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IS NEUROPLASTICITY THE SECRET TO SUCCESS?

6 SCIENTIFICALLY PROVEN WAYS TO BOOST YOUR BRAIN POWER

Neuroplasticity is the brain's ability to change and adapt throughout your life, forming new connections that can have a direct impact on your energy, productivity, focus, creativity, motivation, and much more. Your brain can expand and grow even after an injury.

That's why many entrepreneurs are saying the same thing: One of the smartest ways to invest in your business is to devote resources to your most important asset — your brain.

But how do you keep your brain active, healthy, and functioning at a high level? Param Dedhia, MD, says six key areas are involved: sleep, exercise, joy, nutrition, internal medicine, and inflammation. All of these factors work independently, but together, they can promote neuroplasticity, which is why they all require equal attention.

Everyone wants to stay engaged with the world around them, but you can't do that without sleep. In fact, research published by the journal PLOS One discovered that getting six or fewer hours of sleep was associated with memory and executive function problems, i.e. problem-solving, planning, and execution. So, make sure you get enough sleep before tackling your day.



Exercise is crucial because, according to brain plasticity researchers at IOS Press, exercise "alters the synaptic structure and function in various brain regions," promoting brain growth and even delaying the onset of

Alzheimer's disease. Promoting growth can also be as simple (or as difficult) as focusing our attention on thoughts that bring us joy. Gratitude promotes very different brain activity than negativity, anger, or bitterness, and studies on gratitude show that the positive effects can be lifelong.

Nutrition can't be understated either, since it can assist your body in maintaining health and fighting inflammation. The brain uses about 20% of the body's calories, and eating plenty of omega-3 fatty acids can strengthen brain cells, while antioxidants reduce cellular stress and inflammation, which are linked to brain aging and neurodegenerative disorders like Alzheimer's disease.

With the right habits, you can keep your brain healthy for many decades to come. You might even grow in entirely new and unexpected ways.



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MY 2022 RESOLUTION IS SIMPLE: Learn More IAQ Secrets for You!

For my entire life, I've missed the boat on New Year's resolutions. The closest I've come to setting an annual goal was when I resolved to get up at 5:30 a.m. every morning and walk 3-5 miles down the bike trails near my house — in March! So far, I've more or less stuck to it. I don't always go 3 full miles through The Woodlands, but I do get up and move, which is better than I managed before.

This year though, I'm going to redeem myself on my New Year's resolution record. I'm actually setting a goal: Double-down on my continuing education. I know this isn't a SMART goal (aka a resolution that's specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound), but it's a good place to start.

As you know, one of my biggest frustrations with the pandemic is that it fouled up my plans to meet with and learn from my peers in the indoor air quality field. Conferences were postponed, meetings were canceled, and presentations were moved to Zoom. That left me feeling behind on my IAQ knowledge — even though everyone else was "behind" as well.

those things have changed dramatically, and property management firms have shifted their core methods of doing business to keep up. It's time for me to change my own reactions and investigations to match.



My work will begin this month when I fly to Hawaii for the International Society of Indoor Air Quality and Climate (ISIAQ) Healthy Buildings America conference. There, I'll meet up with the brainiacs who do the scientific investigations that move my industry forward. Next, I have my eye on an Indoor Air Quality Association meeting in February and two other continuing education programs in July and August. I can't wait to compare notes with peers from Florida, Colorado, the Carolinas, Massachusetts, and New York and prepare for the IAQ issues that will be coming in 2022 and beyond.

Working toward this goal will help me serve my clients better. I'll share what I learn at these conferences and use it to improve the health of your buildings. With that in mind, I have an important question for you:

What are your indoor environmental concerns? If you have burning questions or even idle curiosities, I'd love to hear them. If I don't know the answers already, I'll ask my peers in the industry and grill conference presenters for more information. You can email me with your environmental questions and concerns at TWest@BAQ1.com. We might both learn something!

I hope that if you set goals this year you're able to achieve them, and if you don't, more power to you regardless. Have a happy New Year, and I'll see you in person one day soon!

"If you have burning questions or even idle curiosities, I'd love to hear them. If I don't know the answers already, I'll ask my peers in the industry and grill conference presenters for more information."

This year, I plan to make up for lost time. I'll double-down on my continuing education and get up to speed on everything that's changing for building managers and owners since 2020. That includes the latest in building operations, tenant numbers, and methods of use. All three of

MANAGING MOISTURE DAMAGE



Our October newsletter introduced a book titled “Healthy Buildings: How Indoor Spaces Drive Performance and Productivity.” The following article discusses another of the nine foundations of a healthy building discussed in that book.

MANAGING MOISTURE DAMAGE

Managing moisture in any building is one of the most significant issues a building owner faces. The question of how to keep water out of a building affects the design of the roof, windows, siding, insulation, and water or vapor barriers. Using the wrong design or material for the climate presented to the building can lead to water damage and deterioration. The wet components can support mold growth in an area not seen if that occurs, and that too will deteriorate a building’s components very quickly.

Major water events can be expensive! You can incur unexpected costs for tearing out or drying wet materials when they occur. Ceilings, walls, and floors often become saturated, and this requires the building owner to decide on drying, tearing out, remediating, and rebuilding. Certainly, that is one reason you carry insurance. Still, a large insurance claim adds people to the decision process (agents, adjusters, and insurance staff) and can delay the decision on remediation or rebuilding. That can cost the owner and tenant revenue.

We worked on a large university field house that flooded during the 2021 Texas Ice Storm. Although it was only three floors tall, the water flooded dozens of coach’s offices; physical therapy rooms; training rooms; and the locker rooms for gymnastics, volleyball, football, and several other team sports. Ultimately, hundreds of coaches, trainers, and student-athletes were kept from their training areas for many weeks after the flooding occurred.

Major water events like hurricanes and flooding can cause the most damage and disruption. However, it is the minor leaks at toilets,

vanities, kitchen sinks, or water fountains that occur more frequently. These types of leaks occur slowly and are often below surfaces or behind walls that are out of sight. Usually, these leaks are found when someone goes looking for the source of an unusual or mold-like odor.

How can you prevent the small chronic water leaks from affecting your tenant spaces?

HAVE YOUR STAFF PERIODICALLY CHECK PROBLEM AREAS. This includes the cabinets below sinks, water fountains, and restrooms on each floor.

REPLACE WATER-STAINED ACOUSTIC TILES WHEN YOU SEE THEM. While replacing the tile, your engineering staff should determine how the stain occurred and ensure the leak has stopped.

PURCHASE A MOISTURE METER FOR YOUR STAFF TO USE IN SUSPECT AREAS. A good GE Protimeter will cost about \$200 but will be worth it for the amount of information it provides to your staff when a leak occurs.

STOP LEAKS WHEN YOU SEE THEM. Next, determine whether you can extract and dry the area quickly. If there is too much water for your staff to remove, call a water restoration company. Their staff is trained to promptly remove bulk water and carefully dry the wet surfaces if there is too much moisture in the materials (ceilings, walls, or floors). They will tell you what they see, the proposed drying time, and recommend removal rather than drying in some instances.

CALL ON A PROFESSIONAL WHEN TOO MUCH WATER GETS THE BEST OF YOU. A trained water-restoration company can save you time and trouble, and they can often get your building running quicker.

If necessary, call an IAQ consultant who can inspect and document the wet surfaces using a thermal image camera. You can never have too much documentation when moisture becomes an issue in your building.

KICK IT INTO HIGH GEAR

AND MAXIMIZE YOUR PRODUCTIVITY AT WORK

Have you ever gotten your first cup of coffee of the day and settled into your office to be productive, but by noon, your assignment is still completely untouched? If you’re struggling to motivate yourself at work, whether you work from home or in an office, here are a few things you can do to get yourself back on track and be productive again.

REEVALUATE YOUR GAME PLAN.

When you take on any project, you may come up with a strategy for the easiest and most efficient way to work on it. But, as the cursor mocks you from the blank screen, that strategy goes out the window. Maybe it’s time to make a new plan. By backing up a few steps and changing up your approach, you may spark some action and get moving!

STOP MULTITASKING.

While multitasking can be beneficial, consistently splitting your attention between activities can lead to burnout and reduced creativity, especially if the activities are unrelated to the same project. Tackle just one task at a time — this way, you will be completely dedicated to the project at hand instead of trying to do everything all at once.

TAKE A BREAK AND WALK.

According to a Stanford University Study, taking a break and going on a walk may help you think in a different way than you did before. When you step away from the desk and get moving, the ideas can start to flow.



Who knows, maybe when you get back, you’ll feel like your current task is much simpler!

GET RID OF DISTRACTIONS.

When you’re drawing a blank, it’s easy to whip out your phone and see what your friends are up to on social media or to check the weather for the upcoming weekend. Maybe you’d rather sort your emails or even surf the web. But being productive and focused means closing all unnecessary browsers, putting the phone away, and saving the emails for later. Keep your attention where it needs to be.

To kick butt at work, managing your time in ways that are conducive to optimal productivity is key. Experiment with different strategies to get the ball rolling on all of your assignments!

HAVE A LAUGH WITH TRAVIS



CHICKEN WITH LEMON HERB SAUCE

Healthy eating doesn't have to be bland with this citrusy chicken!

INGREDIENTS

- 1/3 cup and 2 tbsp olive oil, divided
- 4 boneless chicken breasts
- 1 clove of garlic, minced
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 1/2 cup parsley, chopped
- 1/3 cup mint, chopped
- 1 1/2 tsp pepper
- 1 lemon, for juice and zest

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat oven to 450 F.
2. In a large ovenproof skillet, heat 2 tbsp olive oil.
3. Season chicken with salt and pepper if desired and sear it in the skillet for 3 minutes on each side. Bake chicken until its internal temperature is 165 F.
4. In a blender, add 1/3 cup olive oil, garlic, salt, parsley, mint, pepper, and lemon zest and juice and blend ingredients until coarsely mixed.
5. Top chicken with sauce and serve!