



BRAIN HEALTH BOOST



Respect for Others Promotes Brain Health

*The Brain Health Initiative (BHI) is working to develop brain healthy communities, creating a culture that promotes brain health protective factors and decreases risk factors, thereby improving brain health, optimizing brain performance, and preventing and fighting brain illness across the lifespan for the Florida Suncoast region and beyond. **Today, we are talking about how standing up for the equality, justice, and dignity of all humans promotes brain health.***

Nearly 250 years ago, the United States was formed under the premise that “all men are created equal...with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are **Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness.**” It is a message that resonates around the world and the effort to protect these human rights continues today.

Human rights are rights inherent to all human beings, regardless of race, sex, nationality, ethnicity, language, religion, or any other status. Human rights include the right to life and liberty, freedom from slavery and torture, freedom of opinion and expression, the right to work and education, and many more. Everyone around the world is entitled to these rights, without discrimination. In the 1940s, the United Nations created a universal and internationally protected human rights code. The [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) defines a broad range of internationally accepted rights, including civil, cultural, economic, political, and social rights.

But ongoing threats to these basic rights can pose a threat to our brain health and well-being. We are all facing ongoing uncertainty and stress as a result of the pandemic, economic instability, and racial and social injustice. According to the [Harvard Global Health Institute](#), research shows that one in 10 people around the world have a brain health condition, but up to 90 percent of those people in low- and middle-income countries are unable to obtain care.

Current events may have opened our eyes to racial and social injustice in the United States, but there is turmoil around the world. Human Rights Month is about acknowledging that people of different races, religions, cultures, and beliefs are still just that: people. It is important for us to take the time to learn about other cultures that are different from ours. By learning the history and maybe even making new friends, we can start to see our similarities and how important it is that everyone be treated with dignity and respect.

WHAT YOU CAN DO TODAY TO PROTECT YOUR BRAIN HEALTH

Respecting the rights of others is important in your interactions with others. Your social interactions are important for protecting your brain health and fighting brain and physical illness. The BHI recommends these strategies for brain boosting social connections with people from all backgrounds.

- **Learn about other cultures and people.** Travel is still limited, but there are other ways to learn about people around the world. Look for “online travel” or remote learning classes that can connect you to new places, ideas, and people. The more open you are to new experiences and new people, the more likely it is that you will make connections with others that can help you maintain good health well into the future.
- **Talk to your kids.** Your kids may have heard adults talking or seen news reports on TV about social and racial injustice, so be prepared to answer their questions. Find ways to start the conversation with older kids by asking what they have heard and how it makes them feel.
- **Find a few good friends.** Interacting with a wide variety of people broadens your social circle and introduces you to new cultures and experiences but remember that not all relationships are created equal. You need a core group of friends who provide a safe space and who make you feel happy and fulfilled.
- **BE BRAIN HEALTHY and adopt a lifestyle** that includes thoughts, behaviors, emotions, responses, and language that promote brain health protective factors:
 - Stress resilience
 - Nutrition
 - Physical activity
 - Sleep
 - Social connection
 - Emotional wellbeing
 - Meaning and Purpose
 - Cognitive stimulation and creativity
 - Engaging with nature
 - General health
 - Positive impacts

About the Brain Health Initiative (www.brainhealthinitiative.org)

The Brain Health Initiative (BHI) is a cutting-edge approach to protecting brain health, promoting brain performance, and preventing and fighting brain illness across the lifespan. The BHI is building brain healthy communities, cultures that foster brain health protective factors and address risk factors, thereby improving brain health and optimizing brain performance outcomes for the Florida Suncoast region and beyond. Join the **Be Brain Healthy** movement, **because brain health matters, and lifestyle makes a difference.** To view all Brain Health Boosts [click here](#).