

mon père
mon oncle

ma grand-mère paternelle

mon grand-père

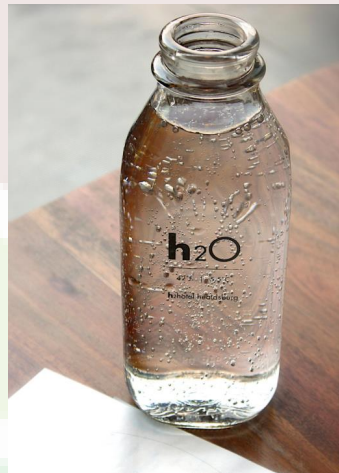
ma grand-mère maternelle

mon oncle

mon père

ma sœur

mon



By Kate Kunkel

Meeting our Challenges

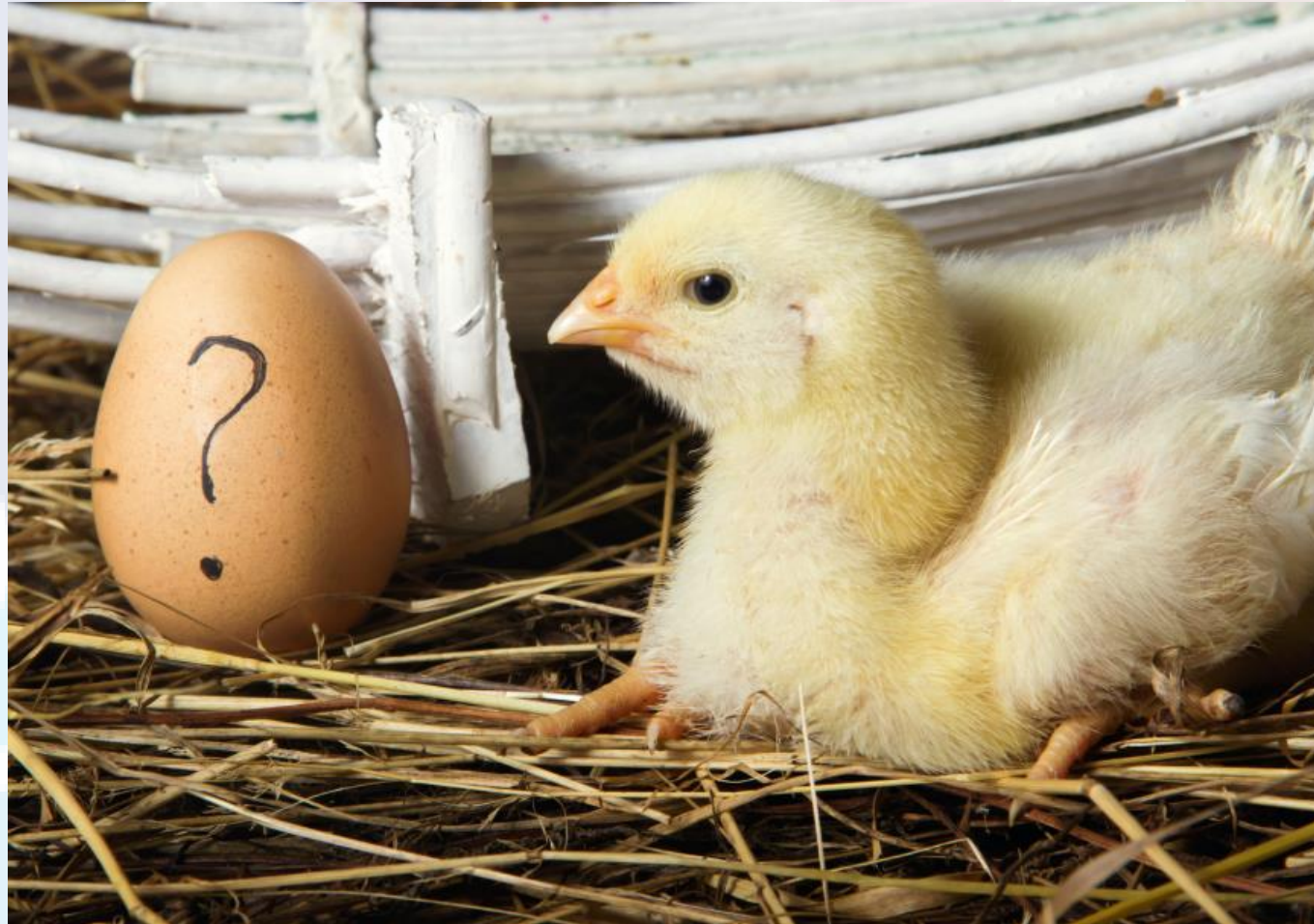
Every day, we are faced with countless decisions, financial pressures, responsibilities at work and at home, physical health challenges, and even stress from political and social events.

Every one of these factors impacts our mental and physical health and, ultimately, the health of our brain.

At the same time, we need a healthy brain to be able to make good decisions and deal with the multiple joys and challenges of life.

The dilemma is, how to get a good brain if you can't make good decisions, and how to make good decisions if your brain isn't healthy.

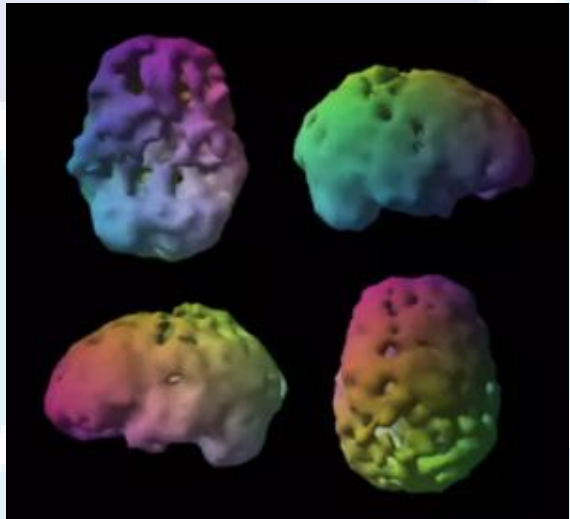
It's like the chicken and the egg...



A Healthy Brain

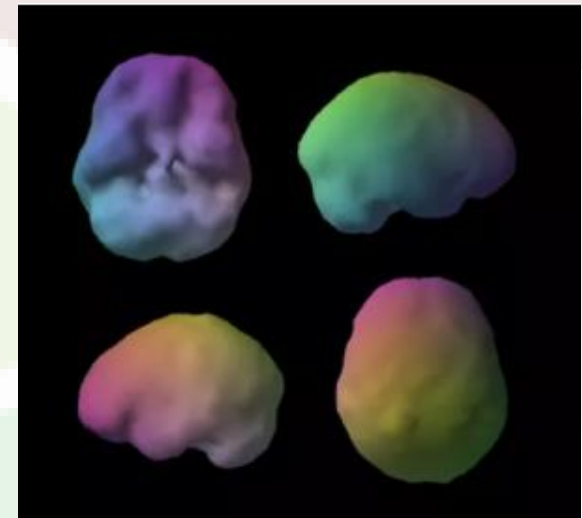
If your brain is unhealthy,
life is much harder.

Harder to make good decisions
Harder to have good relationships
Harder to have a successful business



If your brain is healthy,
life is much easier.

Easier to be physically healthy
Easier to be happy
Easier to enjoy life



So that's why we're going to dig into these five key tips to help you maximize your brain health.

But first, who the heck is Kate Kunkel? And why should you listen to me?

Well, I'm a sound therapist, vegan nutritionist, Dr. Amen Licensed Brain Health Professional, and author of several books on brain health including *The Musical Brain* and *Don't Let the Memories Fade*.

So, I do have a bit of knowledge about brain health. And I've coached hundreds of people to a healthier brain over the last decade.

But the reason I'm so passionate about helping you protect and improve your brain is because I am, first and foremost, the eldest daughter of Inez Kunkel, who died with dementia.

It is my mom's tragic journey through this terrible disease that inspires me every day to do whatever I can to help you avoid that terrible fate.



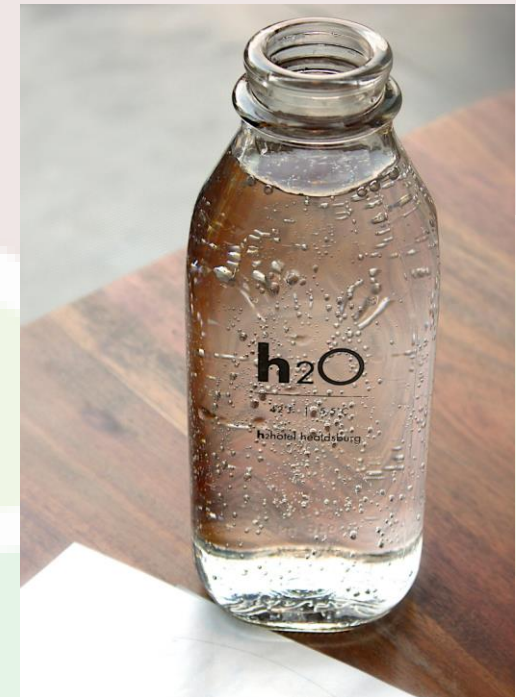
Step No. 1

Drink More Water

Why? Dehydration can lead to memory loss, impaired cognition, and decreased mental performance.

While the short-term effects of dehydration can be reversed by drinking water, chronic dehydration can have serious, long-lasting, negative effects on your brain.

It's also important to note that your thirst receptors are not as precise as you age, so it's common for older people to get dehydrated.



How Much and What Kind?



How much you drink depends on your weight. Newer research suggests that you drink between half an ounce and an ounce of water for each pound you weigh, every day. So if you weigh 160 pounds, drink 80 to 160 ounces of water a day.

Your physical activity, how much you sweat, the temperature and humidity levels of your environment, what you eat, the medications you take, and many other factors determine if that is enough. But please, avoid drinking out of plastic bottles.

Plastic bottles, even if they are labeled “safe”, are not. If you must purchase water on the go, buy it in glass bottles. If your water at home is not pure, consider buying a water purification system and take glass or stainless steel bottles with you.

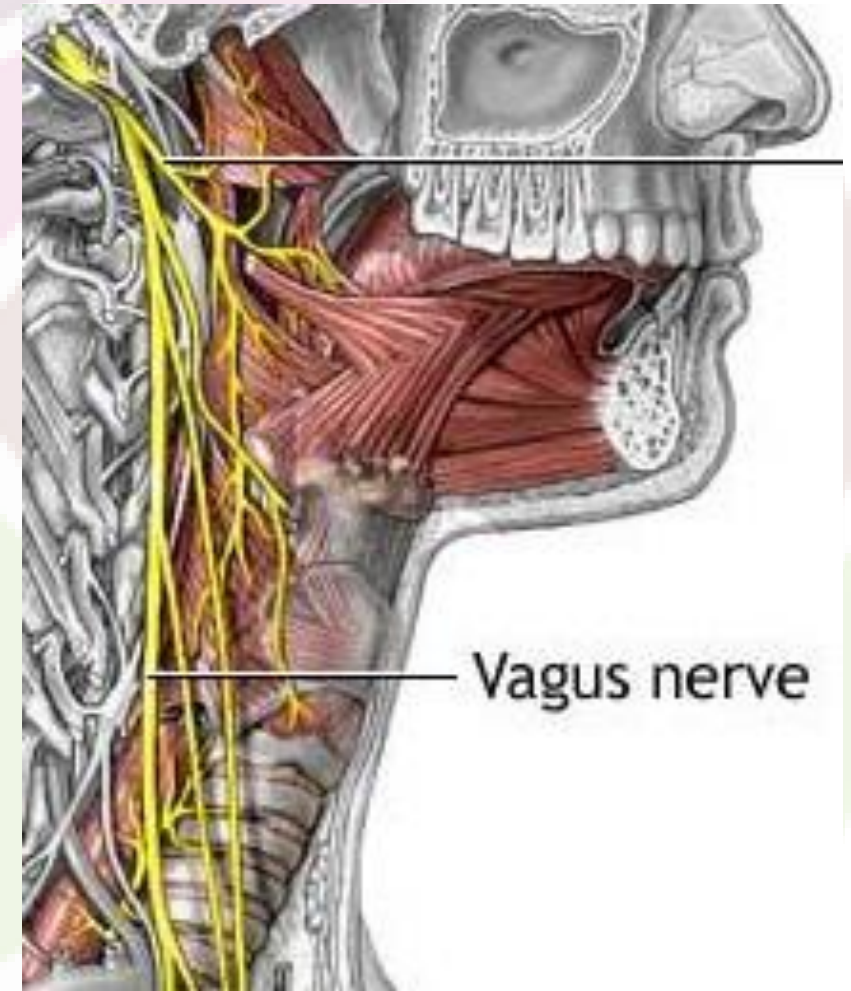
Step #2

Hum

I can imagine this surprises you a bit, but this is one of the easiest yet most powerful things you can do to enhance your brain.

Why? Because it stimulates the vagus nerve, which is the information superhighway between your gut and your brain and all of your other major organs. It runs right behind your vocal cords.

Poor vagal tone makes brain fog, forgetfulness, and other cognitive decline much more likely.



How and What to Hum

You're going to love this. Fun and easy.

Hum anything you like, anywhere you like. You can do it while you're cleaning, gardening, walking, studying, reading, whenever you think of it.

If you want to increase the brain health benefits of humming, it is best to do it purposefully and mindfully at least part of the time.

That means to set yourself up with some good deep breaths and exhale the hum. I've created a demonstration of this technique, which you can access on my YouTube channel [HERE](#).



Step #3

Exercise

Consistent exercise is one of the most important things we can do for our health overall. It is a natural anti-depressant, helps with weight control, regulates blood pressure, and helps alleviate stress.

This does not mean marathons or endurance challenges. We're talking 30 minutes of aerobic exercise 5 times a week. Ideally get in a total of about 150 minutes per week.

Aerobic means you get your heart pumping. That means you're oxygenating your brain (and everything else in your body) and that also means you work up a sweat, which helps detox.

If you can't fit in 30 minutes all at once, break it up into two or three sessions over the course of a day.



What kind of exercise?



Anything that gets you moving and that you enjoy, because then you're more likely to do it consistently, which is essential. The best activities that are backed by studies to help improve brain health are:

- Table tennis: Not only is it physically challenging because you must use hands and arms and legs and feet, it also uses a certain degree of strategy, which means you are using your analytical skills.
- Walking: Preferably outside, and at a pace rapid enough to get your heart rate up.
- Dancing: Not only is it good exercise, but if you are waltzing or doing salsa or something else that requires specific footwork, you are also engaging more parts of your brain. And because it is a social activity that is also employing the brain-boosting power of music, is one of the best exercises we can do.



Step #4

Learn Something New



The old adage of “use it or lose it” is especially true when it comes to our brains.

In fact, one of the biggest risk factors for developing dementia is... retirement! Studies in the U.K., China, and the European Union have all demonstrated that retirement accelerates the decline in verbal memory function, and delayed recall, which can be a predictor of dementia.

People who have had less opportunity to learn also have less cognitive reserve, meaning if something happens, like a traumatic brain injury, it is more difficult to overcome that to maintain brain health

It is essential to keep the mind active, and one wonderful way is to keep learning new things.

What to learn?

It doesn't really matter WHAT you learn provided it is something new. You want to get those neurons firing in different places in the brain, building new connections. If there's something you've always wanted to learn or do – Go for it! And if you do it with other people, all the better, because social interaction is also essential for a healthier brain. Some things that have been studied specifically because of their benefits to the brain include:

- Learning a musical instrument: Many studies support learning a musical instrument as being one of the best things to improve brain function because it uses many parts of the brain. It doesn't matter which instrument.
- Learning a second language: This is almost on a par with learning an instrument. Plus, it opens up a whole new cultural perspective, and if you combine it with trying some of the cuisine enjoyed by native speakers, you'll be expanding the benefits of this new learning.



Step #5

Practice Mindfulness



While meditation can be an integral part, mindfulness simply means doing tasks with focused intent. When we give our full attention to something, we are training our brain to focus.

It is the opposite of attempting to do what many people aspire to but is actually impossible... multitasking.

By being mindful of our actions, thoughts, and feelings, we are also reducing stress. By doing just one thing at a time or sitting quietly and allowing our thoughts to settle down, we put our bodies into the parasympathetic, rest and relax state that is so important for a healthy brain.

By being mindful as we go about our days, we are also more likely to experience JOY in everyday things.

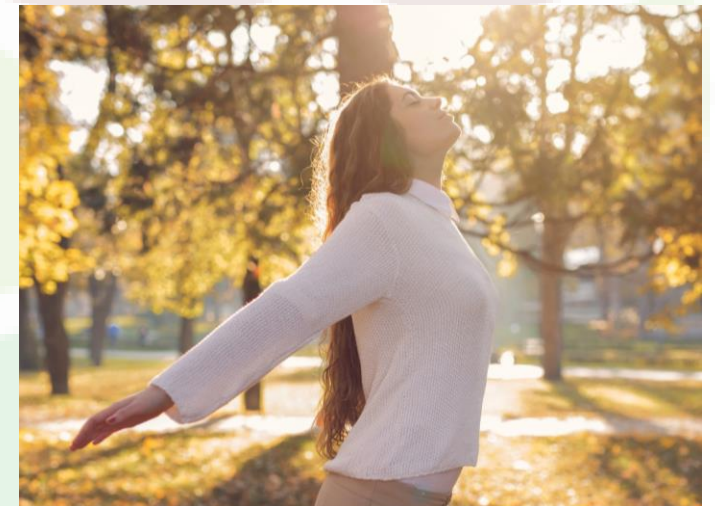
Some Beautiful Mindful Practices

- Gratitude Journaling: make a gratitude list every night. As you're brushing your teeth or having a warm bath or shower, think about all the things you are grateful for that day. When you carry that feeling of gratitude with you to bed, you are also improving your chances for a good night's sleep – also essential for a healthy brain.
- Eat Mindfully: How often do you eat while you are doing something else, like reading or listening to a podcast? Every day, be sure to eat at least one meal completely mindful, paying attention to each morsel of food you ingest. What does it smell like? What is the texture? Is it sweet, sour, salty or spicy? Experience the chewing, enjoying the release of the flavors. Try it first with a piece of fruit like an orange or a strawberry.



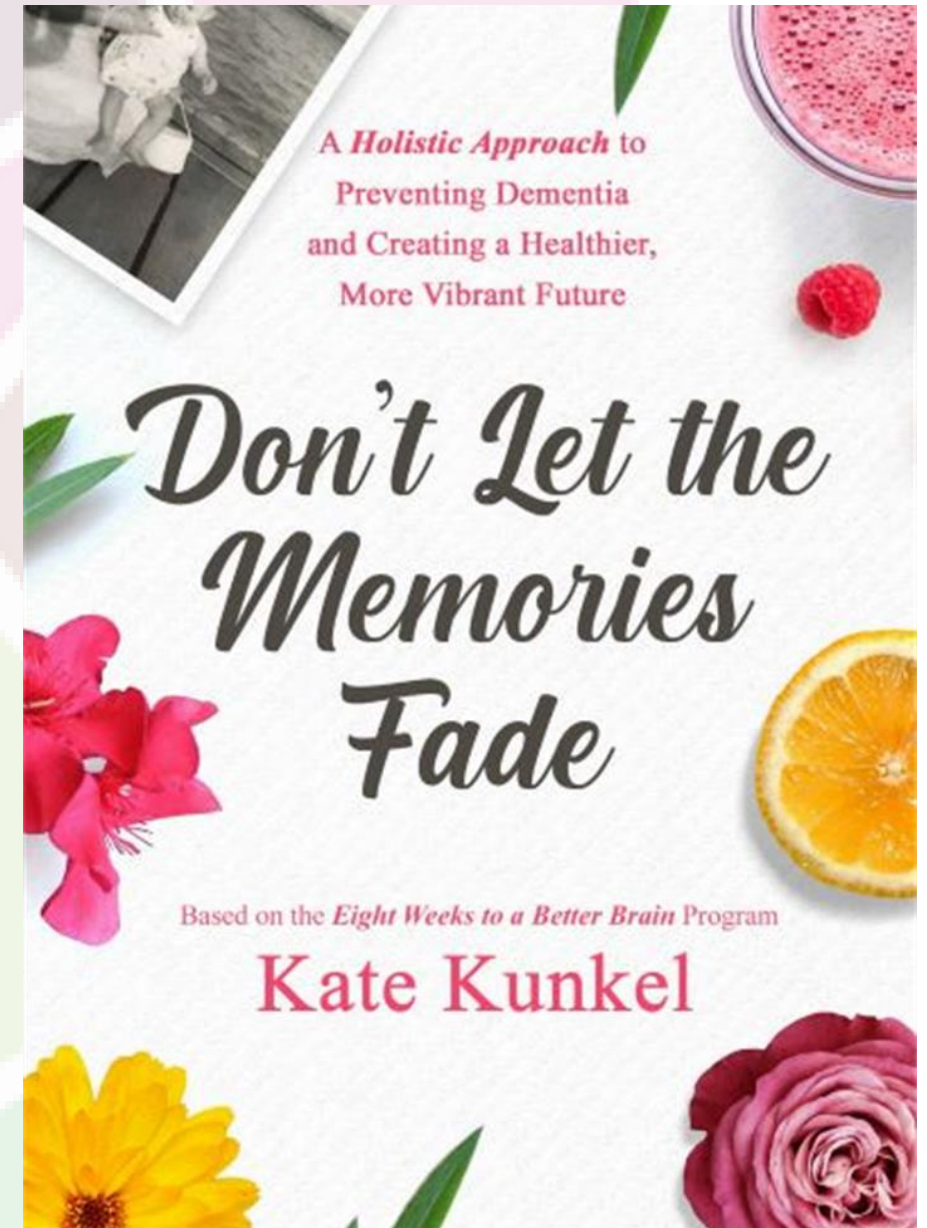
More Mindful Practices

- Walk Barefoot on grass or sand: This connects you to the earth (grounding), empowering your body and brain with the negative charge of the earth. Also, by paying attention to each footstep – its imprint in the sand or grass, and how it feels on the soles of your feet – you are connecting consciously to the earth. After all – it is our home. It deserves our attention and respect!
- Mindful Breathing: This can improve our mood, reduce blood pressure, and clear brain fog almost instantly. One easy way to is to “box breathe”. Breathe in, pulling your breath down to your diaphragm, over a count of 5 or 6 – whatever you can manage. Hold it in your lungs for the same count, exhale to that count, and then hold again for that count. Do this 3 times to bring your attention to your breath. This can be used in stressful situations or just to center yourself.



Summary

- A healthy brain is the cornerstone of everything we do. Without a healthy brain, life can be very hard.
- The five key steps here can make a huge difference in the health of your brain, but they are not the only things you can and should do to improve the health of your body and brain and reduce your risk of developing dementia later on.
- Eliminating sugar and processed foods, adopting a plant-based lifestyle, and reducing the toxic exposure in your life are also important parts of a brain-healthy lifestyle.
- To learn more, please dive into Kate's book, "Don't Let the Memories Fade". Everything you need to know to develop a brain-healthy lifestyle is right there.
- More details are [RIGHT HERE](#).



Thank you for taking the time to learn with me. Please let me know how you made out with these Five Key Steps.



Kate

To learn more about my work, visit

BrainHealthMatters.Today

If you'd like to chat with me, I invite you to set up a FREE 30 minute consultation HERE.

I'm always happy to help in any way I can.