Create a Brain Friendly Lifestyle

©Arlene R. Taylor PhD
www.arlenetaylor.org
www.LLM.life

9-25-16
The chief function of your body is to carry your brain around

—Thomas Alva Edison (1847-1931)

Your brain is unique—there’s never been one just like it nor will there ever be again; and this was Edison’s opinion of its value

You are owner, CEO, caretaker, friend, and you name it—and the only person who can really care for it; all things being equal how you do that will impact how well and how long it works
If you think you can or you think you can’t, you’re right
—Henry Ford

Your brain can only do what it thinks it can, and it’s your job to tell your brain what it can do.

Fortunately, scientists now know more about the brain than was known for hundreds, even thousands, of years; studies are showing how to care for the brain.

Everything starts in the brain—here are seven components to include in a brain friendly lifestyle.
Happiness, humor, and laughter are good for the brain and immune system

Mirthful laughter:

• Reduces stress hormones that can suppress the immune system

• Increases immune globulins that fight against viruses from colds and flues to cancers
Benefits of Laughter
www.Arlene Taylor.org

- Enhances communication between the two hemispheres (thinking!)
- Helps with learning, storage of data, and retrieval of information (memory!)
- Aids digestion, provides pain relief, helps avoid constipation (health!)

You need a minimum of thirty (30) mirthful laughs a day to be healthy—learn to laugh at yourself and you’ll have an unending supply (you’re the only person who will be with you your entire life)
Optimism and Health
www.ArleneTaylor.org

*The first step towards the solution of any problem is optimism* —John Baines

Benefits that optimism may provide include:

- Lower rates of depression
- Lower levels of distress
- Greater resistance to colds
- Better psychological and physical well-being
- Reduced risk of cardiovascular disease/death
- Better coping skills during hardship / stress
- Potentially increased life span
New research on people over age 65 is the latest scientific endorsement of benefits from an optimistic outlook —US National Institute of Aging

✓ Optimism was associated with a reduced likelihood of cognitive impairment over time
✓ Better eating and exercising habits
✓ Less likely to suffer strokes and heart attacks
✓ Better problem solving and judgement
✓ Fewer memory problems
✓ Beneficial health-related outcomes among cancer survivors
You cannot stop thinking, but you can slow down the rapidity of thoughts and create space between them — Sally Kempton

Studies have shown that personal meditative prayer (a form of meditation) or reflection provides the greatest personal benefits:

- Can decrease metabolic activity
- Can increase blood flow to frontal, parietal, temporal, and limbic areas
- May trigger deafferentation (pain relief) — Andrew Newberg MD
Prayer / meditation has been found to positively impact high blood pressure, heart attacks, wound healing, headaches, and anxiety—and can give you some control over the way in which your brain ages.

Study participants who prayed and / or reflected in a quiet, comfortable place for at least twelve minutes each day, experienced significant improvements in their memory.

More Benefits
www.ArleneTaylor.org
Prayer, if done regularly for at least 12 minutes daily, may slow age-related decline of the frontal lobes (Note ↑ activity in frontal and right temporal areas)
Sometimes all it takes is a wish in your heart to let yourself begin again — Collin McCarty

Your heart is more than just a muscular pump; it contains neurons that look just like brain neurons, use the same neurotrophic food, and ‘think’

‘The heart has its own independent nervous system with at least 40,000 neurons (as many as are found in various subcortical sections of the brain); there is a two-way nervous system relay between the brain and the heart’ — Doc Childre, Howard Martin
Neurons in Your Gut

www.ArleneTaylor.org

The Enteric Nervous System or ENS also contains neurons – far more than in any other peripheral organ.

Some are now suggesting there may be as many neurons in your ENS as there are in your brain!

ENS neurons use more than thirty neurotransmitters, most of which are identical to those in the brain and central nervous system.
The Enteric Nervous System also contains:

- 90 percent of all the serotonin in brain - body
- 50 percent of all the dopamine in brain - body

Perhaps because of this, the ENS has been called a *second brain*

Irritable Bowel Syndrome or IBS is an ‘Enteric Neuropathy’
You ‘think’ with your brain neurons—and with your heart neurons and gut neurons

Your choices matter:

- Eat and drink
- Read, watch, and play
- How you behave
- Thoughts you harbor and ponder

The vagus nerve connects the brain and the ENS, which helps explain the reason children cry and get stomach aches when parents argue and fight
#4 - Brain & Worry
www.ArleneTaylor.org

Worry is a total waste of time. It doesn’t change anything. All it does is steal your joy and keep you very busy doing nothing.  —Unknown

Worry and anxiety are forms of fear that are energy eaters and can downshift the brain – focusing its energy and attention toward lower brain levels, which keeps the stress response stimulated and can decrease judgement, health, and longevity…

Seek help if you are having difficulty managing worry and anxiety
Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow. It empties today of its strength —Corrie ten Boom

Worry and anxiety trigger stress hormones that can have serious consequences over time:

- Immune system suppression
- Increased digestive disorders
- Increased muscle tension
- Short-term memory loss
- Premature coronary artery disease / heart attacks, depression, and even suicidal thoughts
Problem-solve, yes, but dump worry and anxiety as they never solve anything, reduce your ability to brainstorm, and trigger the stress response

Use strategies to move away from fear:

1. Identify something humorous about the situation and choose to laugh about it

2. Be grateful for something as fear and gratitude cannot coexist in the brain simultaneously
Gratitude is a vaccine, an antitoxin, and an antiseptic — John Henry Jowett

Gratitude, kindness, and appreciation promote smooth and relatively even heart patterns, while frustration has a negative impact on heart patterns.
Benefits of Gratitude

Gratitude unlocks the fullness of life. It turns what we have into enough, and more. It turns denial into acceptance, chaos to order, confusion to clarity.

—Melody Beattie

Studies have shown that gratitude provides the antidote to fear and improves problem solving.

An attitude of gratitude promotes congruence of thoughts, emotions, and feelings to increase gratefulness; and it improves problem solving and your health.
Embrace Gratitude
www.ArleneTaylor.org

Be thankful for what you have; you’ll end up having more. If you concentrate on what you don’t have, you will never, ever have enough — Oprah Winfrey

✔ Find the silver lining—the gift—you always get something when you must give up something

✔ Identify what you can learn and avoid (insofar as possible) similar situations in the future

✔ There is always something for which to be grateful …
Learning is not attained by chance—it must be sought for with ardor and attended to with diligence —Abigail Adams (1744 - 1818)

You must be approved for a passport, a marriage license, a divorce, an adoption, a TSA Precheck, and to lease a vehicle.

You have been leased a living vehicle to use on this planet—there’s no evidence you’ll be taking it any place else with you—are you studying how best to care for your living vehicle, especially the science brain of function?
Life isn't about waiting for the storm to pass; it's about learning to dance in the rain —Unknown

You only know what you know; you can only do what you know; you can only know if you study and learn; some do not study, others study but do not learn or fail to practically apply what they do learn—some study and are approved.

Information on how best to care for the living vehicle that you lease for use on this planet is available—especially about the science about brain function.
Learn as if you were going to live forever; live as if you were going to die tomorrow

—Mahatma Gandhi

This is the information age, yet people regularly perish right, left, and center; sometimes due to:

- Lack of information or poor personal choices
- A failure to turn what they learn into knowledge and practically apply it
- Thinking that information and knowledge are synonyms—they are not
Information

Information - a noun from the Latin verb *informare* (to inform an idea of, to teach)

Defined as that which informs (including facts, figures, and data) and from which knowledge can be derived

Vehicle metaphor: you have facts and data about the vehicle, how it works, and how to care for it
Knowledge
www.ArleneTaylor.org

Knowledge – a noun likely from Old English (to know and denoting action or practice)

Defined as understanding something through learning, by experience of practical application, by evaluating the outcome (negative or positive?), and by course correcting as needed

Vehicle metaphor: you have honed the skills to care for and operate the vehicle wisely, safely, and appropriately—and you do it consistently
It is not that I do not know what to do—it is that I do not do what I know —Confucius (551-479 BC)

Acquiring knowledge, especially that most elusive self-knowledge, requires: awareness, intention, a choice to learn, daily practical application of knowledge using willpower, consistent effort, and ongoing evaluation … become your own sleuth!

The unexamined life is not worth living —Socrates
When you KNOW better you can DO better

You are the only person who can create a brain-friendly lifestyle for you

Live a brain friendly high-level healthiness lifestyle that can help you prosper and be in good health and stay younger longer—a gift for you and those you love