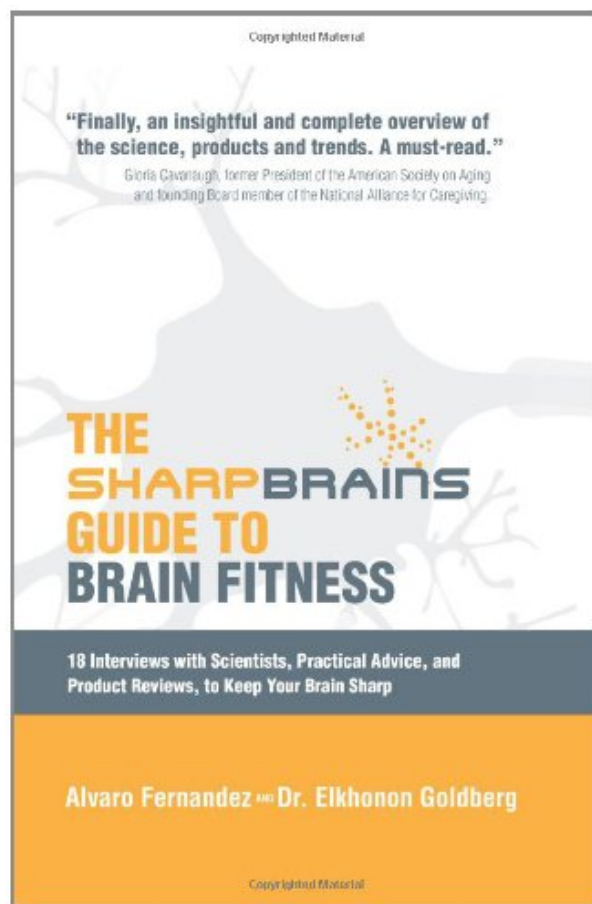


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Alvaro Fernandez ^{MD} Dr. Elkhonon Goldberg

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Selected by AARP as part of its Best Books Series, The SharpBrains Guide to Brain Fitness is an invaluable guide that helps readers navigate growing brain research and identify the lifestyle factors and products that contribute to brain fitness. By gathering eighteen of the top scientists and offering insight, tools, and detailed descriptions of over twenty products, this text is an essential guide to the field of neuroplasticity and cognitive health. An accessible and thought-provoking read, this book also engages readers on emerging trends and forecasts of what the future will hold. While most of us have heard the phrase "use it or lose it," very few understand what "it" means, or how to properly "use it" in order to maintain brain function and fitness. The SharpBrains Guide to Brain Fitness is designed to fill this gap.

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Most helpful customer reviews

30 of 31 people found the following review helpful.

Great Resource for Brain Fitness... A Must Read !!!!

By L Holmgren

I had great expectations for this book and was not disappointed.

This book is a great resource for learning the basics of the different brain areas and varied brain functions. I

learned in Chapter 1 how to improve learning abilities based on the varied ways of learning. If a child is having a difficult time in learning, changing the technique of learning is indicated. In schools, variations must be used with learners that are not learning in the traditional manner. The interview with Dr. James Zull discussed this point. This was not a central point of Chapter 1 but I thought that the comments on education were really interesting.

Chapter 1 also discussed how neuroplasticity is at the core of brain fitness. An interesting study was described, stating that London taxi drivers have a larger hippocampus than London bus drivers due to the taxi drivers need to decide on varying routes compared to the bus drivers having set routes during their day.

The most helpful chapter of this book for me was Chapter 2. The chapter delved in to the 4 pillars of brain health. The four pillars of brain health are: balanced nutrition, stress management, physical exercise, and mental stimulation. Before reading this book, I knew that what is good for the heart is good for the brain. What I learned was how critical physical exercise is for brain health. The chapter went into great detail for each of the 4 pillars and discussed scientific studies related to each area. The book stated that brisk walking for a total of 3 hours each week can halt or reverse brain atrophy. This chapter has straight forward information on how to make a difference in how you work towards brain health and fitness.

Chapter 4 delved in to the different brain training programs that are available to the public. I had no idea that there were so many different programs available outside of the medical and educational professions. The different programs were discussed without bias, which was really appreciated. The programs were broken down into an easy to compare chart and then discussed in detail. This chapter was quite helpful to me in finding a stress management product.

This book also has thought provoking questions for group discussions and or book clubs listed in Chapter 7. The questions listed will bring the topic of brain fitness front and center to debates with families, friends, and colleagues. What better way to stimulate the brain than to take a walk with a friend and talk about the book.

Highly recommended.

26 of 28 people found the following review helpful.

Mediocre

By PRCalDude

This book advertised way more than it provided. The interviews with the scientists contained in this book were basically segues into a marketing brochure for the scientists' expensive commercial brain-training software. Most of this software is only superficially-researched or lightly-proven to work.

There were some useful ideas for those who are unfamiliar with attention training, such as mindfulness meditation. However, Jon Kabat-Zinn's work is far more in-depth and research-based than what these authors present, and JKZ started his research 30 years ago.

In summary, I say that readers would be better-served by doing PubMed searches on "working memory," "attention training," etc, and buying a stress reduction book by Jon Kabat-Zinn.

And exercise and eat well and all the stuff you already know you should be doing anyway.

21 of 22 people found the following review helpful.

The SharpBrains Guide to Brain Fitness

By Diane M. Keefe

This practical guide outlines the new landscape of brain science and provides a structure for enhancing one's

brain health: it rates current products available to maintain the brain and offers proactive tips to ensure a healthy aging brain.

This book also offers hope to those challenged with PTSD and other types of traumatic brain injury by instructing readers to increase capacity and work with the brain's innate power to rewire itself through learning new skills and abilities. The authors have interviewed the prominent scientists in the field for the most recent research and insight so it is chockfull of information.

I would recommend this book to everyone who is interested in a healthy brain and increasing its ability to develop a more fulfilling life.

Diane Keefe
Geriatric Care Manager
MA Gerontology

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