WHAT YOUR BRAIN ENJOYS: DIET

First things first. There’s no easy way for me to put this, so I’m just going to flat-out say it: **Your mind is not your brain**. Take a deep breath let it sink for a while. These two words have been used interchangeably so much so that we’re tempted to think of them as being synonymous. They are not. As a matter of fact, there is no such part of your body called your mind. If you need some convincing, just point to your mind with your index finger.

Let’s assume you didn’t try using your finger to reach out to your mind - I know you didn’t. You have probably heard one of these – “the average person develops only **10** percent of his latent mental ability” or more agreeably “Albert **Einstein** used more than 10% of his brains capacity”. As comforting and reasonable as they sound, these are some of the highly patronized medical myths guarding the truth about the brain.

***“The conscious working of the brain – organ – is what we call mind.”***

Before I say anything else, I wouldn’t want to bother you with the Cartesian dualism or any other **mind -body** concept. Let’s put it this way - The conscious working of the brain – organ – is what we call mind. The computer-software analogy explains it better, If the brain is the computer (hardware) then the software it runs is the mind. Having said this, may I suggest to you that; a healthy brain is bound to have a sound mind. Not only that but you can take care of your brain if not to keep it healthy but to enhance its functionality? Yes, it’s of course true. I’ve analyzed a trove of scientific researches and I’ve made a few notes, don’t worry you can read off my notes.

**Brain Food**

But wait, I’m not going to say do A, B and C and that ends it. No, not today. We want results. In this episode, I’d focus on the issue of – Diet. I have followed what the experts had to say on “brain food” and here are some of the sure bets for mental strength.

*Omega – 3 fatty acids*

Remember, that oil of a medicine - with the fishy smell - that your mum will force down your throat anytime you start coughing at night - those days? Yeah, you have to start loving it now. It’s actually called fish oil (contains many kinds of *Omega – 3 fatty acids*).

The prerequisite for a healthy brain tomorrow, is dependent on your consumption of *Omega -3 fatty acids* today*.* Omega-3 fatty acids are unsaturated fats that have anti-aging effects on the brain. They so important such that low levels have been linked to psychiatric disorders (Grosso et al, 2014).

Do you have to keep gulping volumes of a liquid you don’t like? No! Of course not. You can start by adding the subsequent foods to your recipe. They do offer you the said amount of Omega-3 per serving as listed.

Herrings **(946 mg per serving),** Mackerel **(4,107 mg per serving),** Salmon **(4,123 mg per serving),** Oysters **(370 mg per serving),** Sardines **(2,205 mg per serving),** Anchovies **(951 mg per serving).**

If you are vegan: **Soybeans (1,241 mg per serving)**, Walnuts, Chocolate, and other nuts would do.

**“The prerequisite for a healthy brain tomorrow, is dependent on your consumption of *Omega -3 fatty acids* today.”**

Coffee

Coffee is magical. Whether in the form of Cappuccino, Latte, Instant Coffee, Expresso, Frappe, or Mocha – The effect of coffee can still be felt. If there is any drinkable that I should recommend for instant mental enhancement, it’s coffee. Caffeine contained in coffee, travels via your bloodstream into your brain where it blocks inhibitory neurotransmitters and thus illicit a stimulant effect. This stimulant effect results in mental alertness, lights your mood, increases your energy level, increased appetite, improved focus, and improves your memory. So, the next time, you have a busy day; yet you woke up feeling extremely tired – just order a cup of coffee to get your system fired up. Stop tramadol abuse.

Green Tea (Chinese)

You can’t love “tea” more than the Chinese. I sometimes think their blood group is - “Tea positive”. But, as of today, research has vindicated them – they are right. There are so many kinds of tea. But the green tea stands out. The green tea has two synergistic compounds for your brain – The caffeine (a little amount) and L-theanine. The caffeine does it’s stimulatory whilst the L-theanine induces an anti-anxiety effect and also increases dopamine effects and alpha waves (that has a relaxing effect) in the brain.

Can I humbly, submit to you that the Chinese are part of the smartest groups in world because they love to “par-tea” after “par-tea” between meetings; And so they have the mental space for quick reasoning?

So you too, the next time you’re about to make presentation and you feel a little messed-up – just take a short break, walk into any herbal shop near you and get yourself a cup of herbal tea. You can thank me later.

These three – Omega-3, Coffee, and Green Tea are very much needed today, if you really want a young and healthy brain tomorrow. In the next episodes, I would focus on the effects of activities such as Yoga, meditation, and silence on the mind. Until then, stay safe.

REFERENCES

1. Grosso, G., Galvano, F., Marventano, S., Malaguarnera, M., Bucolo, C., Drago, F., & Caraci, F. (2014). Omega-3 fatty acids and depression: scientific evidence and biological mechanisms. *Oxidative medicine and cellular longevity*, *2014*, 313570. https://doi.org/10.1155/2014/313570