



Why Memory Enhancement is Effective

The brain has “plasticity” or neuroplasticity.” This means that the brain is constantly changing and adapting. The brain’s tremendous compensatory abilities enable it to make up for damages or illness by creating new neural connections and rewiring existing ones.

Michael Merzenich, Ph.D., a neuroscientist at the University of California, San Francisco, says that the brain is a learning machine. (Mercola 2012) He points out that performing activities and exercises that engage your focus will click your brain into learning mode and therefore kick it up a notch.

Dr. Daniel Amen, brain disorder specialist, Director of Amen Clinics, and a New York Times bestselling author, points out that a lack of new learning opportunities will result in diminished cognitive capacity. (Amen 2013) Like a muscle, the brain weakens without use, and is strengthened through exercise. Improving the brain with new and different challenges helps to keep the brain robust and healthy, and builds up the brain’s cognitive reserve.

A cognitive reserve is a storehouse of mental abilities that can compensate for mental deficits. Keeping your brain active and engaged—through brain exercises, mental activities, and social interaction—develops cognitive reserve. Studies show that people with a rich cognitive reserve are less likely to manifest symptoms of dementia. (Botek 2014)

IMEP is effective because:

It puts these scientific findings to use. Through brain games, cognitive training, mental agility exercises and new learning experiences, participants strengthen their cognitive reserve, which can help improve overall brain function.

It addresses individuals holistically—as a whole system instead of individual parts. Incorporating program components that support total brain and body health yields the best results overall, starting with fundamentals such as: adequate hydration, healthy breathing practices, posture awareness, and relaxation.

It provides socialization. A recent study published in the Journal of the International Neuropsychological Society showed that the most socially active seniors had a 70% reduction in their rate of cognitive decline compared with their less social peers. (Szalavitz 2011) IMEP encourages and fosters social interactions and engagement with peers, and offers the dynamics of an interactive and supportive group setting.



COUNCIL ON AGING OF MARTIN COUNTY, INC.

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