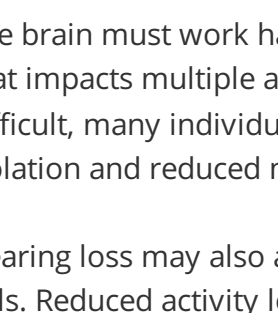




Spotlight Story: Why Treating Hearing Loss Is So Important For Brain Health

* Stopping the Domino Effect of Poor Hearing



Mathilde Tranberg
Cochlear Implant Outreach Ambassador
Pacific Neuroscience Institute

The effects of hearing loss can reach far beyond the ears.

The brain must work harder to hear and hearing loss can have a domino effect that impacts multiple aspects of daily life. As communication becomes more difficult, many individuals reduce their participation in social activities, leading to isolation and reduced mental stimulation.

Hearing loss may also affect balance and spatial awareness, increasing the risk of falls. Reduced activity levels and social engagement can further contribute to poorer cognitive outcomes over time.

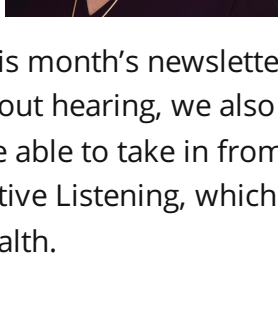
Today, hearing health is increasingly recognized as an important part of maintaining cognitive health, with hearing loss identified as one of the most modifiable risk factors for cognitive decline. Untreated hearing loss has been associated with social isolation, depression, cognitive decline, and an increased risk of dementia.

Treating hearing loss as we age can help protect communication, connection, and quality of life. Understanding the connection between hearing and brain function changes the way we think about hearing health not just as a quality-of-life issue, but as an essential part of healthy aging.

[LEARN MORE](#)

Dr. Miller's Memory Minute

* Why Listening Matters: The Art of Active Listening



Karen Miller, PhD
Senior Director, Brain Wellness & Lifestyle

Hearing and listening go hand in hand, and Active Listening supports better brain health.

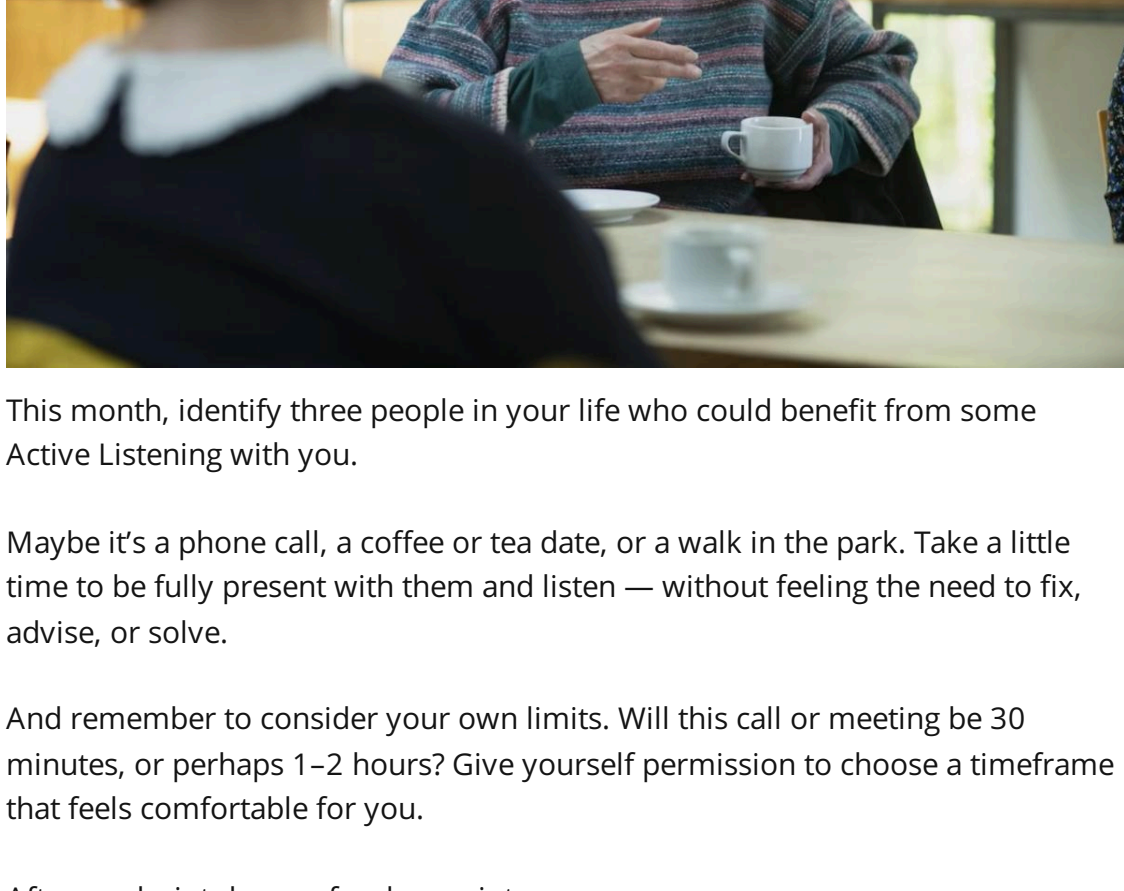
This month's newsletter highlights the importance of hearing. When we think about hearing, we also think about listening — and how much information we are able to take in from the people around us. One of the keys to learning is Active Listening, which can, in turn, support better memory and overall brain health.

Active Listening is about being fully present and truly focusing on the person speaking. It also involves the non-verbal cues that let someone know we are engaged and listening — making good eye contact, nodding, smiling, or simply showing an empathetic expression.

Active Listening also means knowing when to ask open-ended questions and when to summarize as we go, so the speaker knows that we have not only heard them, but also understood them.

When we practice Active Listening, we can build trust and respect, provide support, resolve conflict, enhance collaboration, and, perhaps most importantly, help others feel heard and valued.

* The Active Listening Challenge



This month, identify three people in your life who could benefit from some Active Listening with you.

Maybe it's a phone call, a coffee or tea date, or a walk in the park. Take a little time to be fully present with them and listen — without feeling the need to fix, advise, or solve.

And remember to consider your own limits. Will this call or meeting be 30 minutes, or perhaps 1–2 hours? Give yourself permission to choose a timeframe that feels comfortable for you.

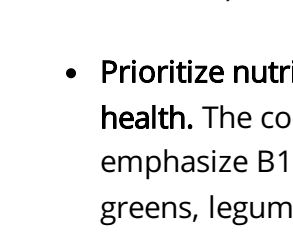
Afterwards, jot down a few key points:

- What did you learn about your friend and their needs?
- What did you learn about yourself?
- How did it feel to simply listen and be present?

Sometimes, giving someone our full attention is one of the greatest gifts we can offer. This month, take the time to listen — you may be surprised by what you hear.

The Balanced Plate with Molly

* Nourishing Inner Ear and Auditory Pathways

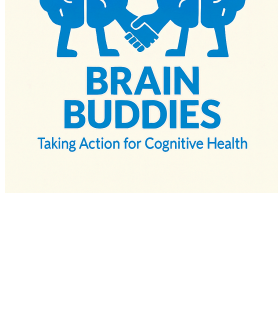


Molly Rapozo, MS, RDN
Registered Dietitian & Senior Brain Health Coach

Supporting hearing health isn't just about protecting your ears; it's also about nourishing the systems that keep the inner ear and auditory pathways functioning well.

- **Prioritize nutrient-dense foods that support vascular and neural health.** The cochlea relies on strong blood flow and healthy myelin; emphasize B12-rich foods (fish, eggs, dairy, fortified foods), leafy greens, legumes, nuts, and antioxidant-rich fruits and vegetables to reduce inflammation and support auditory nerve function.
- **Build meals that stabilize blood sugar and support metabolic health.** Diabetes, hypertension, and obesity each independently worsen hearing. Aim for balanced meals with lean protein, unsaturated fats, and slow-digesting carbohydrates to support glycemic control and reduce vascular stress on the inner ear.
- **Limit smoking and heavy alcohol while supporting restorative sleep.** Smoking accelerates hearing decline, and heavy alcohol may impair hearing partly through B12 depletion. Pair moderate alcohol intake with nutrient-rich meals, avoid tobacco exposure, and prioritize consistent sleep to reduce inflammation and protect sensory aging.

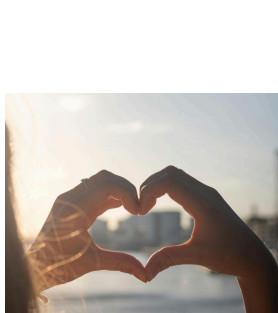
Events & Resources



In-Person Educational Presentation

Thursday, Sep 24 | 1-3 PM | Santa Monica
Dr. Karen Miller presents *Memory: What's Normal and What's Not*, at WISE & Healthy Aging in Santa Monica. Learn to distinguish between cognitive changes due to normal aging and more serious symptoms.

[>> Register Now](#)



Brain Buddies

9 Sessions | Tuesdays, 10 AM, 10/13-12/15
Brain Buddies is a supportive, action-focused group co-hosted by Molly Rapozo, Brain Health Coach, and Bud Williams, Brain Health Enthusiast. Each weekly Zoom session explores a pillar of brain health—nutrition, movement, sleep, stress, connection, or mental stimulation—through practical tips, open discussion, and personalized action steps. Build lasting habits in a welcoming space designed to keep your brain sharp and your lifestyle vibrant.

[>> Register Today](#)

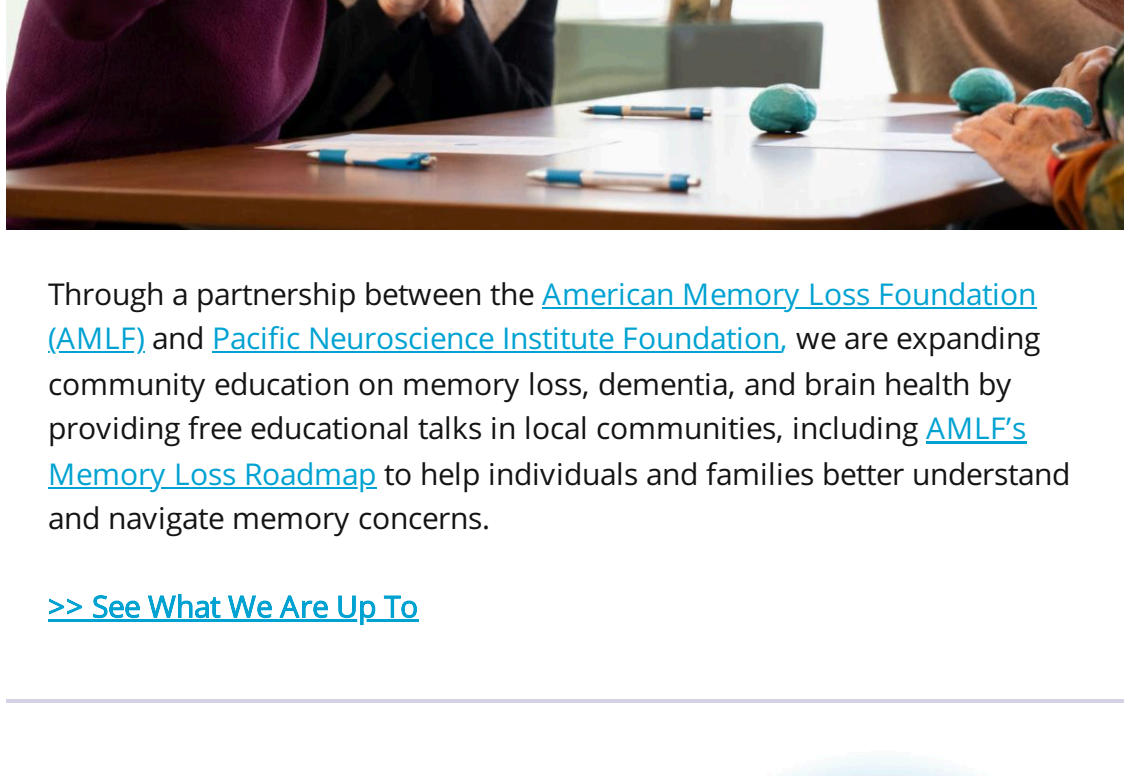


Virtual Dementia Caregiver Support Group

Wednesdays, 3-4 PM
Join our Zoom support group designed for family members and close friends taking care of a loved one living with any stage of dementia. 4 sessions with rolling enrollment | \$100
Facilitators: *Claudia Wong, FNP-BC & Sarah Krystkowiak*

[>> Register Now](#)

Community Education



Through a partnership between the [American Memory Loss Foundation \(AMLF\)](#) and [Pacific Neuroscience Institute Foundation](#), 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](#)

Brain Wellness & LIFESTYLE

PROGRAM



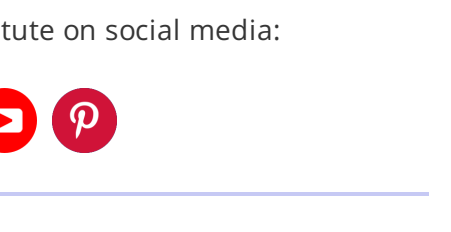
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