

WELLNESS AT HOME, WORK, & BEYOND



COGNITIVE FITNESS: TRAINING YOUR BRAIN FOR THE FUTURE

Your body needs exercise to stay strong, and so does your brain. Cognitive fitness is about keeping your mind agile, resilient, creative, and ready to adapt to challenges now and in the future. The key lies in daily habits that strengthen memory, spark creativity, and protect against burnout.

UNDERSTANDING COGNITIVE FITNESS

Your brain is built to adapt thanks to neuroplasticity, its ability to form new connections, reorganize itself, and keep learning throughout life. Just like muscles grow stronger with exercise, the brain becomes more resilient when challenged in different ways. Learning new skills, exploring unfamiliar places, or even changing routines can stimulate fresh pathways and build cognitive reserve, which supports long-term brain health.

Memory and creativity also thrive on variety. The brain tends to remember information more easily when it's tied to stories, visuals, emotions, or personal experiences. Creativity, meanwhile, grows when you step outside

routines, expose yourself to fresh ideas, and allow time for reflection. Even moments of boredom or downtime can spark innovation by giving the mind space to connect unexpected dots.

At the same time, today's world constantly competes for your attention. Notifications, multitasking, and endless information can exhaust the brain, leading to mental fatigue, forgetfulness, reduced focus, and lower motivation, often referred to as cognitive burnout. Protecting your brain means balancing focus with intentional recovery. Short breaks, mindful breathing, movement, and screen-free time can help reset attention and reduce stress that interferes with memory, creativity, and concentration.

EVERYDAY HABITS THAT SUPPORT COGNITIVE FITNESS

Small consistent actions can improve focus, memory, creativity, and mental resilience over time.

Move your body: Aerobic movement increases blood flow to the brain and supports the growth of new neurons linked to learning and memory. Simple movements to challenge your brain include:

- Taking a different route during your commute or walk



- Walking backwards carefully for short distances
- Dancing, martial arts, or coordination-based activities
- Using your non-dominant hand for simple tasks

Nourish your brain: The brain needs quality fuel to function well. Omega-3 fats from fish, nuts, and seeds, antioxidants from berries and leafy greens, and whole grains can all support focus and memory. Even cooking a new recipe can challenge the brain by combining learning, creativity, and coordination.

Rest and manage stress: Sleep and recovery are essential for memory, focus, and emotional balance. Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep each night and include moments of recovery throughout the day. Slow breathing, meditation, visualization, progressive muscle relaxation, and screen-free breaks can all help reset attention and reduce mental overload.

Stay social: Meaningful social interaction keeps the brain engaged and adaptable. Teaching someone something you recently learned, learning collaboratively through group activities or classes, having conversations that encourage deeper thinking, or traveling to a new place to meet new people and learn about new cultures can strengthen emotional awareness and flexible thinking.

PLAYFUL BRAIN WORKOUTS

The brain benefits most from activities that involve novelty, coordination, creativity, strategy, learning, and fun. Try activities such as:

- Learning a few words or phrases in a new language
- Practicing a musical instrument or listening to a different genre of music
- Getting creative while drawing, crafting, coloring, or writing
- Playing games and puzzles like cards, Dual N-Back training, memory matching, board games (e.g. Trivia or Monopoly), crosswords, Sudoku, chess, or riddles

- Trying a new hobby like juggling, painting, gardening, or photography
- Attending plays, poetry readings, museum tours, films, or other cultural events

The goal isn't to train harder, but to keep the brain curious through meaningful experiences.

Highlight of the month

Your Weekly Brain Challenge

In addition to everyday habits, challenge your brain with one small new activity for 15-30 minutes each day. Alternate activities throughout the week to keep things fresh, engaging, and enjoyable rather than mentally exhausting.

Weekly rotation example:

- **Mon/Wed/Fri:** Cognitive workouts (Dual N-Back, logic puzzles, or creative writing)
- **Tue/Thu:** Skill practice (new language, cooking, or other hobby)
- **Weekend:** Fun and social play (board games, cultural outings, or group activities)

HEALTH COACHING



Schedule your coaching appointment today by emailing **Coach Bre** at BreanneM@solavieve.com