

Linda's Tai Chi

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The Power of a Smidgen by Roger Anunsen

What does a smidgen have to do with brain science and what does it have to do with Tai Chi?

In fact quite a lot. Smidgens could be the key to improving the future of health of our brain.

We are now living in what will forever be known as the golden age of brain science. An estimated 95% of everything that's ever been discovered about the older brains has been discovered since Mt. St. Helens erupted in 1980-and, through brain science, we are now learning how to apply the science to real-life challenges.

After decades of trying, there is still no pill, no tonic, or even enough money to buy our way out of cognitive decline. But, there is some evidence –based good news- we can improve the health of our brains by changing the way we treat our brains, one SMIDGEN at a time.

Our brains thrive on equilibrium (a balanced brain) and thrive on a positive SMIDGEN that is done strategically and regularly.

A positive SMIDGEN is a mini-happy hour that serves delicious, brain healthy food for thought.

Every time your brain is stimulated by anything, a sequence of electrical charges travels through your brain a bit like a pony express, triggering all kinds of chemical reactions to help deliver messages. Over a hundred neurochemicals have been discovered. The best known are dopamine, serotonin, cortisol, endorphins, and oxytocin. To help promote brain health we need to learn how to control the flow of these chemicals- to regulate the negative chemicals that weaken the brain, and stimulate the positive chemicals that strengthen the brain.

SMIDGENS are small doses of positive thoughts or memories that cause the expression of positive chemicals in the brain. This reduces inflammation, lowers anxiety and distress that leads to diminished brain health.

How does Tai Chi help the brain? Deep slow breathing, choreographed movements, relaxed but alert brain and encouraging smidgens to pass through the brain regularly and easily build brain reserve. Research suggests brain reserve can delay onset of neurological decline.

Mind your mind. Your brain changes both structurally and functionally while performing Tai Chi and as you encourage smidgens to form. The more you do it, the better you are at it. As you learn Tai Chi, have fun and enjoy the process. Strive for learning not perfection.

If a negative thought enters your mind, do not stress-out. Acknowledge it and let it pass. Find a smidgen to replace the negative. Your brain thanks you.