



Making a Good Brain Great: The Amen Clinic Program for Achieving and Sustaining Optimal Mental Performance

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Daniel Amen, M.D., one of the world's foremost authorities on the brain, has news for you: your brain is involved in everything you do—learn to care for it properly, and you will be smarter, healthier, and happier in as little as 15 days!

You probably run, lift weights, or do yoga to keep your body in great shape; you put on sunscreen and lotions to protect your skin; but chances are you simply ignore your brain and trust it to do its job. People unknowingly endanger or injure their brains, stress them by working at a frenzied pace and not getting enough sleep, pollute them with caffeine, alcohol, and drugs, and deprive them of proper nutrients. Brain dysfunction is the number one reason people fail at school, work, and relationships. The brain is the organ of learning, working, and loving—the supercomputer that runs our lives. It's very simple: when our brains work right, we work right—and when our brains have trouble, we have trouble in our lives.

Luckily, it's never too late: the brain is capable of change, and when you care for it, the results are amazing. *Making a Good Brain Great* gives you the tools you need to optimize your brain power and enrich your health and your life in the process. The principles and exercises in this book, based on years of cutting-edge neuroscience research and the experiences of thousands of people, provide a wealth of practical information to teach you how to achieve the best brain possible. You will learn:

- how to eat right to think right
- how to protect your brain from injuries and toxic substances
- how to nourish your brain with vitamins and do mental workouts to keep it strong
- the critical component of physical exercise, and which kinds work best
- how to rid your brain of negative thoughts, counteract stress, and much more

Full of encouraging anecdotes from Dr. Amen's many years of experience, *Making a Good Brain Great* is a positive and practical road map for enriching and improving your own greatest asset—your brain.

From the Hardcover edition.

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From Reader Review Making a Good Brain Great: The Amen Clinic Program for Achieving and Sustaining Optimal Mental Performance for online ebook

Cristina N. says

This book has all the necessary ingredients for a better lifestyle. All the advices are easy accomplish and most of the results can be seen within weeks.

Thank you Amen Clinic for sharing this with us!

Kimberly says

Here is this author's advice in a nutshell: "Kids, do like me and play your ping-pong! Eat your blueberries! And don't be running around hitting soccer balls with your head!!" This book could possibly be useful for late middle-aged people who want to stave off dementia (and that's important), but for anyone else, if you already know the basic steps to a healthy life (eat your vegetables, don't smoke, etc.) you're not going to get much more from this book. In fact, I'd say the title is misleading. Much of his research is done on people who do NOT have good brains, but are actually quite sick. People with good brains (who buy the book) should just realize, like I have, that good is good enough, and there's no miracle out there that will make your brain SUPER.

Suman says

I think this book needs to be renamed "Making Idiots Poor". It basically consists of a "doctor", Daniel Amen, pretending to know something about the brain and telling people how to keep it healthy. What results is a 336-page mess with advice so banal that it makes me wonder if the author knows anything about the brain. The brain is a remarkably complex and mysterious organ, and to say that centuries-old adages about living morally is somehow exactly what the brain needs to function optimally seems to indicate a deeper understanding of politically correct morality than any understanding of the body's most complex organ. If you want to read a book about the brain, please read "In Search of Memory" by Eric Kandel, who actually uses data and experiments to support claims about the brain's structure. If you somehow happen to get "Making a Good Brain Great", however, please burn it, or better yet, sell it to an idiot who has no use of a brain.

P.S.

If I could give this book negative or zero stars, I would.

Gofita says

Any informative information is something you could get from your regular family doctor...Dr. Amen uses

anecdotal evidence and bad science. It's all about the money. I'm sure people are helped through the placebo effect but they could save a lot of money and use another cheaper form of placebo.

His studies have never lasted scientific-scrutiny. If they had then it wouldn't just be the Amen clinic using SPECT scans; the medical community would be using them.

For shame, he's preying on people and taking their money.

For information on what the scientific community has said about Dr. Amen and his practices go here:
<http://www.sciencebasedmedicine.org/s....>

Justin Annes says

Good practical guide for beginners to start their journey learning about proper brain care. This is definitely worth the ~220 pages to take your time and read. I found the first half of the book to be very informative as the author leaned heavily on his own expertise and studies into the brain. The second half of the book to me seemed more anecdotal and less analytical. Many of the lessons given from the studies referenced in the second half appears to be more correlation than causal. I'm not an expert and feeling lazy so I won't go into the details. Bottom line is take care of the one organ which has the most impact on making your life better. There are many ways we damage our brains on a daily basis and knowing more about this can only help.

One of many great quotes from the book:

As our brain functions, so do we perceive. Therefore, in reality, we should seek to change not only the outside world but our own brains and attitudes. It is how your brain perceives situations, rather than the actual situations themselves, that causes you to react. I often write this equation for my patients:

$$A + B = C$$

A is the actual event,

B is how we interpret or perceive the event, and

C is how we react to the event.

Most people think the A things in life, what happens to us, determine our behavior. In large part, it is actually the B stuff. Other people or events (A) cannot make us do anything. It is our brain's interpretation or perception (B) that causes our behavior (C). Here are two examples.

Balancing your brain through diet, exercise, music, stress reduction, and supplements will help your perceptions. At the same time, balancing and improving your perceptions can help balance the brain. Psychotherapy—or therapy for your thoughts, feelings, and behaviors—has been found to actually enhance brain function. How your brain works is certainly involved in how you think, feel, and act, but how you think, feel, and act can also influence brain function. The brain and behavior help or hurt each other.

S says

Dr. Amen is a neuroscientist who has been practicing for a long time. I trust in his ability to read SPECT scans with incredible accuracy and that he has no doubt helped many, many people.

He's also making a lot of money off of this book and his clinic. This is not necessarily a bad thing, but it is something to take into account when someone is offering you a diagnosis and a remedy. Nevertheless, I still enjoyed the book and have learned a great deal more about my brain and possible causes for some of my inadequacies.

Dr. Amen shows us scans of "healthy" brains and "unhealthy" brains. He then gives us lots of anecdotal evidence and stories to help us relate to the kinds of disorders he's discussing. He shows and discusses which areas of the brain are associated with certain disorders such as ADD, depression, OCD, etc. After that, he begins to tell us what kinds of treatments will help including activities you can do and supplements you can take. He does cite studies and mentions that not all treatments will work the same for everyone.

He has some good advice and offers some good information for those seeking answers. I wouldn't say everything he says is golden, but he seems to offer some interesting insight into the world of psychology and I absolutely agree that our traditional approaches to mental healing would be benefitted by the ability to track physical progress in the brain as well. Interesting book overall and I will definitely be looking more into some of the information he discusses.

Update: After reading more into the efficacy of SPECT imaging, I am no longer certain that it is as foolproof as Dr. Amen is claiming it to be. Granted, it could definitely be promising - if it really does what he claims it does. It also has the potential to be unnecessary and harmful since it uses a radioactive tracer to detect blood flow and chemical reactions. Time and more studies will tell if this is an effectual procedure or not.

Amanda Marshall says

A must read for anyone with a brain. While it may seem obvious, many people (Dr's included) fail to address the health of the brain when trying to treat emotional/mental problems. It's easy to forget that the brain controls EVERYTHING. So instead of just medicating the effects (ie: depression, ADD) a person is experiencing, Dr Amen advises that we must look at the actual cause these disorders, which is brain function! After reading this book I've started some supplements and even asked my Dr to let me try some medication that Dr Amen has suggested for my type of issues. Even after just a few weeks I have had amazing results. I'm soooo much less irritable, my skin has cleared up and I've even lost over 10lbs. Brain health will be a top priority for me!

Collette says

Informative read on good brain health and what individuals can do to improve. Dr. Amen specifically recommends exercise (no contact sports, good sleep habits, good nutrition, supplements and neurofeedback. He offers a simplified description of several brain systems and informs the reader as to how the over or under activation of these systems lead to dysfunction. Excellent!

Tara Leigh says

Well written, but also full of lists of things that I really didn't need compiled in one place (it sort of read like the Internet doesn't exist). Don't listen to it as an audiobook book- that was very annoying.

It had lots of good information, but his talk of a vaccine-autism link (completely debunked at this point by many scientific studies- I can't recall when this occurred, so maybe it post-dates the book? This is the only reason I didn't just stop reading there and then) makes me quite skeptical of his claims. I'm glad I read it, but I'll be fact-checking any tidbits I plan to take with me.

Wendy says

This book shows SPECT brain imaging and is all about how to keep our brains functioning optimally. I am a total brain whore, so this was like porn for me. It's intelligent, but dumbed down enough that you don't have to be a brain surgeon to get it. It has tips on eating and physical and mental exercise for your 3lb head muscle and includes a 15 day workout plan for your noodle. It made me love my brain so much I would totally make out with it if I could.

Sean Fletcher says

This is a fascinating book and a must read, especially if you are concerned for your health in later years. The book gives insights into the inner workings of the brain and how our brain influences our emotions and vice versa. I gained greater understanding of my own emotional state and how I could improve. The book does fall into some tedium as the author describes different conditions and remedies, but overall the book is worth reading.

Jason says

I picked this book up because recently a friend of mine was struck by a car and has spent the last month in the ICU with brain swelling. I wanted to know more about brain injuries. The book didn't give much information on what to do with brain injuries, this was more a preventive guide.

There are two parts. The first is more of a text book explanation of what the brain is and how it works. It was pretty dry.

The second part is about what you can be doing to help improve your brain. Most readers that are interested in health already know much of this. Such as get plenty of exercise, read, do puzzles, eat right and even play table tennis. Amen does give some great tips on multi vitamins and different supplements we can take to help improve brain function. And at the end he gives us a 15 day game plan to get started.

Overall it was a good book with a lot of good reinforcements on why and how we can improve our thinkers.

Jackie says

Lots of great ideas in this book to make the brain healthier, especially with eating and supplements. I am concerned that the book (2005) is a bit outdated by now (2017). I want to read more about the subject.

Safa says

Includes a lot of irresponsible science: claims that are unsubstantiated, based on anectodes, small research groups, and pseudo-science. Some dangerously vague statements as well. I respect that he's probably a fantastic psychiatrist, but that doesn't automatically qualify him to write about neuroscience.

Robert says

This book illuminates the many ways diet, exercise, meditation, music and learning can heal and/or keep a brain healthy. Medication and various therapies are also sometimes called for but they aren't the only route to a healthy brain.
