

Can Exercises Help Us Hold On To Our Memories?

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National Public Radio aired “Can Exercises Help Us Hold On To Our Memories?”

This interview with Dr. Art Kramer, and Dr. Gary Small (UCLA Center on Aging) was about the effectiveness of computer games like *Mind Fit* and *Brain Age*. The good news is that you can improve memory, cognitive speed, attention, visual-spatial skills and decision making capabilities. These skills can be retained but the jury is out as to whether they can translate to other skills or can be transferred to the “real world.”

While these games are promising, they do not take the place of the more comprehensive personal brain fitness programs at Sparks of Genius (www.sparksofgenius.com).

A high tech/high touch scientific approach using personalized brain fitness software and other new technologies is available for each person. In addition to this training, many choose to receive help discovering or re-discovering their unique gifts and talents. It’s called identifying, igniting and nurturing sparks of genius. Progress with memory and mental sharpness is measured and transferred to the real world of family and friends.

The games discussed on NPR work with minor to mild memory-related concerns. Used in conjunction with diet, exercise and social interactions, they can enhance memory and cognitive functioning. Dr Kramer mused that one day we could go to our health club, do the memory and speed training skills recommended by our neurologist, do our physical work out and then go to our book club meeting.

In fact, brain fitness centers like Sparks of Genius are already in existence. At Brain Training Summer Boot Camp for 7-12 year olds, we recently integrated exercises which improve physical and mental strength, stamina, speed, balance and flexibility. Computer games to improve memory and attention were a critical part of the program. Personal fitness instructors made sure each child had a sense of accomplishment that would carry over to school, home, friends, sports and the arts.

Can brain exercises also help mature and older adults hold on to their memories? Yes, including “*boomers and beyond*.” Baby boomers include the 75 million Americans who were born between 1946 and 1964. “Beyond” at Sparks of Genius includes adults in their Seventies, Eighties and Nineties.

We support and agree with what Dr. Jeffrey W. Elias, Editor of Experimental Aging Research had to say on the NPR blog of [Can Exercises Help Us Hold On To Our Memories?](http://www.sparksofgenius.com)

“I believe, and research supports the notion, that activity fostering social or cognitive engagement, while at the same time providing a sense of reward and accomplishment, is good for the soul and the brain. It is not just the activity itself that is important, but the sense of accomplishment and reward often leading to greater

willingness to engage in the activities of life. This feeling of increased “self-efficacy” can occur even when the specific effects of training are minimal.”

Can exercises help us to hold on to our memories? The Sparks of Genius answer is yes.

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