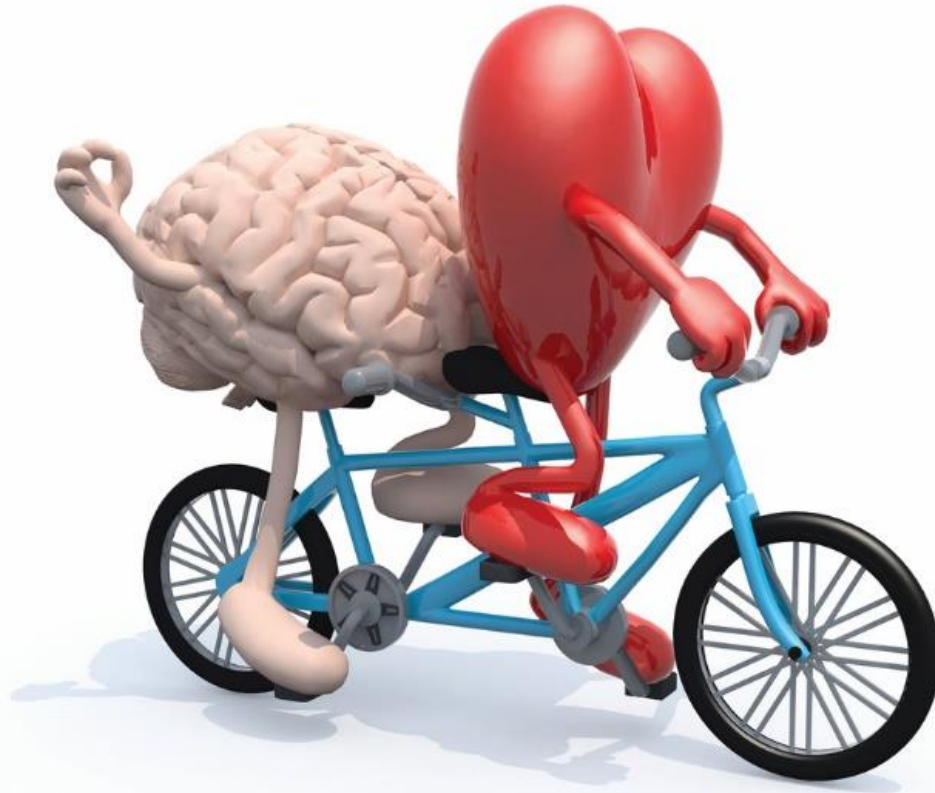


Barbara Cherry  
Professor Emeritus, Psychology  
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# Building Happy Brains

- Physical activity
- Meaningful activity
- Cognition
- Gut Health
- Emotional Health

# Keep moving!



- Take the stairs
- Park farther from the door
- Walk a dog
  - borrow a dog

# Meaningful Activity

## Robot and Frank



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q4y8YAMPFhk>

# Table 1. Top Meaningful Activities

Activity	Meaningfulness M (SD)
Spending time with loved ones	3.48 (0.78)
Supporting family members' or friends' goals and interests	3.34 (0.71)
Caring for children and other family members	3.12 (0.91)
Helping others	3.08 (0.77)
Education/Learning/School	3.03 (0.89)
Persevered at a valued goal even in the face of obstacles	2.98 (0.92)
Expressed my gratitude either verbally or in writing	2.93 (0.92)
Traveling	2.90 (1.03)
Listened carefully to another's point of view	2.90 (0.86)
Sleeping	2.86 (0.95)

M: mean (average); SD: Standard deviation

*note.* adapted from Hooker et al., 2020, Table 3.

Arash Emamzadeh

# Meaningful Activities (con't.)

- In an hour or two
- In a day or two
- In a week or two

# Cognition: Building Reserve

- Cross Word puzzles, Jumble
- Words with Friends
- Jig-Saw puzzles
- Sudoku
- Reading
- <https://www.thehealthy.com/aging/mind-memory/free-brain-games/>

# Super Agers

**YOUTHFUL MEMORY OF**  
**Superagers**

- › Exercise help in superaging
- › Memory on par with 25 year olds
- › Keeping brain active by working hard at something

© www.medindia.net

An elderly man with grey hair, wearing a grey t-shirt and dark shorts, is running on a treadmill. He is smiling and looking towards the camera. The treadmill is a standard indoor model with a handrail and a control console.

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/healthy-aging/what-does-it-take-to-be-a-super-ager>



# Emotional Health: Happiness Exercises

- **Gratitude** visit
  - Write and deliver a letter of gratitude
- **Three good things** in life
  - Write down 3 things each day that went well and why
- You at **your best**
  - Write about when you were at your best and reflect on personal strengths in the story. Review story each day.

# Happiness Exercises (con't.)

- Identifying **signature strengths** (top five)
  - [www.authentichappiness.org](http://www.authentichappiness.org)
  - [www.viacharacter.org](http://www.viacharacter.org)
  - Use one of these each day in a new and different way.
- Using **signature strengths**
  - Use five highest strengths more often during the next week.

# It's all about your environment!!

- Activity Levels
- Health Behaviors
- 
- Social Support
- Culture
- Diet
- Lifestyle Patterns
- Education

# Happy Brains

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C7dPqrmDWxs>

