



## Brain Health: Brought to You by Senior Village

by Judy Cummings

Neuroplasticity - now there's a word! What does it have to do with me and with Senior Village?

Neuroplasticity is your brain's ability to alter its physical structure, repair damaged regions, grow new neurons and get rid of old ones. It also helps to change the circuits in our brains that allow us to remember, feel, think, imagine and learn and is ongoing throughout our entire life.

We all know that no matter what age we participate in physical exercise, it will always have an impact on muscle strength, balance and flexibility, and the same is true for our brains. So, here are some tips to improve your brain health:

- Participate in activities that involve multiple senses (see, hear, touch).
- Engage in something that you enjoy so that you will stick with it.
- Try a new activity to break up your daily routine and challenge the brain to learn something new.

We CAN enhance our brain health, and Senior Village has some ideas and activities to help you achieve a more healthy and vital brain, and best of all, you'll have fun, too!

- **Socialization:** Staying engaged in everyday events helps your brain and your mood. The Village offers bingo, monthly birthday lunches and a monthly Game Day - checkers, dominos, Yahtzee, MahJongg, or you can even bring your own game. Once the summer heat has passed, our popular bocce ball and putting activities will return.
- **Reading** is always a great activity to enhance brain health. But if it is getting harder to focus on print for long periods of time, audio books may be the answer. Friends of the SaddleBrooke libraries have donated audio book players to Senior Village members, and a Village volunteer will help you set up your player and show you how to check out one of over 1000 audio books. Wow, how great is that! Also, Village members gather once a month for stimulating book club discussions.
- **Music**, besides being so enjoyable to listen to, is a great way to stimulate the brain. Music Mends Minds, a non-profit that started in California, is organizing an enthusiastic group in SaddleBrooke. Come and join in, shake a tambourine, beat a drum, clang spoons or play an instrument. Music acts as medicine for the mind, changing brain chemistry and uplifting spirits.

Neuroplasticity: a word to remember! Senior Village will help you regenerate those brain cells while having a lot of fun. Call 520-314-1042 or log on to <http://www.seniorvillageatsaddlebrooke.org/> for more details about any of our programs or to become a member or volunteer. Hope to see you this summer!