____

Friends _____

Patients/Clients _____

What do I want in my work/career?

What do I want in my finances?

What do I want for myself in these areas?

Physical _____

Emotional _____

Spiritual _____

5 REASONS WHY I WANT TO GET HEALTHY

1. _____

2. _____

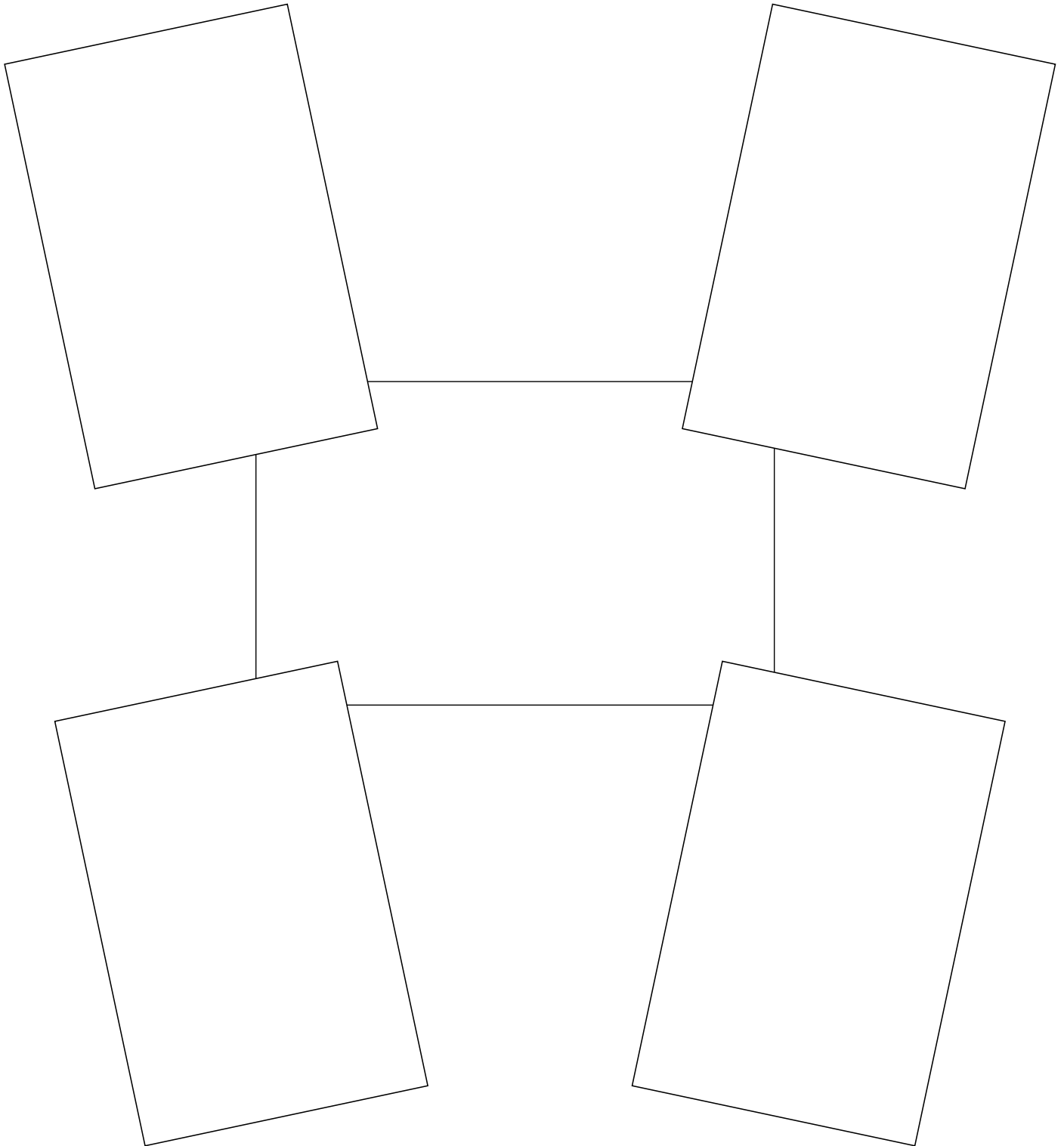
3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

MY ANCHOR IMAGES

Place 5 anchor images on this page that you can look at every day to remind yourself why you must get healthy.



FRIENDS VS. ACCOMPLICES INVENTORY

Friends who will help me get healthy

Accomplices who encourage bad habits...

MY VULNERABLE TIMES

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

MY BARRIERS TO SUCCESS

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

KNOW YOUR BRAIN TYPE

To learn your Brain Type, take the Brain Health Assessment at brainhealthassessment.com. Click on "Take the Quiz" and begin by selecting "Let's Get Started!" The assessment will take approximately 5 minutes and your results will be made available by download or email.

My Brain Type:

KNOW YOUR IMPORTANT HEALTH NUMBERS

1. Body Mass Index (BMI)

The BMI tells you the health of your weight compared to your height. Your doctor can calculate it, or you can easily find a BMI calculator online.

Normal: 18.5 - 25

Overweight: 25 - 30

Obese: > 30

2. Waist-to-Height Ratio

This is another way to measure the health of your weight. Divide your waist size by your height in inches.

Note: You have to measure your waist size at your belly button! Do not guess or go by your pants size. Sizes can vary depending on the clothing manufacturer and many people have bellies that hang over their waistbands.

Women

Ratio < .35: underweight

Ratio .35 - .42: extremely slim

Ratio .42 - .49: healthy

Ratio .49 - .54: overweight

Ratio .54 - .58: seriously overweight

Ratio > .58: highly obese

Men

Ratio < .35: underweight

Ratio .35 - .43: extremely slim

Ratio .43 - .53: healthy

Ratio .53 - .58: overweight

Ratio .58 - .63: seriously overweight

Ratio > .63: highly obese

3. Blood Pressure

High blood pressure is associated with lower overall brain function.

Systolic (high number) _____

Diastolic (low number) _____

Check your blood pressure or have your doctor check it on a regular basis. If your blood pressure is high, make sure to take it seriously. Some behaviors that can help lower blood pressure include losing weight, daily exercise, fish oil and, if needed, medication.

- Optimal: Systolic 90-120, Diastolic 60-80
- Stage 1 Hypertension: Systolic 130-139, Diastolic 80-89
- Stage 2 Hypertension: Systolic \geq 140, Diastolic \geq 90
- Hypotension (too low can also be a problem): Systolic < 90, Diastolic < 60

4. Vitamin D Level

Low levels of vitamin D have been associated with obesity, depression, cognitive impairment, heart disease, and many other diseases. Have your physician check your 25-hydroxy vitamin D level, and if it is low get more sunshine and/or take a vitamin D supplement.

Low: < 30 nanograms/deciliter

Optimal: between 50 - 100 ng/dl

5. Thyroid

Having low thyroid levels decreases overall brain activity, which can impair your thinking, judgment, and self-control, and make it very hard for you to lose weight.

TSH (according to the American Association of Clinical Endocrinologists, anything over 3.0 is abnormal and needs further investigation)

- Free T3 (see the normal ranges for the individual laboratory you use)
- Free T4 (see the normal ranges for the individual laboratory you use)

There is no one perfect way, no one symptom or test result, that will properly diagnose low thyroid function or hypothyroidism. The key is to look at your symptoms and your blood tests, and then decide. Doctors typically diagnose thyroid problems by testing your TSH levels and sometimes your T3 and T4 levels.

6. C-Reactive Protein (CRP)

This measures the general level of inflammation but does not tell you where it is from.

Healthy range: 0.0 - 1.0 mg/dL

The most common reason for an elevated C-reactive protein is metabolic syndrome or insulin resistance. The second most common is some sort of reaction to food—either a sensitivity, a true allergy, or an autoimmune reaction as occurs with gluten. It can also indicate hidden infections.

7. Hemoglobin A1C (HbA1C)

This test shows your average blood sugar levels over the past 2-3 months and is used to diagnose diabetes and prediabetes.

Normal results for someone without diabetes: 4% - 5.6%

Optimal: < 5.3%

Pre-diabetes: 5.7% - 6.4%

8. Lipid Panel

Make sure your doctor checks your total cholesterol level as well as your HDL (good cholesterol), LDL (bad cholesterol), and triglycerides (a form of fat).

Normal levels are:

Total cholesterol: 135 - 200 mg/dL

(Note: levels below 160 have been associated with depression, suicide, homicide, and death from all causes, so 160-200mg/dL is optimal)

HDL: \geq 60 mg/dL

LDL: <100 mg/dL

Triglycerides: <100 mg/dl

If your lipids are off, make sure to get your diet under control, take a high-quality fish oil supplement, and exercise. Of course, you should see your healthcare provider. Also, knowing the particle size of LDL cholesterol is very important. Large particles are less toxic than smaller particle size.

9. Testosterone

Low levels of testosterone, for men or women, are associated with low energy, heart disease, obesity, depression, and Alzheimer's disease.

Normal levels for adult males:

Testosterone Total Male (280-800 ng/dL)—Optimal is 500 - 800 ng/dL

Testosterone Free Male (7.2-24 pg/mL)—Optimal is 12 - 24 picogram(pg)/mL

Normal levels for adult females:

Testosterone Total Female (6-82 ng/dL)—Optimal is 40 - 82 ng/dL

Testosterone Free Female (0.0-2.2 pg/mL)—Optimal is 1.0 - 2.2 pg/mL

10. Ferritin

Ferritin is a measure of iron stores and increases with inflammation and insulin resistance.

Optimal levels: 30 - 100 ng/mL

Low levels are associated with anemia, restless leg syndrome, ADD, and low motivation and energy. Women often have lower iron stores than men because of menstruation. Some theorize that this is one of the reasons that women tend to live longer than men. If your level is low, consider taking iron. If it is high, donating blood may help.

SUGGESTED LAB PANEL

Take this list to your healthcare provider.

Patient Name: _____

Date: _____

General:

- CBC (Complete Blood Count) – BLOOD FLOW
- Lipid Panel – BLOOD FLOW
- Ferritin – RETIREMENT/AGING
- Homocysteine - RETIREMENT/AGING
- C-REACTIVE PROTEIN – INFLAMMATION
- OMEGA-3 INDEX – INFLAMMATION
- Comprehensive Metabolic Panel – TOXINS IN LIVER AND KIDNEY PANEL
- VITAMIN D LEVEL – IMMUNITY
- DHEA-S - NEUROHORMONES
- TSH, Free T3 and T4 - NEUROHORMONES
- Testosterone, Total and Free - NEUROHORMONES
- Fasting Insulin – NEUROHORMONES and DIABESITY
- Hemoglobin A1C - DIABESITY

BRIGHT MINDS RISK ASSESSMENT

Circle the risks that apply to you. If you don't know if you have a risk factor, such as certain lab tests, leave it blank. When you get to the end of the assessment, add up your score. The number in parentheses is the relative increase in risk for brain problems or accelerated aging compared to those without that risk factor. Here's how it translates: 1.3 = 30% increased risk; 1.5 = 50% increased risk; 2 = double the risk, 3 = triple the risk, and so on.

Example: Limited exercise, less than twice a week (2) — this doubles the risk of Blood Flow problems. Chronic mold exposure (1.5) — this puts you at 50% increased risk of Toxic issues.

Blood Flow Risk Factors

1. History of a stroke (5)
2. History of cardiovascular disease, including coronary artery disease, heart attacks, heart failure, heart arrhythmias (2)
3. Pre-hypertension or hypertension in mid-life (2)
4. Limited exercise, less than twice a week (2)

Retirement/Aging

5. Age: 65 to 84 (2), 85 and older (38)
6. Watching too much television (more than 2 hours a day) (2)
7. In a job that does not require new learning (2) or retired without new learning endeavors
8. Loneliness or social isolation (2)

Inflammation

9. Periodontal (gum) disease (2)
10. Presence of inflammation in the body, such as high homocysteine or C-reactive protein (2)
11. Low omega-3 fatty acids (2)

Genetics and Family History

12. One family member with Alzheimer's or dementia (3.5); more than one family member with Alzheimer's or dementia (7.5)
13. One apolipoprotein E4 gene (2.5) or two E4 genes (10) (if known, based on genetic testing)

Head Trauma

14. A single head injury with loss of consciousness (2)
15. Several head injuries without a loss of consciousness (2)
16. Loss of one's sense of smell (2)

Toxic

17. Smoking cigarettes for 10 years or longer (currently or in past) (2.3)
18. Alcohol dependence or drug dependence (currently or in past) (4.4)
19. History of radiation for head and neck cancers (3), chemotherapy for breast cancer (1.5) or colorectal cancer (1.25)
20. Chronic exposure to heavy metals, such as lead, cadmium, mercury, arsenic or aluminum (1.5)

- 21. Chronic mold exposure (1.5)
- 22. Kidney dysfunction (2)

Mental Health

- 23. PTSD (4), depression (3.5), bipolar disorder (2), schizophrenia (2), or chronic stress (2)

Immunity/Infection Issues

- 24. Autoimmune issues, such as multiple sclerosis (1.5), rheumatoid arthritis (3), systemic lupus erythematosus (2), Crohn's disease (1.5), or severe psoriasis (3)
- 25. Adult asthma (1.3)
- 26. Chronic Lyme disease or other infectious diseases not fully treated (2)

Neurohormone Issues

- 27. Low in thyroid, estrogen (in females), or testosterone (males and females) (2) for each one
- 28. Hysterectomy without estrogen replacement (2)
- 29. History of prostate cancer with testosterone-lowering treatment (2)

Diabetes

- 30. Pre-diabetes or diabetes (3)
- 31. Fasting blood sugar over 100mg/dl (2)
- 32. Being overweight or obese in middle age (3)

Sleep Issues

- 33. Chronic insomnia (2.3)
- 34. Sleep apnea (2)

Total Score: Add up the total number of risk factors you circled plus the total of all the numbers in parentheses (relative risk factors).

_____ **Number of BRIGHT MINDS risk factors circled**

_____ **Relative risk factors (the total score from the parentheses)**

_____ **Total Score**

Interpretation of Relative Risk Factors:

If the score is 0 - 6: You likely have a low risk of developing brain problems, memory loss, or dementia.

If the score is 7-14: You have a moderate risk; consider discussing with your healthcare professional.

If the score is greater than 14: You have a high risk; don't delay in seeing a healthcare professional right away.

Example:

Sherrie circled the following:

Pre-hypertension or hypertension in mid-life (2)

Low in thyroid, estrogen (in females), or testosterone (males and females) (2) for each

one, Chronic insomnia (2.3)

3 Number of BRIGHT MINDS risk factors circled

6.3 Relative risk factors (the total score from the parentheses)

9.3 Total Score

Sherrie's score is between 7-14, meaning she has a moderate risk of developing brain problems, memory loss, or dementia and she should consider discussing with her healthcare professional.

BRIGHT MINDS SAMPLE PROFILE

NAME: JANE BRANE



BRAIN TYPE: 12

Difficulty relaxing

Spontaneous

Persistent

Motivated

Restless

Creative, "out-of-the-box" thinking

BRIGHT MINDS RISKS

Blood Flow: Drinking 5 cups coffee/day, inconsistent exercise

Retirement/Aging: Watching TV at night

Inflammation: Low omega-3 levels

Genetics: Grandpa had memory problems

Head Trauma: Sometimes forget bike helmet

Toxins: Many toxic cleaning supplies & personal care products at home

Mental Health: High stress levels

Immunity/Infections: Frequent colds

Neurohormone Issues: Low thyroid levels

Diabesity: Eating cookies every day after lunch

Sleep Issues: Too much screen time, only 5-6 hours sleep/night

BRIGHT MINDS COMMITMENTS

Limit coffee to 2 cups/day and no caffeine after 2 p.m., 45 minutes fast walking four times/week

Take a knitting class in the evening

Take omega-3 fatty acids

Eat polyphenol-rich foods (apples, blueberries, cherries)

Always wear helmet while biking (even when just around the neighborhood)

Download and use "Think Dirty" app and eliminate toxic products from my household

Meditate for 10 minutes/day and take GABA supplements in support of calming my mind

Take Vitamin D3 5000

Remember to take thyroid pill every day and take DHEA for hormone support

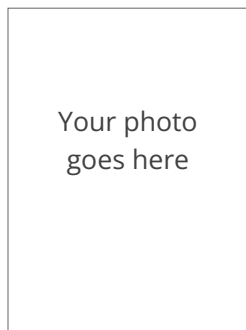
Limit cookies to once a week

No blue screens 30 minutes before bed, go to bed by 11 p.m. every night

MY BRIGHT MINDS PROFILE

NAME: _____

BRAIN TYPE: _____



BRIGHT MINDS RISKS

Blood Flow: _____

Retirement/Aging: _____

Inflammation: _____

Genetics: _____

Head Trauma: _____

Toxins: _____

Mental Health: _____

Immunity/Infections: _____

Neurohormone Issues: _____

Diabetes: _____

Sleep Issues: _____

BRIGHT MINDS COMMITMENTS

RESOURCES

AMEN UNIVERSITY COURSES

Change Your Brain Masters Course: The Amen Clinics Method fully explained in a simple, 12-week online course.

Memory Rescue: Supercharge your brain, prevent memory loss, or rescue your memory if it needs help.

30-Day Happiness Challenge: Daniel G. Amen, MD, unlocks the 7 neuroscience secrets to happiness no one else is talking about. A great way to bring positivity into your life when you commit to doing one positive thing every day for the next month.

Healing ADD at Home: Understand and manage ADD—take back control of your life through this online course!

Brain Warrior's Way: You are in a war for the health of your brain. To win the war, you need to MASTER the Brain Warrior's Way.

Overcoming Anxiety, Depression, Trauma, and Grief: When you take responsibility for your life and use the tools and strategies in this course, it can help you overcome emotional issues.

Overcoming Insomnia: Improve your health and optimize your brain for sustained, quality sleep.

Brain Thrive By 25: This comprehensive 12-part online course, designed by psychiatrist Daniel G. Amen, M.D. and professor Dr. Jesse Payne, is geared to undergraduates and high school students.

Concussion Rescue: For anyone who has experienced a head injury and is ready to rehabilitate their brain health and enhance their quality of life.

Healing Autism: A New Way Forward: This course is designed to introduce families to information about Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), including tips specifically for parents and caregivers.

BrainFitLife

MyBrainFitLife.com

Based on Dr. Amen's 30+ years as a clinical psychiatrist, he and his wife, Tana, have developed a sophisticated online community to help you feel smarter, happier, and younger. It includes:

- Detailed questionnaires to help you know your brain type and a personalized program targeted to your own needs
- Total Brain Assessment, a sophisticated neuropsychological test that assesses your brain
- Fun brain games and tools to boost your motivation
- Exclusive, award-winning, 24/7 brain gym membership
- Physical exercises and tutorials led by Tana
- Hundreds of Tana's delicious, brain-healthy recipes
- Exercises to Kill the ANTs (automatic negative thoughts)
- Meditation and hypnosis audios for sleep, anxiety, overcoming weight issues, pain and peak performance
- Amazing brain-enhancing music from Grammy Award winner, Barry Goldstein

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