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## Preface

### Building A Miraculous Brain

The average person uses only about two percent of his or her mental potential. This is the conclusion of researchers from Stanford University—certainly not slouches in the brain department—who evaluated the neocortex, the thinking part of the human brain, in a series of studies.

This subject has always fascinated me. What exactly is the potential of the average person? What would it be like to experience just four percent of one's capacity, to essentially double one's abilities? Could we attain 10 percent? What would that be like? Would there be Einsteins popping up in classrooms, little Galileos gazing through telescopes instead of at televisions, enterprising junior Trumps selling snacks at high-school football games? How would the world change for the better if everyone was two or five times more mentally able than they are right now?

The brain of no other animal even approaches the complexity of the human brain. Weighing in at only about three pounds, this astonishing organ is the seat of consciousness, the controller of physical and hormonal activity, and is, overall, one of the most underappreciated wonders of the world.

I, too, failed to completely appreciate the potential of the human mind—until I began researching answers to questions about how to eliminate mental fatigue, improve mood, and enhance memory that kept coming up at my nutritional seminars. Parents often asked about natural ways to improve their child's ability to focus and concentrate. Older individuals wanted to know how to preserve their mental function and avoid the horrors of Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

I became utterly fascinated with this subject and set myself to finding natural ways to improve mental function and performance. At first pass, it was apparent that there was an astonishing body of research—huge in scope and depth, coming from highly esteemed researchers and institutions. As I voraciously engaged in research, I attended photo-reading and super-learning courses with the hopes of taking in even more information. I frequented lectures in functional and nutritional medicine, particularly in relation to brain function. Eventually, applicable concepts began to emerge—concepts I felt would help to unlock the doors of human potential.

Two important concepts kept coming up as I sought concrete solutions to share with my audiences. These concepts are the foundation of the four steps (*Nourish*, *Support*, *Improve* and *Protect*) that weave throughout the pages of this book.

**1. More often than not, we humans function way below our capacity bio-chemically.** Through poor food, nutritional and lifestyle choices, we limit—even starve—our brains of the fuels and stimulation necessary for optimal mental function.

**2. Most of us do not recognize or understand our own unique mental patterns of learning.** We often fail to utilize our minds in the ways that take advantage of our own unique mental strengths. When we recognize and apply our existing strengths, this gives immediate and easy access to an abundant supply of existing mental “threads” or connections, which makes learning and remembering faster, more efficient, and easier.

Both of these themes tie into nutritional, medical, and neuro-physiological advances that have occurred over the last decade or more.\* Physicians and researchers refer to the 1990s as “the decade of the brain.” Within this decade, unprecedented amounts of time, energy and money were invested in exploring the mysteries of this organ. Knowledge built exponentially. As with any field of research, more questions were generated than answers; still, the mass of information gathered has, for the first time, given solidity to our understanding of how the brain functions and is organized. There is no longer any question that nutrition, diet, and physical and mental stimulation can improve cognition, whether applied individually or in combination. And you can use this book to apply all this new knowledge to improving your brainpower—*right now*.

The story that unfolds in modern science is fascinating. In essence, you start out with a set of genes that creates the basic hardware of your mind and that predisposes you to certain learning styles and ways of thinking. Then, something even more powerful and influential happens: the nutritional ingredients you consume throughout life (or fail to consume), the physical and mental stimulation you engage in (or fail to engage in), and the thoughts you habitually think *all have powerful effects on your genetic expression*.

Like clay in the hands of a skilled artist, within the so-called limitations of your genetic inheritance lies a tremendous amount of possibility! Case in point: the behavior of hard-core criminals in prison has been found to change dramatically with “brain-boosting” dietary changes. Profoundly depressed people, schizophrenics, and people with bipolar disorder have all been greatly improved in research studies

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\* This book is largely about the first point—about how you can enrich, stimulate, preserve, and grow neural connections with the right foods, nutritional supplements, and exercise program. (Just that was enough to build a nearly 500-page book; if I’d covered the subject of learning patterns and mental exercise as well, you might have had trouble lifting this volume!) If the second point is of interest to you, great! Visit the Brighter Mind website for more information.

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through the use of dietary changes and/or nutritional supplements. Many studies have even demonstrated increases in IQ with the right nutritional interventions!

### **Your Miraculous World: A Galaxy In Miniature**

Your sense of who you are emanates from a vast inner galaxy of brain cells called *neurons*. By the time you are three years old, you possess more than *100 billion* of these neurons, which have formed more than 15,000 synaptic connections with other neurons. That's *15,000 connections* for *each* of your *100 billion neurons*. By that tender age, your pattern of threads—your neural tapestry, extensive, intricate, and unique—is woven, but not complete.

Elsewhere in your brain, the real drama is just beginning. These billions of cells harmoniously interact to manifest the miracle of learning, knowledge, thought, perception, consciousness, movement, and a sea of fluctuating emotions. All the while, your perceptions are being stored as information that you can effortlessly retrieve in the near or distant future at the slightest whim. And all that you think, learn, and do continues to modify and form your neural tapestry into YOU.

Think of it. The very foundation of who you are is based on your brain's never-ending ability to perceive, comprehend, reason, learn, and grow. Isn't it one of life's incredible gifts to know how to protect and improve the function of this miraculous organ? I think so, too. And you can do so with certain foods and nutrients known to significantly improve the processes of learning, growth, memory, and the overall function of the brain.

I find this irresistibly exciting; since most people I have met are completely unaware of their ability (or potential) to dramatically improve their mind, I find it compelling to share these transformational concepts that are so often buried in scientific literature.

### **Building A Miraculous Brain With Nutrition**

For a school-aged child, adding the foods and nutrients recommend in this book to their daily diets and implementing adequate physical and mental stimulation can be the difference between struggling in the classroom or effortlessly excelling.

For an adult, taking these steps can make the difference between optimal mental performance—with a razor-sharp memory and effortless multi-tasking—versus never-ending mental distractions, mental fatigue, and frustration.

Insomnia, irritability, mood swings, and mental fatigue in people of any age can be naturally eliminated with the information outlined in the pages of this book.

I also touch upon the important issues of depression and anxiety, which often go hand-in-hand with cognitive difficulties. In my research, I found that many of the interventions described here for improving cognitive function were also quite useful for mild depression and anxiety. The basic physiological and biochemical mechanisms that control your mental sharpness throughout life also make major contributions to your sense of well-being and your mood. When your body and brain are properly nourished and stimulated—which, if you follow the guidelines in this book, they will unquestionably be—depression or anxiety are highly likely to resolve as well.

The Brighter Mind Program's four steps provide unique, specific nutritional factors that improve and enhance brain function, coupled with mental and physical stimulation that can significantly modify and improve the natural chemistry of the brain—a fact that I have established with references to more than 1,400 peer-reviewed nutritional and medical journal articles, scientific textbooks, and books and articles written by experts in the field of mental health and nutrition.

All you have to do to begin is implement the age-appropriate nutritional program into your daily diet. You will be taking in the nutrients shown by scientific research to dramatically improve focus, concentration, mood, memory and mental energy for your particular age group. When you begin your Brighter Mind Program, you will be taking not just a step, but a quantum leap toward improving every aspect of your mental function and life by finally experiencing your true mental performance potential.

When you substantially increase the power of your mind, what will you do with this ability? The process of creating your new Brighter Mind begins now. . . .