Improving Our Brain Power
An interview with Gary Null, Ph.D.

Gary Null is one of the founding leaders of the health food movement in the 1970s, and host of the longest running health radio show in America. He has inspired thousands of Americans to adopt healthier living habits, proving that getting older doesn’t mean you have to look or feel run-down. Gary Null is the author of 78 books on a wide variety of health topics such as anti-aging, natural healing, fitness, and nutrition. His latest book, Gary Null’s Mind Power, shows people how to rejuvenate their brain and memory naturally.

In your new book, Mind Power, you write that we don’t necessarily have to lose brain function as we age.

That’s right. We now know that there are many things we can do to stop glycation, which is a primary way that the body ages, creating what we call non-functioning proteins. When you eat the common diet, you create these glycated by-products, and that’s destructive to the body’s biochemistry. But by creating a more challenging environment for ourselves, we can stop the aging process or slow it down. We are doing too many things that are passive.

In regards to mental function, is it correct to say, “Use it or lose it?”

That’s correct. Television, reading, and movies are all passive. We need to be problem-solving, doing hobbies. We need to relax ourselves in better ways to help our whole system rebalance.

Isn’t there a link between exercise and brain function?

That’s correct. Exercise is a missing link, but it’s the consistency of the exercise that’s important. I recommend six days a week, up to 45 minutes a day aerobically, another half hour with resistance exercise. If you’re doing it right, there are many benefits. You’re hitting the muscles, you’re hitting the anaerobic and aerobic systems, and you’re increasing the detoxification process of the liver and kidneys. You’re rebalancing mood hormones, like endorphins, in the brain. You’re lowering your blood pressure, and lowering your cholesterol. You’re raising your metabolism and heart beat while you’re exercising, and also making your resting pulse lower. You’re strengthening the cardiovascular system, and you’re burning intramuscular fat. You’re also gaining more strength, endurance, stamina, and range of motion.

You’ve written that there are over 1,000 substances that may cause brain toxicity, and thus a decline in mental function. Which are the most common?

Most cleaning materials are full of toxins. Then there’s chlorine in the water, which is a very strong neurotoxin that destroys brain cells. Mercury, which is in fish like swordfish and tuna, is also a neurotoxin. Aluminum is toxic; lead is toxic; copper from copper pipes in high amounts is toxic. These things are all toxic to the brain cells; they destroy neurons or interfere in their proper use. Then of course there’s cigarette smoke. There was a time when environmental illness was not considered legitimate, but today there’s whole science divisions focusing on it.

What type of water filtration do you recommend?

The best type of water filtration is one that goes beyond charcoal. Charcoal allows bacteria and viruses through in tremendous amounts, as well as parasites like giardia and cryptosporidium. You need to have a triple filter with baked-in silver, because that will have broad-spectrum anti-bacterial and anti-viral properties. And you need it to be down to 0.5 micron filtration, which will trap most of the other sediment, like heavy metals and pesticides.

You mentioned plaque build-up in the brain. Is there a connection between high-fat diets and Alzheimer’s disease?

Yes, there is. At its very core, Alzheimer’s is a matter of steroid plaque building up in the brain, and this comes from inflammatory responses. So the more things that cause inflammation in the body, the more you’re going to have that happen. Anything you can do that can help neutralize or lessen the impact is going to be good for you. That means getting rid of commercial water that has fluoridation and chlorine, and getting rid of fried foods that create heterocyclic amines, which is a very dangerous carcinogenic chemical and causes inflammation in the brain.

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If you stop all the caffeine, carbonated beverages, artificial sweeteners, processed carbohydrates, dairy and meat products, then that will stop the inflammatory agents from getting in the body. Also taking things like highly concentrated DHA fish oil, and green tea, DHEA, L-carnitine, vitamin C, lycopene, etc—these things help trap additional free radicals, neutralizing them, protecting your body. Antioxidants are like the bullet-proof vest to protect against free radicals, which are the bullets.

You mention chronic inflammation. How big of a problem is this?

It’s the number one cause of physical disease in the world. It’s related to almost all diseases: heart disease, cancer, dementia, Alzheimer’s, Parkinson’s, multiple sclerosis, cystic fibrosis, fibrocystic breast disease, etc.

Which vitamins and minerals do you think are the most lacking in the average American diet?

Vitamin D, vitamin K, vitamin C, and calcium and magnesium. People should take a high-potency daily multiple, and a high-potency B complex. And you want something that doesn’t have all the artificial excipients, binders, and fillers. What’s important is the level of bio-availability. In fact, one of the worst sources of most nutrients is directly from food, because of people’s poor digestion. The average person doesn’t have a good digestive system—they have a leaky gut, or they have over-stressed their digestive system because they have been eating too much food, or there’s an imbalance in the acid/pH ratio. Most people’s diets tend to be far too acidic, and they’re eating too much fat, so the food doesn’t have a chance to get through in a properly absorbed form. The important issue around supplementation is taking the time to get an evaluation, a blood...

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chemistry, to see what you actually need, because this whole idea that "one size fits all" just doesn't work.

You've written that CoQ10 is one of the most important nutrients for people over thirty. Why is this?

It's because the cells of the body diminish in the capacity to create energy, and everything in the body runs off energy. Coenzyme Q10 ensures that your cells have enough energy. It's no different than a car: if you're getting very poor performance from your transmission, your carburetor, your air filter, then you're just going to chug along at a lower capacity. That's no different than what's going on inside the cells of the body. The mitochondria are energy factors of the body. You have from a few dozen to a few hundred per cell. The brain and the heart have the most, because they use the most energy. The brain doesn't weigh but about two pounds or so, and yet it uses up to 20% of the total body energy. So because it's so active all the time, in order not to suffer from brain fatigue or loss of real active cognition, you need to have what is called ATP, or adenosine triphosphate, which is actually the precursor to creating energy. Coenzyme Q10 ensures that your cells actually have that extra energy, and as a result, the heart muscle works more efficiently, as does the brain. I would recommend the average person take 100 milligrams of CoQ10, three times a day.

Don't you advocate the elimination of sugar from our diets?

Yes, no one should be having refined sugar; it's just too destructive. I believe we should educate the public honestly about the effects of sugar. People need to know its connection to cancer, heart disease, digestive disorders, and overgrowth of candida and yeast.

Should we eliminate all meat and dairy from the diet?

Yes. Meat is not designed for human consumption. We secrete enzymes under the tongue which help dissolve and break down carbohydrates. And if you look at the longest-lived and the healthiest people, they're vegetarians, not meat eaters. Dairy products are a throw-off-by-product of the body of the animal. It's not meant for human consumption but for baby cows. It has excess amounts of calcium, phosphorous, sodium, and protein—more than what a human baby or human being requires, and it's highly allergenic.

How much do you think stress affects our health?

I would say that 30% of everything that happens to you is based on stress reactions in the body.

For more information from Gary Null, visit his website at [www.garynull.com](http://www.garynull.com)

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