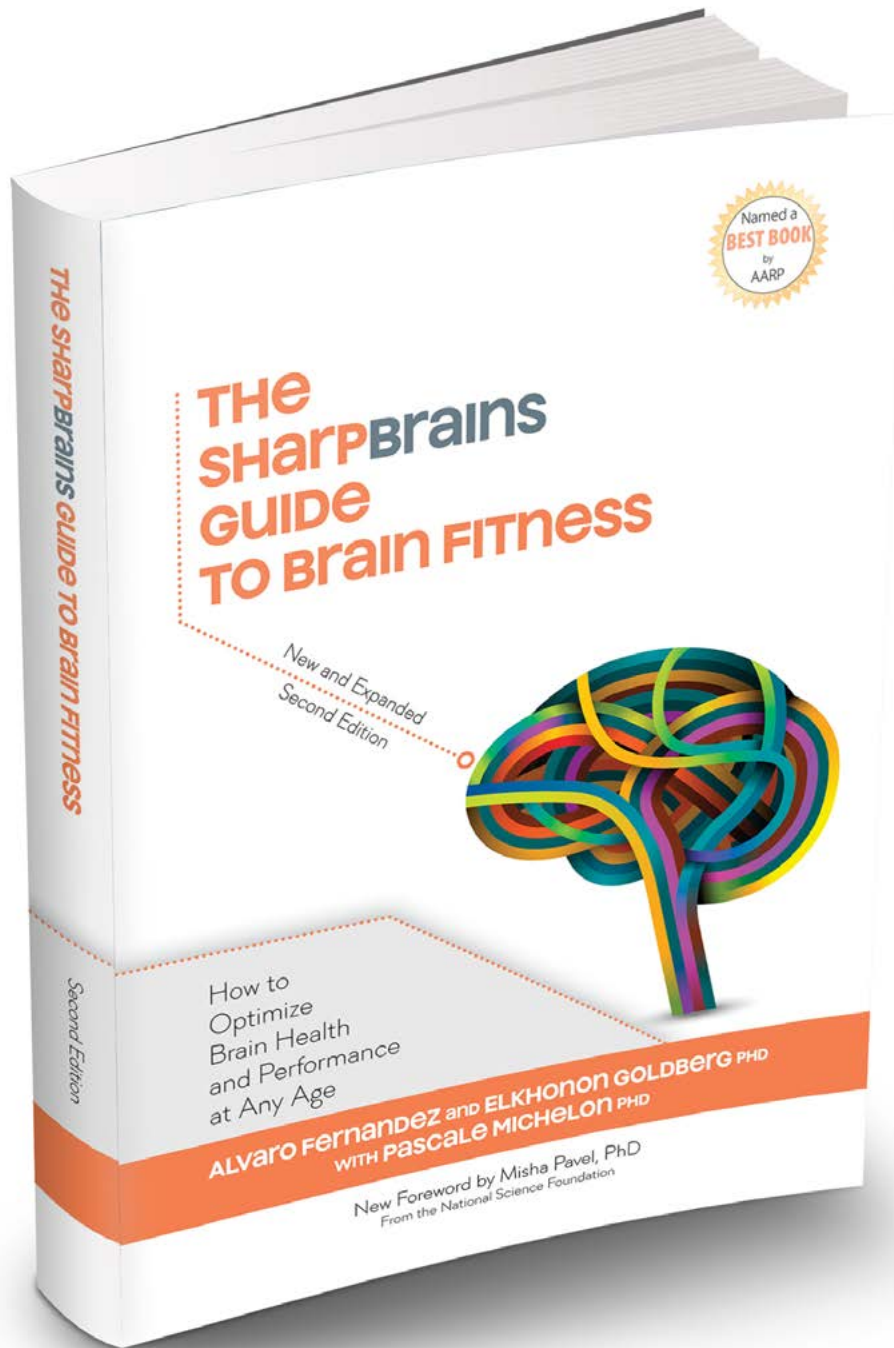


DISCUSSION GUIDE



The SharpBrains Guide to Brain Fitness:
How to Optimize Brain Health and Performance at Any Age (2013)
By Alvaro Fernandez, Dr. Elkhonon Goldberg, & Dr. Pascale Michelon

Visit sharpbrains.com to learn more

What better way to stimulate our brains than to explore and discuss the latest brain science and how to apply it?

We are pleased to offer the following materials to foster group discussion of the recently released SharpBrains' book with your friends, colleagues, students.

Below you will find information about the book and 20 questions designed to elicit through-provoking conversation on various topics presented in the book. Feel free to pick and choose the questions that seem best suited for your group, and of course do not hesitate to let the discussion guide itself as the conversation starts to get interesting!

To your Unique Brain, and Unique Mind,
The SharpBrains Team

REVIEWS

"Using charts, drawings, and up-to-date scientific studies, (The SharpBrains Guide) presents the case that any brain, at any age, can change for the better ... The authors suggest myriad activities to help the process along ... (This is) A stimulating, challenging resource, full of solid information and practical tips for improving brain health."

—**Kirkus Reviews**

"On a personal note, I have to say I wish I had read this awesome guide when I was much younger."

—**Scott Barry Kaufman, PhD, at Scientific American**

"A book for everyone who wants to act and live smarter and healthier, based on latest neuroscience."

—**Dr. Tobias Kiefer, Director Global Learning & Development, Booz & Company**

"A great start for making sense new brain science and for taking active steps towards Smart Health."

—**Misha Pavel, PhD, Program Director at the National Science Foundation**

"A much-needed resource to help us better understand our brains and minds and how to nourish them through life."

—**Susan E. Hoffman, Director, Osher Lifelong Learning Institute at UC Berkeley**

BOOK DESCRIPTION

Modern life places extraordinary demands on our brains. Not only do we live longer than ever before, but we must constantly adapt to complex and rapidly evolving personal and professional realities. Yet, despite our tremendous efforts to meet the various challenges life presents us with, we often ignore the single most precious resource that enables our ability to function and perform: our brain.

The SharpBrains Guide to Brain Fitness cuts through the clutter of misinformation to present a scientific, objective and unbiased portrait of the brain health field. Allowing readers to move beyond superficial and conflicting media coverage, and aggressive marketing claims, this book reveals what really does and doesn't work to enhance mental fitness. In doing so, this work provides an education on how to improve brain health and performance at any age, to delay or prevent cognitive decline, and become smarter consumers of both media coverage and scientific research.

QUESTIONS

1. Prior to reading this book, what did "Use it or lose it" mean to you? What does it mean to you now?
2. What have you learned about your brain that has surprised you the most?
3. What have you been doing over the last couple of years to help maintain your brain in top shape?
4. How would you define neuroplasticity? And, why does it matter?
5. What are some key brain functions to nurture and maintain other than memory? And why may attending to some of these other functions result in a better memory?
6. At what age should we start thinking about brain health and fitness? Why?
7. Is the brain fitness value of doing 25 crossword puzzles different depending on whether those are our first ever 25 puzzles or whether we already have done 10,000 puzzles before? Why?
8. What type of evidence do book authors use to support the book's ideas? Does it seem convincing? Relevant?
9. Why is physical exercise good for the brain? How do different types of exercise seem to affect the brain?
10. How are your diet and your brain connected? Can you give precise examples of what to do, and what not to do?
11. What leisure activities effectively stimulate and challenge the mind? Are crossword puzzles among them? Why or why not?

- 12.** Can you explain the mechanisms by which stress may affect the brain and thus cognitive performance? Under what circumstances does stress adversely or beneficially affect the brain?
- 13.** How is meditation a kind of brain training? Why do you think the practice is not as widespread as yoga?
- 14.** Can you define brain training and compare it to mental stimulation?
- 15.** Which of the brain training techniques that you read about in the book stand out most to you?
- 16.** Have you tried any of the computerized brain training programs discussed in the book? If so, what has your experience been?
- 17.** Which vignette in Chapter 9 did you find most personally relevant and valuable?
- 18.** Which interviews did you enjoy the most? Which one left you wanting to learn more, and why?
- 19.** How can the growing field of brain fitness affect the way we live our personal and professional lives? How may it affect yours?
- 20.** Do you feel better equipped now to understand, navigate and discuss new science and new ways to optimize brain health and performance? How do you plan to stay abreast of this rapidly developing field?