

What Has Dr. Shook Been Reading?

Keep Your Brain Alive, 83 Neurobic Exercises to Help Prevent Memory Loss and Increase Mental Fitness, by Lawrence C. Katz, Ph.D. and Manning Rubin. Workman Publishing Company, New York.

When I was a girl I remember my Grandma worrying about her forgetfulness. I assured her "...everyone forgets things...", that she was "...worrying because society has taught us that old people are forgetful.". Well today, I'm much more sympathetic to those concerns of my Grandma. I was most delighted to find a book about preventing memory loss and increasing mental fitness.

Keep Your Brain Alive is a pleasant and fun little book that begins with an easy to understand explanation of how the brain works. Lawrence and Rubin have presented in a simple and effective manner a topic that has the potential of being hugely complicated and overwhelming. What the areas of the brain are called what they do and how they work together.

Meet your cerebral cortex, with its centers for touch, vision, hearing, muscle coordination and abstract reasoning. Say "Howdy" to your limbic system that processes emotions and learn how the sense of smell directly stimulates memory and emotions. In a flash the brain coordinates, memory, language, abstract thought, emotions, sight, sound, touch, smell and muscle activity.

Goodness Gracious! ... It is truly awesome.

Use it or lose it, exercising many different muscle groups will enhance the flexibility and coordination of your muscles and joints. Activating many different brain areas in novel ways will activate nerve circuits increasing your minds mental flexibility and coordination. Lawrence and Rubin have suggested sensory stimulating exercises for the home, office, vacation and commute. They call these exercises Neurobotics.

Here are a few examples of Neurobic exercises. Shower with your eyes close. Buy whole foods preferably at the farmers market, touch and smell the fruit and vegetables, Ask for a taste. Turn off the TV during supper. Read out loud. Drive with the car windows open. Eat Chinese food. Go camping. Rearrange your desk. Brush your teeth or put on your make up with your non-dominate hand. And (Hooray hoorah) according to Lawrence and Rubin, sex can be the ultimate Neurobic Workout (See page 51.).

Brushing my teeth with my left hand was hard. Showering with my eyes closed was easy. All in all it seems like a lot of fun.

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