

# Brain Storm

by Dakim



## Where Are the Car Keys? Ask a Woman.

A woman is more likely to remember everyday things like where she left her car keys than a man. At least that's what an article printed in *Science Daily* indicated. Psychologists Agneta

Herlitz and Jenny Rehnman in Stockholm found that women excelled in verbal episodic memory tasks like remembering events, faces, pictures and words as well as tasks that required both verbal and visuospatial processing like remembering where a particular object had been last seen. On the other hand, men performed better for remembering non-linguistic (visuospatial) information. So, a man is more likely to remember his way out of the woods. Which may be the answer to why men don't feel the need to ask for directions. (Even if they can't always find the car keys.)

## Stop Us if We've Told You This Before

The experiments of Nigel Gopie of the Rotman Research Institute in Toronto and Colin MacLeod of the University of Waterloo indicate that there's a difference between our destination memory (remembering to whom we've told something) and our memory for information in general. Participants in their study were broken into two groups, each of which looked at the faces of famous people paired with random facts on a computer screen. However, one group, the destination memory group, was asked to actually 'tell' the fact to the face on the screen. While both groups correctly remembered both facts and faces, the destination memory group scored 15% lower on pairing the facts with the faces they told the facts to.

The scientists speculate that this is due to some kind of 'brain drain.' When giving out information, our brain is focused not only on the facts, but upon ourselves. Leaving less immediate resources in our brain for remembering to whom we told the information. Gopie goes on to say that he'd expect to find in an experiment "that people who are self-focused would have worse destination memory." So, narcissists be aware. Be very aware.

## Tables are Turned on Our Dakim Ambassador

While doing a presentation for the residents of Bartley Healthcare, one of our Dakim Ambassadors, Maureen Rossi, was surprised she had a thing or two to learn herself. When she asked what they do to challenge themselves with numbers and logic, the residents said they played *Rummikub*, a strategy game featuring numbered tiles. It holds the attention of people playing, stimulates the imagination, challenges their wits and all while having fun. The Director of the community asked Maureen to play the game with one of the Alzheimer residents, a gentleman who had also suffered a stroke and needed to communicate via a white board. Even so, the resident handily beat the ambassador who promptly went out and contacted the game's manufacturer and persuaded them to donate fifteen Rummikub games to lower income communities. As Maureen said, "I will never again have preconceived notions about what residents can or cannot do."



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# Brain Storm™

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*The Brain Fitness Solution*

## Ginkgo a No Go?



There's no magic memory pill, and apparently, there's no magic memory herbal remedy either. For decades people have taken ginkgo biloba in hopes of having sharper minds and better memories. However, in the largest study of its kind to date, ginkgo proved no more effective than a placebo on attention, memory and other cognitive measures. The study, authored by Dr. Steven T. DeKosky, Dean of the School of Medicine at the University of Virginia, is just the latest to indicate that when it comes to improving memory, you might want to forget about ginkgo biloba.

## The Cold Truth About Alzheimer's and the Flu

A new research study indicates that having a cold or flu may actually speed up memory loss in Alzheimer's patients. In a study conducted at the University of Southampton, UK, patients with mild to severe Alzheimer's who subsequently suffered acute or chronic infections, or even bruises, were more likely to have high levels of a protein involved in inflammation, and also experienced faster memory loss than patients who had low levels of the protein. In fact, people who had high levels of the protein TNF-alpha in their blood—a sign of chronic, ongoing inflammation—had memory loss at four times the rate of those with low levels. Just one more reason to get a flu shot when your doctor tells you to.

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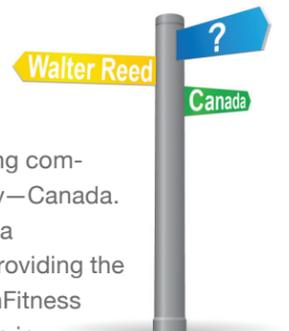
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## Dakim Takes on New Frontiers

by Dan Michel  
Founder and CEO of Dakim, Inc

Here at Dakim, we're already off to an exciting new start trying to expand into other markets. We're taking the #1 cognitive fitness system in U.S. senior living communities to a whole new level, and country—Canada. Thanks to our partnership with Tock Tick, a Canadian-based company dedicated to providing the best in brain health products, Dakim BrainFitness will be available for the first time to families in Canada who are trying to help loved ones facing or currently coping with cognitive decline, dementia and Alzheimer's. Our new relationship with Tock Tick is just the beginning of what we anticipate being a global fight against a disease that already devastates millions and shows no signs of slowing down.



## On the Home Front

Dakim has successfully introduced our system to Walter Reed Army Medical Center, Bethesda, where it is currently being used to assist soldiers with traumatic brain injury (TBI) in regaining cognitive function. Currently 5.3 million Americans suffer from disabilities caused by TBI. And the positive responses we've received from therapists and soldiers alike convinced us that Dakim BrainFitness can be a valuable tool for the rehabilitation of those suffering from stroke and TBI. So, we are thrilled to announce our expansion into the rehabilitation market where we will be able to help thousands of individuals regain some of their lost selves.

The feedback we're getting from speech pathologists in particular is that Dakim BrainFitness is more enjoyable for patients than conventional workbooks and exercises. It provides a thorough cognitive workout with the appearance and humor of a TV game show, customizes the 'show' for each user based on his or her response, and adds variety to the therapy experience. We at Dakim look forward to helping tens of thousands of new users, whether they're seniors or soldiers, enjoy better brain health and a better quality of life in the year ahead.



## Small Thoughts on Longevity

You probably recognize Dr. Gary Small from his recent PBS special, *Living Better Longer*. Or perhaps you've read his latest

bestselling book, *iBrain: Surviving the Technological Alteration of the Modern Mind*. Gary Small, M.D., professor of psychiatry and biobehavioral sciences, is the director of the UCLA Center on Aging and Chief Scientific Advisor for Dakim.

## Multitasking vs. Music

Whether you're 25 or 75, today's rapid pace often requires us to 'do two things at once.' Though we think we can get more done when we divide our attention and multitask, we are not necessarily being more efficient. Studies show that when our brains switch back and forth from one task to another, our neural circuits take a small break in between—a time-consuming process that reduces efficiency. Dr. Gloria Mark and associates at the University of California, Irvine studied the work habits of high-tech office employees and found that each worker spent an average of only 11 minutes per project.

Every time a worker was distracted from a task, it took them 25 minutes to return to it. That is a lot of time they'll never get back.

Some combinations of tasks, however, do appear to improve mental efficiency. This includes performing a task while also listening to music. In particular, music appears to enhance the efficiency of those who work with their hands. Music and manual

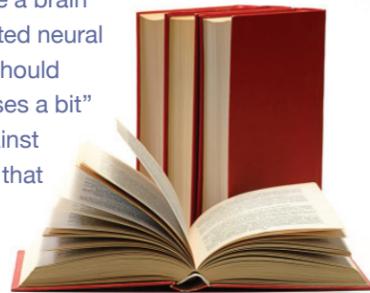


tasks activate completely different parts of the brain; thus, effective multitasking sometimes appears to involve disparate brain regions. You combine this knowledge with research that indicates that music may help lower blood pressure and elevate mood, and there's a lot to be said for turning on that radio.

## Debunkification

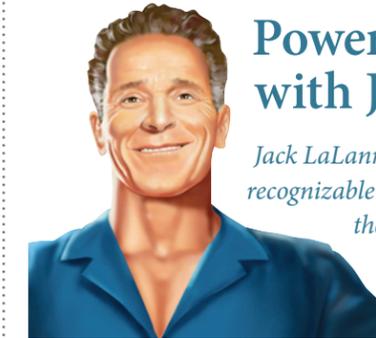
Okay, so that's not a word. Yet. However, the English language is continuously expanding and changing. Have you googled lately? Our brains are capable of doing the same thing. Today the concept of "you can't teach an old dog new tricks" is being debunked by several leading researchers and scientists. 'Neuroplasticity' is the latest buzz-word in brain research. Talk is no longer about losing brain cells it's about gaining new pathways in the brain as we age.

So, how do we go about that? Dr. Kathleen Taylor, a professor at St. Mary's College of California, has a few ideas. She believes that since seasoned adults already have a brain full of well-connected neural pathways, adults should "jiggle their synapses a bit" and "bump up against people and ideas" that are different. Dr. Taylor says, "We need to know stuff. But we need to move beyond that and challenge our perception of the world. If you always hang around with those you agree with and read things that agree with what you already know, you're not going to wrestle with your established brain connections."



She maintains that "As adults we have these well-trodden paths in our synapses. We have to crack the cognitive egg and scramble it up. And if you learn something this way, when you think of it again, you'll have an overlay of complexity you didn't have before—and help your brain keep developing as well."

To put it another way, all of us "dogs" can be taught new tricks by learning how the other dogs do them. And another myth about aging is officially "debunkified."



## Power Aging with Jack LaLanne

*Jack LaLanne is perhaps the most recognizable name in fitness throughout the world. We at Dakim are proud to welcome him as our newest advocate for brain fitness.*

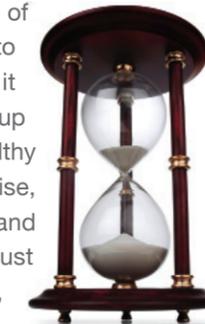
## Time Flies When You're Doing Nothing



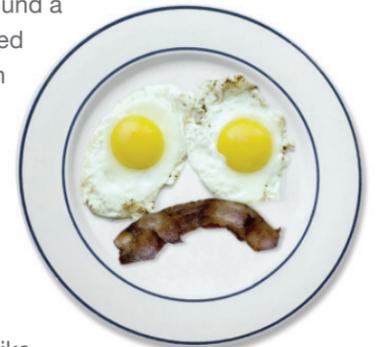
We've all experienced the 'time flies when you're having fun' phenomenon. But research shows that the reverse may also be true. At least when you're attempting to judge how long in the past an event occurred.

In the December issue of the journal *Psychological Science*, a study conducted by Dr. Gal Zauberman of the Wharton School of Business asked students to judge how much time had passed since the occurrence of certain 'news' events, like the appointment of Ben Bernanke as Chairman of the Federal Reserve and Britney Spear's decision to shave her head. Students tended to underestimate the passage of time by months.

The researchers concluded that this was because so many other events regarding those people had taken place in the interim. According to Zauberman, "People have a hard time understanding the passage of time, and in order to understand it we latch onto something we do understand"—the unfolding of events. If very few events occur, the brain somehow associates the lack of activity by telescoping the perception of time. So, if you don't want to the year wondering why it passed so fast, fill the year up with lots of brain-healthy activities like exercise, socializing with friends and learning new things. You just might live longer. Or, at least, it will seem like you did.



If you know me, you know that I would never, ever consider waking up to a breakfast of eggs and bacon. And if the idea of all the fat and cholesterol bacon contains doesn't stop you from taking a bite or 12, maybe this will . . . researchers at Rhode Island Hospital have found a substantial link between increased levels of nitrate (the kind found in bacon) and increased deaths from diseases including Parkinson's and Alzheimer's. So put down that greasy strip of bacon and start eating foods high in antioxidants instead.



Now, we've all heard that foods like blueberries and salmon are good sources, but there are plenty of other foods that aren't getting the press they deserve. Here's a list of the 20 best foods high in antioxidants:

- |                    |                        |
|--------------------|------------------------|
| Red beans          | Strawberry             |
| Wild blueberry     | Red Delicious apple    |
| Red kidney beans   | Granny Smith apple     |
| Pinto beans        | Pecan                  |
| Blueberry          | Sweet cherry           |
| Cranberry          | Black plum             |
| Artichoke (cooked) | Russet potato (cooked) |
| Blackberry         | Black beans            |
| Prune              | Plum                   |
| Raspberry          | Gala apple             |