



## DOING WELL

*and Cheers to Loving Life*

Happy March! I don't know about you but I am so happy to be on the precipice of warmer weather. Spring is my second favorite season after summer. A lot of beauty to be seen and experienced, but it is the air of renewal that is so exciting! I personally feel it even more this year, because I am in a season of rebuilding and revitalization.

This month's focus ended up being on brain health. There is so much interest in the brain amongst my community because many of us are of the age where our parents (and sometimes even peers) are being affected by health issues that are in the dementia or brain disorder spectrum. I was literally working on the focus piece of this newsletter, 'The Mighty Brain', when I heard about Wendy Williams diagnosis of dementia and aphasia. She's not even 60 yet. So I don't know about you, but I'm doing everything I can to be in the know as to how to prevent or slow down any health issues that I can, and I hope that the tip of the iceberg that I've shared below, is of some help.

And finally, be on the lookout for upcoming events for people who are looking to find love or enrich the love that they have; we are going 'old school' people! I am in the process of developing IRL (in real life) events and opportunities to connect organically. And not only connect, but come together and talk out some of our perceived differences. I am partnering with some folks who have been out here in these trenches and agree that it is time to start coming together again, live and in person. Make a friend, find a love, grow the love you have, but please just come on out! We can do this and we're going to have some fun and adventures along the way!

# **THE MIGHTY BRAIN**

Your healthy brain is everything, literally. It is your ability to move, speak, understand, recall, experience emotion, and just plain be alive. Unlike other body parts and organs, which we learn to live without or can be replaced, when the brain dies, that is pretty much it. When the brain is irreversibly damaged or incurably ill, independent function often ceases, and progressive decline is basically inevitable. The brain is mighty, and so much is still unknown.

Fortunately, we know enough to be proactive with regards to brain health. For me it became personal, as I work through my mother's Alzheimer's diagnosis and all that is to come. As I was preparing to write this, the awful Wendy Williams news regarding her dementia and aphasia diagnosis, came out. She is not yet 60 years old, and life as she knew it is just going to continually decline.

Keeping your brain as healthy as possible should be top of mind, pun well intended. Learn better in order to be better. The information shared today, is just a dot in huge drawing, as there is so much territory to cover; but hopefully it will lead you to your own journey with regards to being healthier, being proactive, and helpful to loved ones who may now be living within the spectrum of their own brain health prognosis.

## **Types of Brain Disorders**

There are multiple types of brain disorders. Dementia has become a catch all phrase for memory issues, both reversible and irreversible; there are many types of dementia, with Alzheimer's being the fastest growing type. Outside of dementia, there is brain cancer, Epilepsy, mental disorders, Parkinson's and other movement disorders, and strokes.

There is also damage to the brain, caused by a traumatic physical injury, which is typically caused by an external event and not usually predictable or prevented through lifestyle change (except for those activities where wearing a helmet is strongly suggested/mandatory).

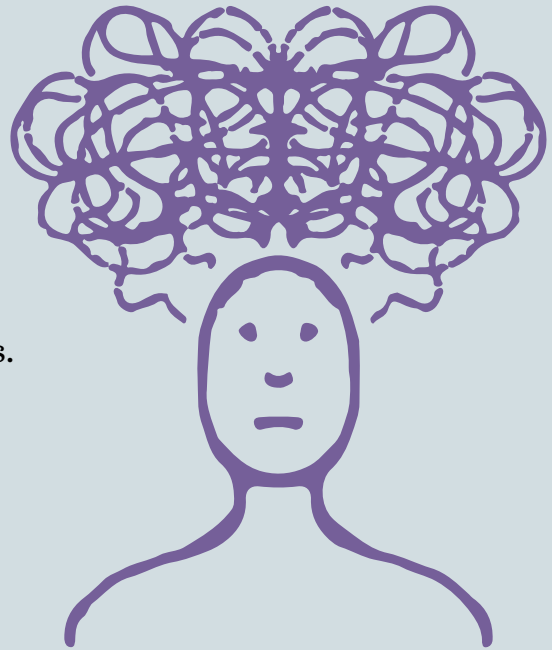
## **Signs and Symptoms of Brain Disorders**

What are some of the symptoms that help us to become aware that there is more than just a little forgetfulness going on? Well firstly, understand that forgetfulness is normal for people of all ages, especially when you have so much stimuli at the same time, that you are not fully processing information in a way that it will be recalled. That is said to say, don't panic right off the bat.

The signs of brain dysfunction will depend on the underlying cause. For instance, cognitive disorders cover a very wide range from intellectual disability, dementias, autism spectrum disorders, stroke, persistent mental illness, brain injury and more.

## Signs of Cognitive Brain Disorder

- Difficulty processing information.
- Difficulty in expressing thoughts.
- Difficulty understanding others.
- Shortened attention span.
- Inability to understand abstract concepts.
- Impaired decision-making ability.
- Personality changes
- Confusion about time and place
- Memory loss.



Then there are brain tumors and cancers. While all brain cancers are tumors, all brain tumors aren't cancerous. If they grow large enough, they can start to impact vital functions as the tumor presses upon parts of the brain that controls those functions. It is important to know the signs so that tumors can be diagnosed and treated. Treatment and prognosis vary greatly, due to the many forms of this disease.

## General symptoms of a brain tumor

- Headache or pressure in the head that is worse in the morning.
- Headaches that happen more often and seem more severe.
- Seizures
- Nausea or vomiting.
- Eye problems, such as blurry vision, seeing double or losing sight on the sides of your vision.
- Balance issues & difficulty walking
- Memory problems

## **Tips to Keep Your Brain Healthy**

The good news is that in addition to the scientific community learning more each day and hopefully getting closer to cures and enhanced treatments, there are things we can add to our lifestyle that will go a long way towards lowering your risks for keeping your brain healthy:

**1.Exercise regularly** – scientific research has shown that people who exercise regularly are less likely to experience a decline in their mental function, due to the increased blood flow to the brain.



**2. Get plenty of sleep** – Consecutive sleep is said to give your brain time to consolidate and store your memories effectively.

**3.Eat a Mediterranean diet** – Your diet plays a huge role in overall health, including your brain. Omega fatty acids, found in extra virgin olive oil and other healthy fats are vital for optimal cell function, decrease risk of heart disease, and increase mental focus, while slowing cognitive decline in older adults.

**4.Stay mentally active** – Exercise your brain through puzzles, reading, card games and try to find a way to keep learning.



**5.Remain socially involved** – It's important to have people in your life for social engagement. Social interaction helps to ward off physical and mental challenges, such as stress and depression.

**6.Keep your blood vessels healthy** – As mentioned above the blood flow to your brain is crucial, as is healthy blood pressure, blood sugar, and cholesterol to help ward off stroke, and other brain related illnesses or damage.

These tips are not only a prescription for brain health, but overall health. Choose to be well!

### **Resources:**

[10 Early Warning Signs of Dementia that You Shouldn't Ignore](#)

[Mayo Health Clinic: 6 Tips to Keep Your Brain Healthy](#)

[Society of Nuclear Medicine & Molecular Imaging: Types of Brain Disorders](#)

[John Hopkins Medicine: Brain Tumors and Brain Cancer](#)

[Cleveland Clinic: Brain Cancer \(Brain Tumor\)](#)

# Cultivating Connection: A Proactive Approach to Thriving Relationships

## Benefits of couples coaching:

- Improve communication and commitment
- Gain tools for conflict management
- Foster deeper understanding
- Tap into emotional regulation skills
- Develop shared goals and plans to achieve them

Couples coaching is about working with an expert prior to serious issues that may be too advanced to save the relationship. If you are questioning whether to take your relationship to the next level or if you are already in a committed relationship, and want to develop a skill set to keep it growing in love, then coaching is for you.

Couples coaching is not a replacement for couples therapy. For couples seeking to enhance their communication, manage conflict constructively, and strengthen their bond, couples coaching can be a valuable tool. Schedule a complimentary consultation to discuss if coaching is a fit for you.

[SCHEDULE HERE](#)

## Relationship Way

Join our mailing list to learn about events, both virtual and in person, developed for a community of singles, couples, or anyone who is interested in cultivating better relationships.

[Sign up here](#)



## Care Conversations

Join us at the next Care Conversations on brain health  
THURSDAY, MARCH 14TH  
CASCADES LIBRARY  
21030 WHITFIELD PLACE  
POTOMAC FALLS, VA 20165  
6 - 8PM

[Registration Link](#)



[FREE RESOURCE](#)

**BRAIN MD©  
BRAIN HEALTH ASSESSMENT**

This quiz provides general information regarding brain types related to healthy brains. Taking this quiz is not intended to act in place of a medical diagnosis.

[TAKE THE QUIZ](#)