



The Mosaic

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Eat Well, Live Well: The Power of Superfoods

By Emily Warren, MA and Teresa Amaral Beshwate, MPH

Cover Story

“Shiver me timbers, blow me down!” It was a superfood that launched the most famous sailor man into sudden greatness and simultaneously impressed his lanky love. Perhaps Popeye, famous for being strong to the finish ‘cause he still eats his spinach, was the discoverer of superfoods. Does your everyday fare propel you into Popeye-style spinach-powered greatness?

The term superfood was coined by nutritionists in the early twentieth century, but is only recently becoming commonplace. Superfoods are nutrient dense, especially healthy food choices, meaning that they pack a punch. While superfoods don’t instantaneously produce bulging biceps, they do deliver a variety of notable health benefits.

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o Apples: Rich in vitamin C which is good for our bones, skin and connective tissue. Vitamin C also helps to promote the absorption of iron. The fiber in apples helps to lower cholesterol and blood sugar levels.

o Nuts: Nuts help to lower cholesterol and they have Omega-3 fatty acids which help to keep our hearts healthy. Nuts also contain fiber which makes a person feel full and helps to prevent diabetes. Nuts contain vitamin E, which helps to stop the development of plaque in arteries.

o Beans: Low-fat source of protein and fiber. Fiber is not only helpful to relieve constipation it helps to prevent heart disease and diabetes. Additional nutritional benefits included in beans are potassium, iron, zinc, folate and phosphorus.

o Blueberries: Low-calorie food filled with fiber and vitamin C. Studies have shown that blueberries may lower cholesterol, atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries), improve short term memory and may even improve bone health.

o Broccoli: A good source of Vitamin C and Vitamin A. It also contains calcium, folate and is a good source of fiber. All this good stuff that is packed into broccoli helps to prevent cell damage. Also, it may prevent heart disease, diabetes and some cancers.

o Salmon: Compared to beef or pork, salmon is a low-fat protein and an excellent source of Omega-3 fatty acid, which has been shown to help lower blood pressure, decrease triglyceride levels and lower risk of heart disease. Initial studies have shown a decreased risk in colon, breast and prostate cancer; however more advanced studies need to be done.

o Sweet Potatoes: Packed with vitamins A, C and B-6 in addition to potassium and fiber. Sweet potatoes offer 100% of the daily recommended value of vitamin A - a vitamin which promotes vision and health cell growth. Vitamin A may also prevent some cancers and aid in immune function. Sweet potatoes are fat-free and low in calories.

o Quinoa: (pronounced Keen-Wa). Quinoa looks and is eaten like a grain, however, it’s actually a seed. It is a complete protein that is high in iron and calcium.

o Dark Leafy Greens: Spinach is one of the most nutrient dense foods available. It is very low in calories yet full of nutritious elements. Spinach has over 20 nutrients, all for only 40 calories per one-cup serving.

o Kiwis: Contain vitamin C, potassium, fiber and are a decent source of vitamins A and E. Kiwifruit is one of the few fruits and vegetables that contains vitamin E. Vitamin E has been shown to positively impact our immune systems and metabolism.

As French author François La Rochefoucauld eloquently wrote, “To eat is a necessity, but to eat intelligently is an art.” Maybe that’s what Popeye meant when he said, “I yam what I yam.” In any case, let us not delay in filling our plates with the delicious goodness of superfoods.

Hot Health Topic

The Ten Habits of Highly Effective Brains

By Alvaro Fernandez, MA

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Let's review some good lifestyle options we can follow to maintain, and improve, our vibrant brains.

1. Learn what is the "It" in "Use It or Lose It." A basic understanding will serve you well to appreciate your brain's beauty as a living and constantly-developing dense forest with billions of neurons and synapses.
2. Take care of your nutrition. Did you know that the brain only weighs 2% of body mass but consumes over 20% of the oxygen and nutrients we intake? As a general rule, you don't need expensive ultra-sophisticated nutritional supplements, just make sure you don't stuff yourself with the "bad stuff."
3. Remember that the brain is part of the body. Things that exercise your body can also help sharpen your brain: physical exercise enhances neurogenesis.
4. Practice positive, future-oriented thoughts until they become your default mindset and you look forward to every new day in a constructive way. Stress and anxiety, no matter whether induced by external events or by your own thoughts, actually kills neurons and prevent the creation of new ones. You can think of chronic stress as the opposite of exercise: it prevents the creation of new neurons.
5. Thrive on Learning and Mental Challenges. The point of having a brain is precisely to learn and to adapt to challenging new environments. Once new neurons appear in your brain, where they stay in your brain and how long they survive depends on how you use them. "Use It or Lose It" does not mean "do crossword puzzle number 1,234,567." It means, "challenge your brain often with fundamentally new activities."
6. We are (as far as we know) the only self-directed organisms in this planet. Aim high. Once you graduate from college, keep learning. The brain keeps developing, no matter your age, and it reflects what you do with it.
7. Explore, travel. Adapting to new locations forces you to pay more attention to your environment. Make new decisions, use your brain.
8. Don't Outsource Your Brain. Not to media personalities, not to politicians, not to your smart neighbor... Make your own decisions, and mistakes. And learn from them. That way, you are training your brain, not your neighbor's.
9. Develop and maintain stimulating friendships. We are "social animals," and need social interaction. Which, by the way, is why 'Baby Einstein' has been shown not to be the panacea for child development.
10. Laugh. Often. Especially to cognitively complex humor, full of twists and surprises. Better, try to become the next Jon Stewart

Now, remember that what counts is not reading this article —or any other— but practicing a bit every day until small steps snowball into unstoppable, internalized habits...so, pick your next battle and try to start improving at least one of these 10 habits today. Revisit the habit above that really grabbed your attention and make a decision to **try something different today!**

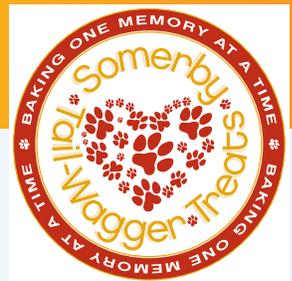
Alvaro Fernandez is the co-founder and CEO of Sharpbrains, Inc. A member of the Global Agenda Councils run by the World Economic Forum, Alvaro has been quoted by The New York Times, The Wall Street Journal, USA Today, CNN, among others. He co-authored the The State of the Brain Fitness Market 2010 report and the book The SharpBrains Guide to Brain Fitness. Learn more at www.sharpbrains.com, where you can subscribe to the Sharpbrains newsletter. Also see The Sharp Brains Guide to Brain Fitness: 18 Interviews with Scientists, Practical Advice, and Product Reviews, to Keep Your Brain Sharp (Sharpbrains Inc., 2009).

Community Spotlight: Somerby of St. Vincent's One Nineteen Somerby Tail Wagger Treats – Baking One Memory at a Time

By: Danielle Palli

Trivia question: What has 1420 legs, 6000 biscuits and one small oven?

Answer: The total number of pedestrians and tail waggors who make up the *Somerby Tail Wagger Treats* social group, of course!



The community of Somerby at St. Vincent's One Nineteen, the Greater Birmingham Humane Society and the Boy Scouts of America (Troop 119) joined forces last June to create *Somerby Tail Wagger Treats*, an intergenerational initiative that benefits older adults, young people and the appreciative puppies they serve.

Residents at Somerby are rolling up their sleeves, kneading dough, lining up batches of biscuits and baking these treats for the hundreds of dogs that are being cared for by the Humane Society. Memory care residents are also highly involved, dispelling the myth that those with Alzheimer's and dementia are unable to participate and actively give back to the community.

Masterpiece Living has been an integral part of Somerby for the past three years, and Lifestyle Coordinator Sarah Thorne Davis, along with Eagle Scout Andrew Tucker, spoke with us about how they had taken the social, intellectual and physical aspects of MPL into consideration when developing this project.



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“In our research, we learned that when memory care residents work with their hands, it helps reconstruct neurological pathways in the brain,” Andrew Tucker said. “We chose to make dog biscuits because it fulfilled a need in the community and gave our volunteers a sense of purpose.”

“Those with memory challenges benefit from auditory, visual and tactile tasks,” Sarah Thorne Davis added. Therefore, in addition to providing community service and an enjoyable social environment, *Somery Tail Wagger Treats* (STWT) offers participants sensory and intellectual stimulation as well.



Six months prior to the STWT launch, the team consulted with an animal nutritionist to make certain the biscuit recipes were safe and healthy for dogs. Their goal was to bake 5000 biscuits in a year. They met that goal in less than a month (21 days, to be exact). Now up to 6,000 biscuits, their new goal is 20,000 by year's end - with the added anticipation of making the project *mobile*. Soon, the high-tech mobile unit will be used to ensure that the entire Somery community - independent, assisted living and memory care - will be able to participate.

“Currently, we meet with residents Tuesday and Thursday, from 9 through 11 a.m. each week. What’s been happening is that residents are having so much fun, that they are staying past noon. We even have one man who lives across from where we bake biscuits. He hates to cook and never used his oven before. Now, he volunteers to bring dough back to his apartment to help us bake. That’s the only thing he uses his oven for - to make dog treats!”

By next year, *Somery Tail Wagger Treats* will likely be found in all four Somery communities, which include Mobile, Alpharetta and Mt. Pleasant. And now, even the Shelby County Humane Society is jumping on the new puppy gravy train.

Poetry

By Michael Drummond



They roll around
Like two crazy kid lovers
Laughing so hard
Underneath the covers

They kiss and lock eyes
They smile like they know
How lucky they are
To live in this flow

They talk for hours
About what rebels they are
How difficult it was
To make it this far

Their house is full
Of words and art
Doesn't matter how well
It's straight from the heart

Their love draws others
Who worship their spirit
And as they grow older
All want to be near it

They know the clock ticks
Holding hands to the end
Not a single regret
For these best of friends

The simplest of dreams
But hardest to achieve
Yet we wake every morning
Wanting to believe

Michael is an Administrative Assistant in the Campus Activities Department at ABHOW's Valle Verde, a Masterpiece community in Santa Barbara, CA.

“We house 250 dogs at any given time,” Executive Director of the Shelby County Humane Society, Jennifer Miller, informed us. “When I saw what Andrew Tucker’s team was working on, I was awestruck. Our animals have their basic needs met, but we don’t have funding to provide those extra treats. It is so special because we bring our dogs to Somery, which helps our animals develop socialization skills and get the love they so desperately need.” As this project grows, STWT may expand to include the making of cat toys and fund-raising Christmas ornaments.



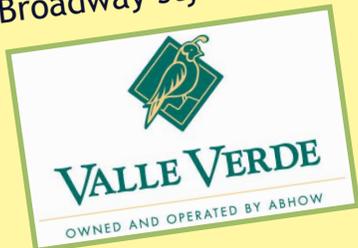
Let’s not forget the impact that this initiative has had on the Boy Scouts of America, and their supportive families, as well. Volunteers from Troop 119 found such joy in working with Somery residents, hand on top of hand, helping mix batter and knead dough. Many of their parents commented about how impressed they were witnessing their sons treating older adults with such respect. Andrew Tucker is currently working out a plan to grow this project to include other Boy Scout troops and local community groups.

The *Somery Tail Wagger Treats* logo reads, “baking one memory at a time.” Together, that adds up to hundreds of thousands of wonderful memories to date.



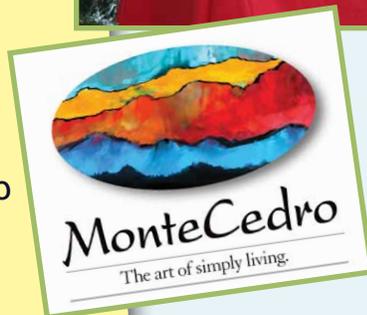
NEWS:

- ABHOW's Valle Verde launched
- Masterpiece Living in August with a Broadway style revue.



- Masterpiece Living welcomes new corporate and community partners:

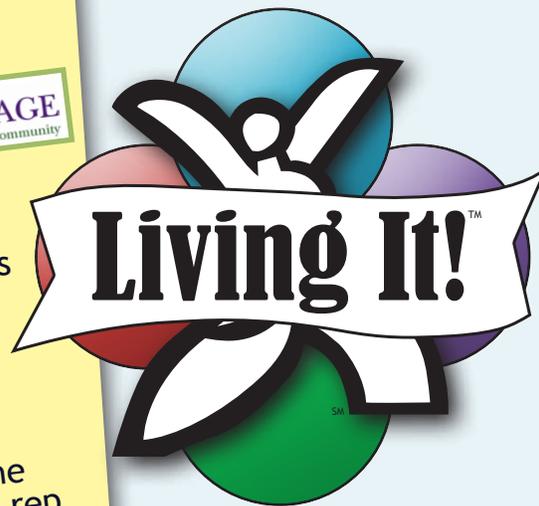
The Episcopal Homes Communities - MonteCedro in Pasadena, California



Presbyterian Senior Living communities - Glen Meadows Retirement Community in Glen Arm, Maryland, and Westminster Village in Dover, Delaware.



- The inaugural Living It! Campaign is underway in many Masterpiece communities. Living It! awards, best practices and more to come in the future editions of the Mosaic!



If your community is interested in piloting World of Wellness, a new Program by Masterpiece, during the month of October, please let your rep know.

- Don't forget to budget for Lyceum 2012 in Arizona.

- Christian Living Communities social accountability programs were featured in the July/August edition of LeadingAge Magazine. Congrats CLC! Read more at <http://www.leadingage.org>

