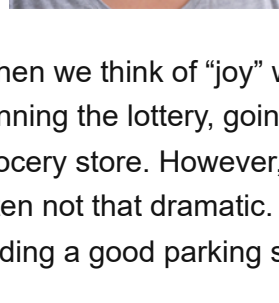




Pacific Brain Wellness & Lifestyle Newsletter | JULY 2026

Spotlight Story: The Joy Garden

* Cultivating Happiness Every Day



Ynez Tongson
Administrative Manager, Brain Wellness & Lifestyle

Joy doesn't have to be life-changing. It can show up in all sorts of shapes and sizes.

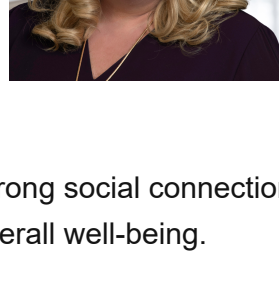
When we think of “joy” what usually comes to mind are big, life-altering events: winning the lottery, going on a dream vacation, finding the love of your life at the grocery store. However, **real joy**, the kind that keeps us **grounded and resilient**, is often not that dramatic. It can be something as mundane as your morning coffee, finding a good parking spot or listening to your favorite song.

Joy is daily practice, not a special occasion. **Imagine joy as a garden.** You cannot ignore it for weeks and expect roses. You need to do the simple, consistent work of tending to it. Joy grows through simple, consistent action.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Dr. Miller's Memory Minute

* Embracing Daily Joy for Longevity



Karen Miller, PhD
Senior Director, Brain Wellness & Lifestyle

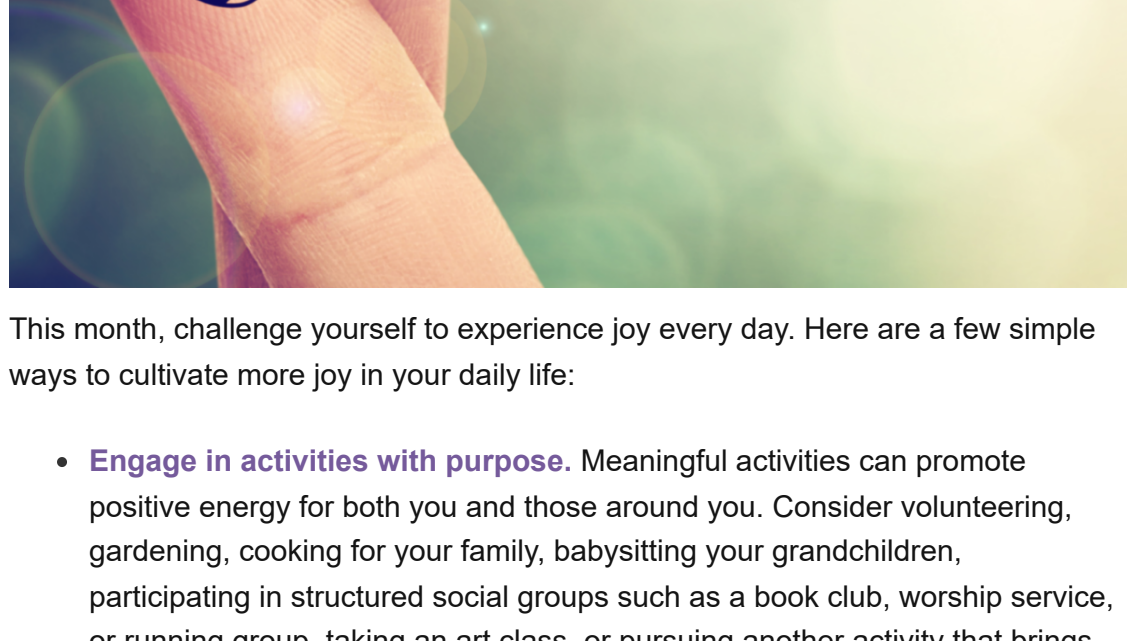
One of the key components of **longevity**—and a central finding in research on the Blue Zones, where people often live to be 100 years and beyond—is socialization.

Strong social connections are closely linked to greater joy, lower stress levels, and overall well-being.

We can all do a better job of **embracing joy** in our own lives and bringing more joy to those around us. After all, you really can't have too much joy! Cultivating joy can help us **combat stress, burnout, fatigue, depression, and loneliness** while supporting both our mental and physical health.

Joy is different from happiness in that it is often driven by an internal sense of purpose and fulfillment rather than simply being a reaction to a situation. We often think of happiness as an emotion, while joy is more of a **state of being**. You don't have to feel giddy—or even happy all the time—to experience joy. Instead, joy comes from **appreciating** moments of happiness, meaningful interactions with others, and your own self-reflection within the broader context of life.

The Daily Joy Challenge

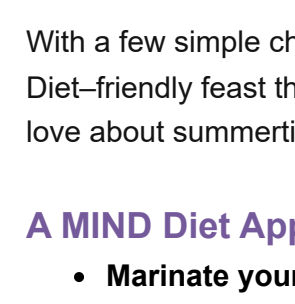


This month, challenge yourself to experience joy every day. Here are a few simple ways to cultivate more joy in your daily life:

- **Engage in activities with purpose.** Meaningful activities can promote positive energy for both you and those around you. Consider volunteering, gardening, cooking for your family, babysitting your grandchildren, participating in structured social groups such as a book club, worship service, or running group, taking an art class, or pursuing another activity that brings you a sense of purpose and connection.
- **Keep a journal.** Take time each day to reflect by noting positive or inspirational moments, documenting your travels or experiences throughout the day, week, or month, or recording observations about nature—watching birds, insects, animals and flowers, or reflecting on the walks and hikes you've enjoyed.
- **Express gratitude.** Share your appreciation with both the people closest to you and those you encounter in everyday life. This might include sending a thank-you note or text to a longtime friend, knocking on a neighbor's door just to say hello, thanking the parking attendant for their help, or taking a moment to connect with the receptionist at your doctor's office.

The Balanced Plate with Molly

* The Joys of Summer Grilling and Eating Outdoors



Molly Rapozo, MS, RDN
Registered Dietitian & Senior Brain Health Coach

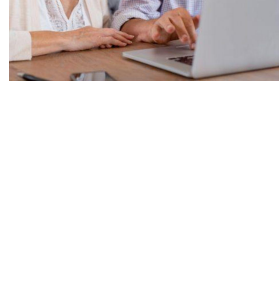
Warm evenings and long daylight hours make summer the perfect season for grilling. Sharing a meal outside invites us to slow down, enjoy fresh seasonal foods, and connect with friends and family.

With a few simple choices, you can turn your cookout into a delicious MIND Diet–friendly feast that supports brain health while celebrating everything we love about summertime eating.

A MIND Diet Approach to Summer Grilling

- **Marinate your protein to reduce AGEs.**
Seafood, chicken, or tofu all benefit from a marinade made with extra-virgin olive oil, fresh herbs, and something acidic like lemon juice or vinegar. This combination not only adds bright flavor but also helps reduce the formation of advanced glycation end products (AGEs) that occur with high-heat cooking.
- **Don't forget to load the grill with vegetables.**
Brush large-cut veggies with EVOO, salt, and pepper, then place them directly on the grill or thread them onto skewers to prevent slipping through the grates. Bell peppers, summer squash, eggplant, mushrooms, and red onion all caramelize beautifully and pair well with any protein. Serve your grilled protein and low-carb veggies with a high-fiber side like a bean or potato salad dressed with pesto or an EVOO vinaigrette.
- **End strong with a nutrient-dense, whole food finish.**
Fresh summer fruit like cherries or ripe melon makes an easy, refreshing dessert. For something a little different, grill peaches or pineapple to bring out their natural sweetness. Top grilled fruit with a high-protein cottage “cream,” made by blending low-fat cottage cheese with cinnamon, vanilla, and a splash of maple syrup.

Support this Summer



Dementia Caregiver Support Group

Join our **online support group** designed for caregivers taking care of a loved one living with any stage of dementia. Sessions are **FREE in July** with rolling enrollment. August sessions & beyond with rolling enrollment \$100/month.

July 22, & 29, 2026 | Wed, 3 - 4 pm PT

[>> Register Now](#)



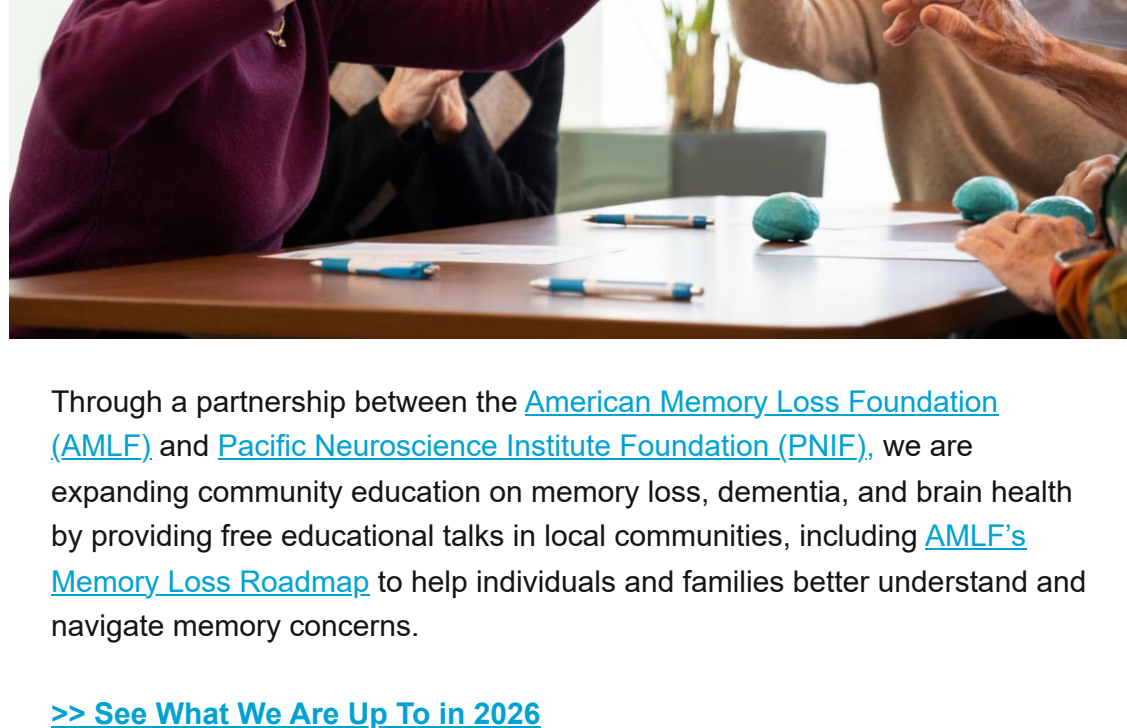
August Virtual Vital Minds

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 diet, exercise, sleep, stress management, social engagement, and cognitive stimulation. Facilitated by Molly Rapozo, MS, RDN. [See pdf flyer for more details.](#)

Starting Aug 20, 2026 | Thurs, 10 am PT | 6 Sessions

[>> Register Today](#)

Community Education Events



Through a partnership between the [American Memory Loss Foundation \(AMLF\)](#) and [Pacific Neuroscience Institute Foundation \(PNIF\)](#), we are expanding community education on memory loss, dementia, and brain health by providing free educational talks in local communities, including [AMLF's Memory Loss Roadmap](#) to help individuals and families better understand and navigate memory concerns.

[>> See What We Are Up To in 2026](#)

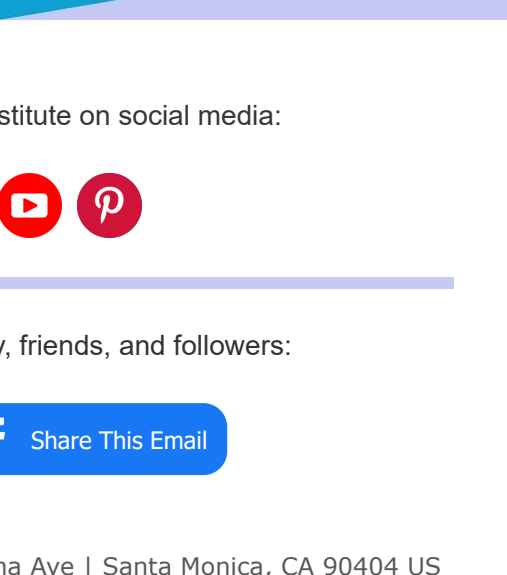
Brain Wellness & LIFESTYLE

PROGRAM

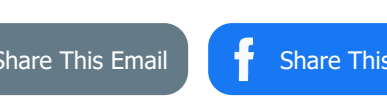
213-344-2037

[PacificLifestyle.org](#)

Lifestyle@pacificneuro.org



Follow Pacific Neuroscience Institute on social media:



Share this newsletter with family, friends, and followers:

[Share This Email](#)

[Share This Email](#)