Boost Your Memory with Brain Fitness
National Wellness Institute
July 16, 2013
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Problem Recognition
- Tsunami of Aging
- Incidence of Alzheimer’s disease
- CDC Healthy Brain Initiative
- Memory Clubs

National Plan to Address Alzheimer’s disease
- “Alzheimer’s disease burdens an increasing number of our Nation’s elders and their families, it is essential that we confront the challenge it poses to our public health.”
  - President Barack Obama

- President Barack Obama
Top 10 Aging and Health Concerns of Boomers & Seniors:
- Losing Health
- Inability to Care For Ourselves
- Losing Mental Abilities
- Running Out of Money
- Becoming a Family Burden
- Ending Up in a Nursing Home
- Unable to Drive
- Inability to Get Good Healthcare
- Inability to Work or Volunteer
- Being Alone

What is Cognitive Health?
- CDC Healthy Brain Initiative: 9 Elements
  - Language
  - Thought
  - Memory
  - Executive Functions
  - Perception
  - Judgment
  - Attention
  - Remembered Skills (Driving)
  - Ability to live a Purposeful Life

Brain Buster
- This “old sweet song” is now the state song of a southeastern coastal state and was a hallmark of Ray Charles in the 1960s.
Partner Needs Assessment

YMCA gatherings place for older adults classes focused on physical activity.
YMCA older adults members express interest in new classes, trying new activities.
Over 100 class offerings at YMCA none related to memory enhancement.
RN's can assist the YMCA in class development on health related topics.
YMCA staff express desire to keep current with new informative programming.
YMCA has multi-disciplinary approach with class offerings. Fit With Activate Fox Cities goals.
YMCA collaborative effort to develop new memory enhancement programming.
Administration expresses desire to improve YMCA participation satisfaction scores and increased revenue.
New memory enhancement class offering based upon evidence-based literature. Plan to expand to five other YMCA sites.

Needs Assessment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Information</th>
<th>Sources of Information</th>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Tasks</th>
<th>Content</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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</tr>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Active Older Adults

- The YMCA of the Fox Cities offers programs that build a healthy spirit, mind and body.
- YMCA provides activities for active adults to come together for wellness, fellowship and fun.
- Some programs and activities for older adults include: exercise classes, health screenings, clubs, massage, social events, trips.
Implementation

- Literature Search
- Threats and Barriers

Brain Buster

- Which Beatles song lasted longest on the charts for 19 weeks?

Primary Prevention

- Cognitive Health Memory Enhancement Program
Program Session Design
- Welcome/Warm Up
- Activity/Quiz
- Review of Session Content
- Practice/Activities
- Review

Brain Fitness Program
- Topics
  - Memory and Aging
  - Learning Styles
  - Mental Aerobics
  - Exercise
  - Nutrition
  - Optimism & Humor
  - Socialization

Memory & Aging Overview
How It Changes as We Age
- Normal Age-Related Changes in Memory
  - Longer to process new information
  - Longer to recall information
  - More difficult to pay attention
Memory Factors At Any Age
1. Emotional Health
2. Sensory Losses: Vision & Hearing
3. Distraction
4. Fatigue
5. Medication
6. What’s Important
7. Overload

Top 10 Things We Would Like To Remember Better
1. People’s names
2. Household items
3. Important dates
4. Meetings and appointments
5. Phone numbers
6. Paying bills
7. Medicine
8. Errands
9. Grocery Items
10. Feed pets/plants

Memory Overview
How It Changes as We Age
- Brain Plasticity
  - Definition: Brain’s capacity to learn new information as we age
- Types of Memory
  - Sensory Memory
  - Short-term Memory
  - Long-term Memory
Learning Styles

- Overview of Learning Styles and Tips for Each type of Learner
- Learning Style Activity, Which Learning Style Are You?
Overview of Mental Aerobics for Memory Enhancement

- Two Broad Types of Mental Aerobics
  - Do New Things
  - Do the Same Things, but Differently
- Other Types of Mental Aerobics

Mental Aerobics For Every Day

- Brush your teeth with your non-dominant hand
- Find a new route to work, store, church
- Change up your daily routine
- Try a new game
- Read something different
- Volunteer to read
- Rearrange your environment
Exercise

- Types of Exercise
- How Exercise Affects Memory
- Introduce Activity Daily
- Overcoming Fitness Barriers
- How to stay Motivated
Nutrition

Overview of Nutrition and How It Affects Memory
- Antioxidants
- Omega-3 Fatty Acids
- Dark Green, Leafy Vegetables

Optimism & Humor
- “A pessimist sees the difficulty in every opportunity; an optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty.”
  - Winston Churchill, British Prime Minister
- “The average pencil is seven inches long with just a half-inch eraser – in case you thought optimism was dead.”
  - Robert Brault, freelance writer
Overview of Stress & How it Affects the Mind, Body, Memory

- How Stress Affects Us
- Good Stress versus Bad Stress
- Managing Stress in Daily Life

Optimism & Humor Overview

- Benefits of Optimism
- Making Lemonade out of Life’s Lemons
- Benefits of Humor and Laughter
Overview of Socialization and How it Affects Memory

- Social active people:
  - Live longer
  - Remain more independent
  - Strong social networks can prevent declines in memory

Benefits of Being Social

- Fun
- Reduces Stress
- Makes Us Feel Needed
- Good For Our Bodies
- Good For Our Brains
Dissemination

Brain Fitness Program

- Future Topics
  - Brain Dominance
  - The Five Senses
  - Stress
  - Remembering Who, What, When & Where
  - Play with Your Brain: Brain Games
  - Brain Boosters

Think Positive!
Secondary Prevention

- Community Memory Screenings

The End is Really the Beginning....

Selected References


Carlson, M. C., Saczynski, J. S., Rebok, G. W., Seeman, T., Glass, T. A., McGill, S., . . . Brieder, B. (September, 2010). Y-today – Who we are. Presented at the YMCA of the Fox Cities 2010 All Board Summit, Neenah, WI.


Selected References


Additional resources available upon request.