

# WHAT'S THE #1 SECRET TO BUILDING BETTER COMMUNITY BRAIN WELLNESS? FRIENDSHIPS

## TOTAL BRAIN HEALTH INSIGHTS

BY CYNTHIA R. GREEN, PH.D.  
PRESIDENT, TOTAL BRAIN HEALTH

To paraphrase a popular classic tune, friendship and brain health are the perfect “blendship.” In celebration of ourselves, let’s take a look at some of the heartwarming ways friends help our brains thrive.

### Friends are our partners in crime.

Being active and engaged across body, mind and spirit is essential to maintaining sharp thinking, reducing dementia risk, and staying vital. Finding what we love to do, whether familiar or new, also supports personal growth, emotional wellbeing, and purpose. Having a friend – or two or three! – who share our goals makes it much more likely we will do the things that keep our brains healthy, whether it’s getting out for a walk, trying a new class, or taking a trip on our bucket list. Having a “partner in crime” can make it much easier to achieve our brain fitness goals and stay motivated along the way.

### Friends keep us on our thinking toes.

Want a great way to give your thinking skills a good workout? Try talking to a friend. Research shows our intellectual abilities such as attention and memory can be maintained and even improved with practice, no matter how old we are. We don’t need a computer game to do that! A good conversation with a buddy can capture our attention, get us thinking fast, and force us to be flexible in our thinking to keep up with each other. We must remember what they said and hold onto what we want to say – and wait our turn to boot. In addition, friendships shore up our social skills, so that when we meet new friends or even acquaintances, we can feel more comfortable in our ability to connect.



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## Friends make us happy.

[A recent study](#) by the technology company K4Connect found residents in senior living communities see their friendships and connections with others as an important measure of their happiness. Doesn't that just make sense? As social creatures, we like to feel connected and supported. Having friends provides that sense of belonging, which in turn is an important part of promoting our wellbeing. This matters from a brain fitness perspective, as does the ways friendship can buffer emotional distress, boost our sense of self-worth, and make it easier to value ourselves as we grow older. Finally, the K4Connect study found that folks who have friends in our community are more likely to stick around. This suggests that focusing on helping everyone find their friends is not only good for their brains and wellbeing, but also for supporting feelings of satisfaction.

Try celebrating the love of friendship with some creative ways to highlight what friendship means to you and for chances to make new ones. And look to add activities to your calendar that explore aspects of personal growth. Seek programs that give yourself the chance for meaningful exploration and common experiences around topics such as ageism, building resilience, and self-discovery in our third age. They can be a wonderful way to connect.

Here's to the many ways friendship warms our minds and hearts, at every age!

*President and founder of Total Brain Health, Cynthia R. Green, Ph.D. is a clinical psychologist, author and nationally recognized expert on memory fitness and brain health.*

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# Learn more at [totalbrainhealth.com](https://totalbrainhealth.com)



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## About Total Brain Health

At Total Brain Health, we believe all minds can thrive. We deliver science-backed, experiential training programs you can use to build better brain health. With products that support fitness across the cognitive continuum, we are proud to be a top provider of cognitive fitness programs in the U.S.