



DAVID DOUGLAS WELLNESS

David Douglas School District
— WELLNESS —

HAPPY Newsletter

November 2016

The Power of Positive Thinking

We have all heard the phrase, the power of positive thinking but what does it really mean and how does it affect our health? We hope that this article will give you a little insight to how positive thought can help you be healthier and happier.

To start, let's talk about neuroplasticity. Neuroplasticity is an umbrella term referring to the ability of your brain to reorganize itself, both physically and functionally, throughout your life due to your environment, behavior, thinking, and emotions. The concept of neuroplasticity is not new and mentions of a malleable brain go all of the way back to the 1800s, but with the relatively recent capability to visually "see" into the brain allowed by functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI), science has confirmed this incredible morphing ability of the brain beyond a doubt. Your brain is constantly changing. It's affected by everything that happens to you. Every action you take and even every thought you think changes your brain, Dr. Rudolph E. Tanzi is a professor of neurology at Harvard who discovered the first Alzheimer's gene. He co-authored the book *Super Brain: Unleashing the Explosive Power of Your Mind to Maximize Health, Happiness, and Spiritual Well-Being* with Deepak Chopra. In it they put forth a mind-blowing concept that the brain is not a *thing* as much as it's a process

They go on to explain, "If you think of everyday experience as input for your brain, and your actions and thoughts as output, a feedback loop is formed. The old cliché about computer software — garbage in, garbage out — applies to all feedback loops. Toxic experiences shape the brain quite differently from healthy ones. This seems like common sense, but neuroscience has joined forces with genetics to reveal that right down to the level of DNA, the feedback loop that embraces mind and body is profoundly changed by the input processed by the brain."

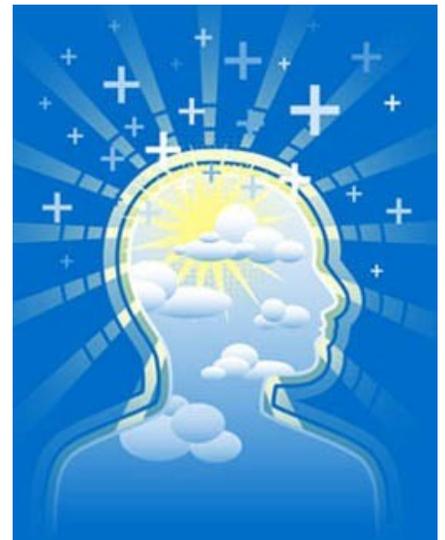
Tanzi and Chopra sum up the recent discoveries that make it possible for anyone to improve their brain:

- Your brain is constantly renewing itself.
- Your brain can heal its wounds from the past.
- Experience changes your brain every day.
- The input you give your brain causes it to form new neural pathways.

The more positive the input, the better your brain will function.

Thus, when you are engaging in positive thinking you are forming neural pathways that make it easier for you to continue to see the positive in situations. The reverse is also true, but what is amazing is that you can literally change your brain!

Continued on page 3



In This Issue

- Healthy Eating p2
- App of the Month p2
- Wellness around the district p3
- Out and about in Portland p3
- Press Play p4

Healthy Eating

This recipe is one the whole family will enjoy and a great way to enjoy the Fall.

Paleo and Kid-Friendly Sausage Stuffed Acorn Squash

Ingredients:

- 2 acorn squash, halved and seeds scooped out
- pinch of sea salt
- 1 tablespoons grass-fed butter
- 1 lb all-natural pork sausage, no casing. Or sub ground turkey breast
- 1 medium yellow onion, diced
- 1 celery stalk, diced
- 2 apples, red-ish variety, chopped
- ¼ cup almond flour
- 1/2 teaspoon sage
- sea salt and pepper to taste
- 1 eggs, beaten
- 2 tablespoons fresh, chopped parsley

Directions:

Pre-heat the oven to 400 degrees.

Step 1: Place the acorn squash face up in a casserole dish or baking sheet. Rub the acorn squash with the melted butter and season lightly with sea salt. Bake for 1 hour or until the squash is soft and can be pierced easily with a fork.

Step 2: While the squash is cooking, brown the sausage in a sauté pan. When the sausage is done cooking, remove from the pan and place in a colander to drain. Leave the sausage drippings in the pan. Add the onion and celery and cook until the onion is translucent, about 5 minutes. Add the apples and cook for 2 more minutes.

Step 3: In a large bowl, combine the sausage, the vegetables and the almond flour. Taste and season with sea salt and pepper if necessary. Add the egg and the parsley and combine well.

Step 4: Place the sausage mixture into the cavities of the squash and cover with aluminum foil. Bake for 20 minutes.

<http://www.cortneychaite.com/2016/01/kid-friendly-paleo-sausage-stuffed-acorn-squash/>



App of the Month

This month's featured app is a nod to the holiday in the month of November, Thanksgiving! The app is called Gratitude 365. This is a great and easy way to have your gratitude journal with you at all times so you can jot down all the great things that happen in your life. You can create a daily entry and even add a picture. The app then gives you the ability to display these pictures in a calendar. You can track how many days you've written in your journal and how many total gritudes you have. It also has a passcode feature. When you record all that you have to be grateful for it makes your tough days a little easier.



Congratulations to our first Facebook challenge winner!

Jeff Schaffer, teacher at Floyd Light, was our first Facebook challenge winner. Keep an eye on the Facebook page for the next challenge.

Floyd Light Hood to Coast 2016 Team: "No Bathroom Pass"

Doug Pease

Chris Butler

Dena Henry

Kim Tucker

Jim Lofthus

Doreen Maness

Stephanie True

Andy Locke

Wellness challenges around the district:

Earl Boyles has a "Happy" Walk every Tuesday morning where they walk in the gym for 20 min and purposely keep the conversation on positivity.

West Powellhurst is having an 8 Healthy Habits challenge.

Positive thinking cont.

Some of the health benefits to positive thinking are as follows:

- Increased life span
- Lower rates of depression
- Lower levels of distress
- Greater resistance to the common cold
- Better psychological and physical well-being
- Reduced risk of death from cardiovascular disease
- Better coping skills during hardships and times of stress

Rick Hanson, Ph.D. is a neuropsychologist, Senior Fellow of the Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley, and bestselling author of *Hardwiring Happiness: The New Brain Science of Contentment, Calm, and Confidence*. He describes the brain as being like Velcro for negative experiences and Teflon for positive ones. This negative bias is a survival mechanism that kept our distant ancestors out of danger but has become counterproductive in the modern world.

According to Hanson, you can train your brain to focus on the positive with these simple steps. First, look for and recognize those little bits of good wherever you find them. It doesn't matter if it's as small as a smile from your significant other, an enthusiastic greeting from a beloved pet or the satisfaction of crossing an item off your to-do list. Next, savor this positive experience. Visualize it in vivid detail, recalling how it made you feel since we remember things better when they are associated with an emotion.

Dr. Hanson recommends trying one of the following daily for at least three weeks to help increase both optimism and life satisfaction.

- Jot down three things you're grateful for.
- Write a positive message to someone.
- Meditate for two minutes.
- Exercise for ten minutes.

Write down the most meaningful experience of the past 24 hours.

LET'S GET STARTED ON POSITIVE THINKING!!!

Get out and around Portland

Veterans' Day Run

November 12 Mt Tabor Park

5K or 1-mile walk to honor veterans

http://veteransdayrun.com/#/register/portland?_k=wqk5hz

Cranksgiving

November 19th 1pm at Velo Cult

Cranksgiving is a treasure-hunt food drive on bikes – teams visit a list of stores and buy a list of items. Items are donated to Outside In, which serves homeless youth.

<http://puddlecycle.com/cranksgiving/>

Turkey Trot!

Multiple options

November 23rd 7pm at Portland International Raceway

<http://htcraceseries.com/event/turkey-trot-5k-runwalk/>

November 24th 8am at the Oregon Zoo

<http://orrc.net/events/event-list/turkey-trot-4-mile-run-and-walk-with-kids-tot-trot/>

Tofurky Trot

November 24th 9am at Oaks Park

<http://www.eventbrite.com/e/tofurky-trot-2016-in-pdx-tickets-24222688714?aff=ebapi>

Press Play

“It is a happy talent to know how to play.” -Ralph Waldo Emerson

Play. It is the stuff of our earliest memories. It is the place where we created worlds of wonder, experienced the thrill of victory and the agony of defeat, and tried adulthood on for size. It’s where we learned that, after being cooped up all day, there is little more in life that will bring you more joy than carousing for a bit with your friends.

“We don’t stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing.” -George Bernard Shaw

Grown-ups are often accused of having forgotten how to play. It’s harder for us to let go. To be lighthearted. But just because it’s hard doesn’t mean it isn’t worth doing. In fact, quite the contrary. Play builds bonds between people, leads to innovation, and propels us into new discoveries about ourselves and the world. And no one on Earth knows this in their bones like professionals who work with kids.

“The creation of something new is not accomplished by the intellect but by the play instinct.” – Carl Jung

When a member of our staff sits down to work with a child, whether it is in the same room or across the miles via the miracle of modern technology, they endeavor to create new neural pathways that will give rise to new skills.

When a member of our staff carves time out of their day to go for a run, to belly laugh with friends, or to sit on the floor being silly with their own children, they create new balance that will allow them to be more fully present in their work.

When a member of our staff discovers a fresh use for an old toy, or tries an unfamiliar app for an old familiar task, they create exciting new possibilities for themselves and for the children they serve.

And what do all of these things have in common? You guessed it.

Play.

Push ourselves to play more, in new and different ways, and we’ll encourage those we know and work with to do the same. Playing alone is almost never as much fun as playing with others, though. So c’mon. Join us.

Stand up, dust the cobwebs off, and *Push Play*.

Written by Kelly Bawden for the Hello Foundation

Do you have ideas for an upcoming newsletter?

An app you use everyday? A favorite healthy recipe? A great relaxation technique to share with your co-workers?

Please submit ideas to
meagan_lutu@ddsd40.org



Staff Dodgeball at Fir Ridge!