



Your Brain, Only Better.

April 1, 2011

Volume 1, Issue 4

Brain Bulletin

The Politics of the Brain: Right vs. Left?

Inside this issue:

Builder Spotlight	2
Recipe	3
Puzzles	3
Calendar	4

Sorting through the facts and myths about the brain, I'm sometimes asked, "What's to be done with all this rigmarole about right vs. left brained people?" This is another of those things that has long outrun the original data. The brain works by delegating things to its two halves (hemispheres), and then uses a bridge between the two (corpus callosum) to bring everything together.

Left-handed people are right-brained, and vice versa: not necessarily. The motor skills for one side of the body are on the other side of the brain: that's true, but a preference for certain motor skills (left-handedness) has nothing to do with preferences for any of the other skills on that side of the brain. One might actually prefer the right side of the brain for handedness and still prefer the left side for everything else.


Language is a left-brain task: Most of the time that's true, but sometimes not. Unlike most other general skills in the brain, the location of language skills varies somewhat by individual. About 95% of right handed people process language in the left temporal lobe, with the other 5% using the right temporal lobe. Among south-paws, it's about 70% left, 20% right and 10% split between the two.

So, when you talk about right- or left-brained thinking, what are you saying? That's up to you. While these terms are not likely to go away soon, it's probably best to find more specific ways to express our thinking about our thinking. Most issues, problems and people are simply too complicated to be divided so completely.

(read an extended version of this article and join the discussion on the blog at www.brain-trainers.net)

Left and Right Brain Functions

Left-Brain Functions	Right-Brain Functions
Analytic thought	Holistic thought
Logic	Intuition
Language	Creativity
Science and math	Art and music



Fact or Fiction?

Yes, each side is assigned skills in early development — a process called *lateralization*. But that's where things get oversimplified a little too much:

Math is a left-brained activity: not necessarily. Some math skills, such as counting, are on the left side, but others, such as lines and shapes, are on the right. There's often a mix of both sides in any mathematical activity, depending upon how it's taught. Algebra leans to the left, geometry to the right; for this reason, most people prefer one or the other.

Brain Builder Spotlight

(The Brain Builder Spotlight is an opportunity to get to know people who are working to improve their cognitive abilities. March's Brain Builder is **Richard**.)

Our Brain Builder for April attends classes regularly at Allegro of Fleming Island. Like many seniors, Richard is most concerned with memory loss. While the classes explore many different topics, people who focus on one issue will still find something useful in every class. We sat down with him recently to ask about his choice to attend brain training classes:

Brain Bulletin: How did you hear about our events?

Richard: I heard Matthew speak at Pine-wood Presbyterian Church.

BB: What do you hope to get out of brain training events?

R: To learn more about memory loss and gain.

BB: How has brain training made a difference in your life?

R: I've been learning ways to improve my memory and also meeting new friends.

BB: What have you learned at your trainings?



R: I've learned new techniques to prevent memory loss and how to expand my memory.

BB: What is your biggest challenge?

R: Finding ways to halt memory lost. I don't want to lose any more memory than I have already.

BB: What topics would you like to see in future brain training classes?

A: I'm interested in the effect of foods, family, religion and other areas on improving memory retention.

Study Shows That Regular Training Is Needed



(Article written for SharpBrains.com by Pascale Michelon, Ph. D., originally titled "The Benefits of a One-Time Cognitive Training Program Do Last but Wane Over Time.")

[The IMPACT study, published in 2009,] was a randomized clinical trial with healthy older adults that compared a computer-based cognitive program that trains auditory processing (Brain Fitness Program, Posit Science) with educational video programs (control group). People who used the program improved in the trained tasks, which was not that

surprising, but there was also a clear benefit in auditory memory, which wasn't directly trained.

A 2011 paper reports the 3-month follow-up results of the IMPACT study. The 487 participants in the original study were 65 and older. Training was 1 hour a day, 4 to 5 days a week, for a total of 40 hours in 8 to 10 weeks. There was no contact with the researchers between the initial training study and the follow-up study.

The results showed that 3 months after the initial training most of the improvement observed in the training group was still present, although not as strongly. In other words, without reinforcement, the cognitive training effect was maintained but waned over time. So what's the take-home message? Let's look at physical fitness. We do not expect 2 months of intense abdominal

training to last a lifetime but instead regularly go to the gym. The same is true with brain fitness. It looks like you cannot train your brain for a few months and then stop and expect the benefits to last forever. Regular training is needed.

~~~~~  
Dr. Michelon has a Ph.D. in Cognitive Psychology and is a Research Scientist at Washington University in Saint Louis, in the Psychology Department. She conducted several research projects to understand how the brain makes use of visual information and memorizes facts. She is now an Adjunct Faculty at Washington University, and teaches Memory Workshops in numerous retirement communities in the St Louis area.

# April's Brain Healthy Recipe

Appetizer: Seasonal Fruit Salsa with Cinnamon Tortilla Chips

(contributed by bestfruitnow.com)

## Ingredients for fruit salsa

Serves 8-10

- 1 cup strawberries, chopped
- 3 kiwifruits, peeled and chopped
- ¼ cup mango, chopped
- ½ cup pineapple, chopped
- 1 medium orange, peeled, seeded and chopped
- ¼ cup bell pepper (red, green or yellow), chopped
- ¼ cup green onion, sliced
- 1 Tbsp lemon juice
- 1 medium jalapeño pepper, seeded and chopped



## Ingredients for cinnamon tortilla chips

- ¼ cup sugar
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 2 Tbsps melted butter
- 8 6-inch flour tortillas

## Instructions for cinnamon tortilla chips

1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees F.
2. Mix together the sugar and cinnamon and set aside.
3. Place tortillas on a cutting board, brush with melted butter, and thoroughly sprinkle with sugar and cinnamon.
4. Cut the tortillas into quarters and place on two cookie sheets.
5. Bake for 10-12 minutes.
6. Serve with the fruit salsa.

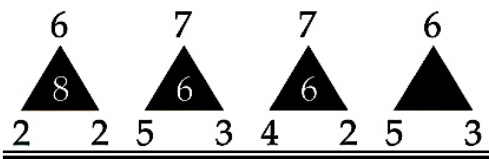
## Instructions for fruit salsa

1. In a large bowl, gently combine fruits, peppers, green onions, lemon juice, and jalapeño. (You can substitute other fruits as desired.)
2. Cover tightly with clear wrap and chill for at least ½ hour. The salsa can be stored in the refrigerator for up to 24 hours.

# Puzzle Corner

## The Empty Triangle

Which figure should be placed in the empty triangle?

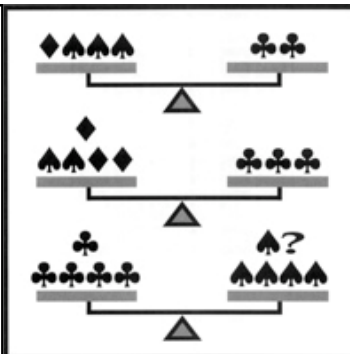


## How Many F's?

FINISHED FILES ARE THE  
RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC  
STUDY COMBINED WITH THE  
EXPERIENCE OF YEARS

## Tipping the Scales

The top two scales are in perfect balance. How many diamonds will be needed to balance the bottom set?



## The Blind Beggar

A blind beggar had a brother who died. What relation was the blind beggar to the brother who died?  
"Brother" is not the answer.

Remember that Logic and Insight are different skills, and must be exercised differently. To learn more, see our classes on Creativity and Logic

Logic

Insight

## Answers from Last Month:

**The Eighth Letter:** "E." The letters are the first letters of the numbers "one" through "seven."

**Rhyming Riddle:** Ward (spelled backwards, it's "draw")

**What's Going On?:** He's in a baseball game. "Home" is home plate, and the masked man is a catcher.

**Tower of Hanoi:** top layer to B, second layer to C, top layer to C, third layer to B, top layer to A, second layer to B, top layer to B, bottom layer to C, top layer to C, second layer to A, top layer to A, third layer to C, top layer to B, second layer to C, top layer to C.

**Don't Forget the Ham!:** changing either the hens or the time changes the number of eggs, therefore double the number of hens (and eggs) to three without changing the time, then adjust time downwards by half a day to get 2 eggs.

Brain Trainers  
Mental Fitness LLC



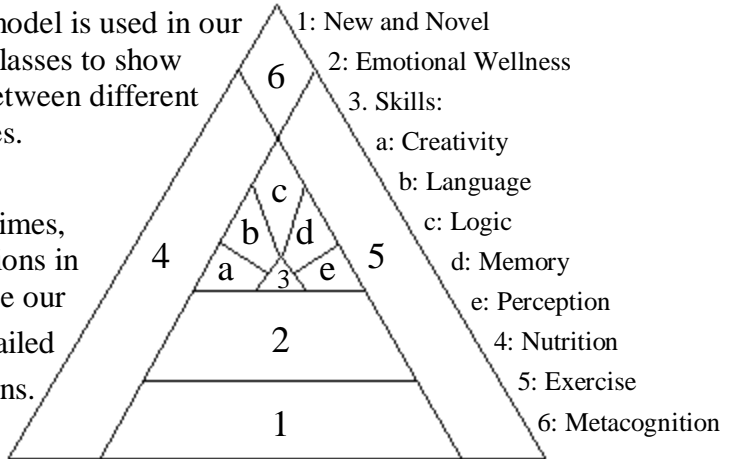
Your Brain, Only Better.

904-699-6034  
matthew@brain-trainers.net  
www.brain-trainers.net

## The Brain Fitness Pyramid®

This pyramid model is used in our brain training classes to show relationships between different mental exercises.

See below for times, dates and locations in your area, or see our website for detailed class descriptions.



© 2011 Brain Trainers Mental Fitness LLC

# April

| Date | Location                    | Time     | Class Name                               | Pyramid Level                           |
|------|-----------------------------|----------|------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
| 4/6  | Elmcroft of Timberlin Parc  | 11 AM    | <b>Special Topic: Music on the Brain</b> | 2: Emotional Wellness & 3: Skills (all) |
| 4/7  | Fleet Landing               | 9:30 AM  | <b>Young at Brain</b> (Please RSVP)      | 1: New & Novel                          |
| 4/7  | Allegro of Fleming Island   | 10 AM    | <b>The Ways of Words</b>                 | 3b: Language                            |
| 4/12 | Allegro of St. Augustine    | 1 PM     | <b>Death, Taxes...and Stress</b>         | 2: Emotional Wellness                   |
| 4/14 | Orange Park Senior's Center | 11:30 AM | <b>Young at Brain</b>                    | 1: New & Novel                          |
| 4/21 | Allegro of Fleming Island   | 10 AM    | <b>Powers of Perception</b>              | 3e: Perception                          |
| 4/26 | Allegro of St. Augustine    | 1 PM     | <b>Clue Chasing</b>                      | 3c: Logic                               |
| 4/28 | Allegro of Fleming Island   | 10 AM    | <b>Nutrition and the Brain</b>           | 4: Nutrition                            |

### Hosts & Locations

#### **Allegro of Fleming Island**

3651 Highway 17  
278-4442

#### **Allegro of St. Augustine**

1101 Plantation Island Drive South  
417-8902

#### **Orange Park Senior's Center**

414 Stowe Avenue  
269-4731

#### **Elmcroft of Timberlin Parc**

7620 Timberlin Park Blvd.  
647-4560

#### **Fleet Landing**

1 Fleet Landing Blvd.  
246-9900