

San Francisco Brain 'Expo 2008

Nancy N Byl – Professor, School of Medicine UCSF Sensorimotor Strategies You Can Use To Improve Learning

Although not a presenter to be recommended for our LBE nonetheless she put forward some very interesting facts on neuroplasticity. She had found through her research and practice in Physical Therapy first in rats and then in stroke victims that:

- Our brains are plastic - in other words we can learn throughout life and our potential for learning, including recovery post neural trauma recovery and disease, is enormous
- Exercise is the critical component for positive health and well being

Learning has to be:

Goal orientated
Brain based
Target specific
Exercised

She laid out the foundations for learning:

Adequate hydration and oxygen perfusion
Balanced nutrition
Adequate sleep
Good posture flexibility and strength
Good cardiopulmonary (including good circulation)
Neutral weight/height

Learning also requires:

Non stereotypical behaviours
Desirable **duel** activities
Competing behaviours not simultaneous in time
Behaviours integrating sensory , motor and cognitive **challenges**
Accurate performance (correct 80% of time)
FUN, FUN, FUN

She went on to discuss what we need to do to maintain positive physical and mental health and this was indeed fascinating...couple of snippets:

Learn something new everyday
To quieten the nervous system – swing in a swing, rock in a chair, wrap up in a blanket and roll.
Do something for someone else everyday!

At this point I am concluding this report. Although I felt that she had backed up much of what I believed in and gave me further fascinating evidence and research to learn she did not act on her findings. She and her audience remained in one position throughout the 90 min lecture!

All that Nancy Byl lectured on was in fact all backed up by the following 2 presenters:

LeAnn Nickelsen, MEd
Brain Smart Foods that Maximise Learning

What we eat has a direct impact on the way our brain functions.” Too much or too little of any nutrient can effect the brain and thus learning negatively.....these nutrients subsequently impact which chemicals and how many chemicals are manufactured in the brain. In turn these chemicals control our behaviour or states of mind. They can make us more alert and focused, more relaxed, more hyperactive, more attentive, or downright sleepy and unfocused.”

Here are some little interesting snippets

By 2050 diabetes will have increased by over 400% at the present rate

Omega 3 deficiency can cause depression

Avoid MSG and Aspartame

You need 7 – 9 portions of fruit and veg to kill free radicals.

Here are the ‘14 foods that will change your life’ by Steven Pratt and Kathy Matthews:

1. Blueberries
2. beans
3. broccoli
4. oats
5. oranges
6. pumpkins
7. wild salmon
8. soy
9. spinach
10. tea
11. tomatoes
12. turkey
13. walnuts
14. yogurt

And there’s so much more...but no space!

Then there was.....

Katherine Prior
Yoga Ed. Tools for Teachers

What a fantastic method for developing Health Intelligence.

“Yoga Ed. believes that physical, mental and emotional health and well-being are directly correlated with enjoying successful relationships and a fulfilling life.

Katherine demonstrated and enabled us to practice simple techniques that we could use in the classroom or in the staffroom which have been proven to improve focus, concentration, creativity, responsible behaviour and academic achievement”

Brilliant! Everyone could benefit.