

Healthy Living Feature How To Fix Your Broken Brain

By MARK HYMAN, M.D.

Boost Your Brain Power

Most of us have experienced conditions such as depression, anxiety, memory problems and trouble focusing or just plain brain fog. We think these problems are all in our heads. However, in his pioneering new book, "The UltraMind Solution," Mark Hyman, M.D., explains how the real causes of these problems are in your body, not your head. By simply addressing the underlying causes of mood, memory and behavior problems you can boost your brain power and have a calm, confident, focused and happy mind.

Stop the Brain Damage

The three-pound organ in your head is very sensitive. So if you want to feel happy, alert and focused, start being sensitive to its needs. Ditch the high fructose corn syrup and sugars, trans fats, processed and packaged foods (which contain up to 3,500 food additives and chemicals). Choose organic foods and grass-fed animal products to avoid hormones, antibiotics and the gallon of neurotoxic pesticides each of us consume every year. Filter your water. Wear a helmet when doing sports that put your head at risk. Stop or reduce brain-

damaging medications (acid blockers, statins and acetaminophen).

Optimize the Seven Keys to an UltraMind

If you fix your body you will fix your brain, automatically. The seven basic systems of the body must be optimized for your body (and brain) to function properly. Here's all you need to do: optimize nutrition; cool off inflammation; balance your hormones; fix your digestion; enhance detoxification; boost your energy metabolism; calm your mind. And optimizing the seven keys to an UltraMind is simple. Follow this roadmap that automatically balances the seven keys: eat right for your brain; tune up your brain chemistry with supplements; sleep, rest and exercise for your brain; live clean and green.

Step 1: Eating Right for Your Brain

To boost your brain power, you need the right nutrition. Eat real, whole, organic, ideally local food. Become a fat head (60 percent of your brain is made up of omega 3 fats) by eating sardines, wild salmon, herring, omega 3 eggs, flax seeds and walnuts. Eat protein for brain power every morning and with every meal. Include foods such as eggs, nut butters, protein shakes, beans, nuts and

seeds and lean animal protein. Eat brain food, otherwise known as the right carbs: whole fresh vegetables, fruits, beans and whole grains. And eat colorful fruits and vegetables with phytonutrients — hidden brain protectors with healing anti-inflammatory, antioxidant and detoxifying compounds.

Step 2: Tune Up Your Brain Chemistry with Supplements

We need nutritional supplements because we don't hunt for or gather wild foods anymore, and we live in a toxic world under a lot of stress. Our depleted diets cause 92 percent of us to be deficient in the minimum amount of nutrients needed for optimal brain function. Vitamins and minerals run the chemical reactions in your body and brain that make happy-mood chemicals, cool inflammation, help you detoxify, make energy and more. So take a daily multivitamin, omega 3 fats (1,000 mg of fish oil), vitamin D3 (2,000 IU), calcium (600 mg), magnesium (400 mg) and the special brain-boosting B vitamins folic acid, B6 and B12. And take probiotics to keep your gut healthy — a happy gut is a happy brain.

Step 3: Get a Good Night's Sleep

Sleep is one of those things we take for granted — until we can't. If you are having trouble falling asleep, staying asleep or getting enough sleep, try to change your relationship to sleep. Think of it as a sacred, precious, healing part of your day and prepare for it carefully. Avoid substances that interfere with

sleep, like caffeine, cold medications, alcohol and sugar. Get back in rhythm by going to bed before 11 p.m. and sleeping eight hours. And create a peaceful, sleepy environment, clear your mind, write down all your worries and tasks before bed and relax by taking a hot bath.

Step 4: Find Your Pause Button: Relax

Finding our pause button is something we never learn. Healing, repair, renewal and regeneration all occur in a state of relaxation. So how do we find the pause button and activate the parasympathetic nervous system, otherwise known as the "relaxation response"? Try my two favorite ways: First, take five breaths into your belly to the count of five, then breathe out for five. Do this five times daily. Or second, take a bath — draw a hot bath, add two cups of Epsom salts, one cup of baking soda, 10 drops of lavender oil — and one stressed human. Soak for 20 minutes just before bed.

Step 5: Exercise

While most of us accept the benefits of exercise on our bodies, perhaps its most powerful effect is on our brains. It helps rewire our circuits and improve learning, memory, concentration, and focus. And it is the best antidepressant and anti-anxiety therapy available. So all I ask you to commit to is this: Walk vigorously for 30 minutes every day. That is the only exercise you need to do for an UltraMind.

Step 6: Live Clean and Green

Our brains are exquisitely sensitive to environmental toxins and stresses. There is an intimate connection between the sustainability of our own health and the health of the planet. Small everyday choices lead to big changes over time for our communities, our planet and ourselves. Living clean and green involves four steps:

1. Drink clean water (use a reverse-osmosis filter).
2. Limit your exposure to chemicals and metals by eating organic and using green household products.
3. Keep your body fluids moving by drinking plenty of clean water, eating fiber to move your bowels daily and sweating to get rid of toxins through the skin.
4. Reduce your exposure to electro-pollution or electromagnetic radiation.

Make the Changes Permanent

To keep these changes permanent, you'll want to continue eating fresh, whole, real foods, and avoid processed foods, high-fructose corn syrup, trans fats and other toxins. You should also keep tuning up your brain chemistry with supplements, and make a habit out of getting good sleep, finding the pause button daily, moving your body, and living clean and green.

The UltraMind Solution

Once you have followed The UltraMind

Solution for six weeks, you'll likely find the results include a happier mood, better memory and less brain fog, as well as renewed energy, weight loss, improved health, clearer skin, improved sleep and more. To find out more details of this plan based on "The UltraMind Solution," by Mark Hyman, M.D., you can download a free sneak preview of the book [here](#).

Based on "The Ultramind Solution" by Mark Hyman, M.D.