Pacific Brain Wellness & Lifestyle Newsletter | JANUARY 2026

Spotlight Story

❋ 10 Ideas to Jump Start Your Brain Health In the New Year

Karen Miller, PhD
Senior Director, Brain Wellness & Lifestyle Program
On average, we abandon nearly two-thirds of our New Year's resolutions—whether it's eating fewer carbs, exercising daily, losing weight, saving money, reading more, or spending more time with family—by the end of January.

Often, our goals are either too lofty or overly rigid, leaving little room for real life. Highly specific targets, like saving a fixed percentage of our income, or inflexible routines, such as going to the gym every day at 6 am, can make resolutions difficult to sustain. Instead of repeating the usual cycle, let's consider a more brain-healthy approach—one that jump-starts the new year by supporting our whole being and strengthening the mind-body connection.

Consider some of the 10 brain-health-boosting ideas in this linked article to jump-start your new year.

LEARN MORE

Dr. Miller's Memory Challenge

❋ 3 Brain-Healthy Habits Worth Trying

Below are three of the ten brain-healthy ideas featured in the article above. Choose one or two to help you get started.

Tip #1: Green makes us happier
Buy some seeds or a plant and add a touch of greenery to your front or back porch, or a kitchen window. Simply gazing at greenery can help us feel calmer and renew our focus in the moment.

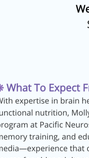
Tip #2: Music for the ears
Create a playlist of 20 songs to play while you're getting ready for work, school, or volunteering. Choose songs that bring back great memories. For example, *Girls Just Wanna Have Fun* reminds me of my college days.

Tip #3: Spread kindness—it's infectious
Interact with someone you don't know. Hold the door open, compliment their sweater or running shoes, or simply wish them a good day. Putting a positive spin on the day for a stranger can result in them "paying it forward." With an extra bounce in their step, they may compliment the next person they see in the elevator, smile at someone on an errand, or brighten another person's day.

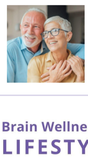
The Balanced Plate with Molly

❋ Winter's Top 5 Brain-Healthy Seasonal Foods

Molly Rapozo, MS, RDN
Registered Dietitian & Senior Brain Health Coach
Winter produce in California offers a surprising amount of color, flavor, and cognitive nourishment. This season's vegetables and fruit are packed with antioxidants, vitamins, and plant compounds that support memory, focus, and long-term brain health. **Here are five standout foods** at their nutritional peak this winter, plus simple ways to bring them into your weekly meals.



Leafy greens like kale, spinach, and chard are the undisputed stars of brain-healthy eating. Rich in folate, vitamin K, and lutein, they're strongly linked with slower cognitive aging. Winter greens are especially tender and flavorful, making them easy to use: toss spinach into omelets, blend kale into smoothies, or sauté chard with garlic and olive oil as a quick side dish. Even one serving a day can make a meaningful difference.



Cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, Brussels sprouts, and cauliflower shine in winter and offer powerful anti-inflammatory compounds that support long-term brain resilience. Roasting them brings out their natural sweetness: try sheet-pan Brussels sprouts with balsamic, cauliflower "rice" bowls, or broccoli tossed with a lemon tahini sauce. These vegetables pair beautifully with Mediterranean flavors, making them easy to fold into your weekly rotation.

Pomegranates, mushrooms, and kiwi round out the top five with a trio of antioxidant-rich benefits. Pomegranates offer vibrant polyphenols that support memory and blood flow; sprinkle the seeds over yogurt, salads, or roasted vegetables. Mushrooms provide a unique antioxidant called ergothioneine, sauté them into soups, scrambles, or grain bowls. Kiwi delivers more vitamin C than oranges and adds brightness to smoothies, fruit salads, or a simple afternoon snack.

Register for the February *Vital Minds* Course

❋ Six weekly sessions focused on memory and cognition

Virtual Vital Minds is an interactive and **small-group program** for individuals experiencing cognitive complaints, including normal aging and mild cognitive impairment. It covers strategies geared towards using memory more effectively in real-life situations, while reviewing brain-healthy behaviors such as **nutrition, exercise, sleep, stress management, social engagement,** and **cognitive stimulation**. Facilitated by Senior Nutrition and Health Educator Molly Rapozo, MS, RDN.

6 Weekly Zoom Sessions
Wednesdays at 11 am - 12 pm PT
Starting February 18th, 2026

REGISTER HERE

❋ What To Expect From Your Coach | Molly Rapozo, MS, RDN

With expertise in brain health coaching and 20 years of experience in integrative and functional nutrition, Molly serves as a health coach at the Brain Wellness & Lifestyle program at Pacific Neuroscience Institute. She leads group sessions, provides memory training, and educates the community through webinars, podcasts, and print media—experience that directly supports **Advanced Memory Training**, a new virtual course for older adults to strengthen memory and cognitive skills. You can contact Molly directly here with any questions.

Introducing New Offerings in 2026
Brain Wellness & Lifestyle services are now available in **Washington State** with virtual 1:1 health coaching and in-person groups in the Greater Seattle area. Contact us for more information.

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