

- Mind and body

Revitalising ageing minds: Strategies and paths to cognitive vitality

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In the journey of life where healthy ageing becomes a societal focus, maintaining cognitive vitality deserves a spotlight. There's a popular belief that bookish knowledge helps in sharpening the brain as we age; however, various other surprising elements contribute extensively to our brain performance.



A LIFE-LONG WORKING JOURNEY

Renowned psychologists continue to champion the idea of maintaining gainful occupations past traditional retirement age.

According to the Brain and Mind Research Institute at the University of Sydney, modern individuals aged 65 to 70, especially those non-smokers who lead an active lifestyle, exhibit healthier brain functions compared to their predecessors, many of whom retired at a younger age.

PERPETUAL MOVEMENT - A BRAIN'S BEST FRIEND

The significance of regular aerobic exercise cannot be overstressed for maintaining long-term brain health.

Scientists assert that just as physical fitness improves with exercise, so does the brain. The goal: achieve a minimum of 30 minutes of physical activity every alternate day.

A HEALTHY BODY FOR A HEALTHY MIND

Risks of cognitive decline and memory loss have been associated with largely preventable conditions such as obesity, hypertension, and Type 2 diabetes. Health experts endorse the avoidance of cigarettes and saturated fats to mitigate age-related brain damage, propelling the mantra of a healthy body for a healthy mind.

THE REJUVENATING POWERS OF SLEEP

Sleep deprivation can lead to protein build-ups on synapses, potentially affecting our cognitive abilities to think and learn. Inadequate sleep has shown links to cognitive decline in the elderly. If quality sleep seems elusive, it's crucial to seek solutions.

REDEFINING RELAXATION

Elevated stress levels can lead to harmful chemicals affecting brain areas related to memory. Some theorists propose that living a balanced lifestyle, engaging in relaxing activities such as yoga or Pilates, and maintaining a strong social circle can potentially delay memory impairment by reducing stress levels.

THE LINGUISTIC LIFELINE

The linguistic prowess of bilingualism offers promising results for delaying the onset of dementia. Research conducted on 44 elderly Spanish-English bilinguals indicated that individuals with a higher degree of bilingualism exhibited stronger resistance to dementia and other Alzheimer's disease symptoms.

The level of bilingualism was found to be directly proportional to the delay in the onset of such conditions.

In the pursuit of enhanced cognitive vitality, it's clear that simple lifestyle choices can make a profound difference. From staying active in the workforce, prioritising physical exercise, nourishing the body with healthy choices, ensuring quality sleep, embracing relaxation, to even learning a new language – all contribute to the nourishment of the mind, and ultimately, a sharper version of yourself as you age.