

WELLNESS CONNECTION

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NOVEMBER 2021

HEALTHY HARMONY - It is Never Too Late!



By Jackie Billhymer

Have you always wanted to learn to do something, but you keep telling yourself “It’s too late,” or “I’m too old for that?” Well it is never too late to start a hobby or new activity at any age! Cognitive abilities, such as logic and reasoning, problem solving and paying attention, often decline as we age. However, it is important to know that there is no limit to your brain’s capacity for learning. Staying active is not just about getting regular exercise. The brain needs exercise, too, and learning something new can help keep your brain active and healthy.

Physical activity helps improve cognitive function, but so do activities like painting, learning an instrument, gardening, or learning a new language. Challenging your brain with new and complex activities helps improve your memory and focus. The additional benefits of these types of activities include bringing joy and happiness to your life and creating a powerful antidote to cognitive decline. Harvard Medical School published an [article](#) with three tips to help you get started on a new hobby or activity:

- **Pick one new activity.** Your brain can only focus on one thing at a time. Being able to devote enough time and attention to the new activity will increase the likelihood that you will stick with it.

- **Sign up for a class or lessons.** Start with the basics to help build your confidence. Involving someone else in the process will also help keep you accountable.
- **Schedule practice time.** Practice with consistency and make an effort to incorporate your new activity into your daily or weekly schedule.

Pursuing your deepest (and sometimes wildest) hopes and dreams has the ability to show you that you are capable of things you never thought possible. I have wanted to learn to play the guitar since I was five years old, and recently started taking lessons. I am on my eighth lesson and can attest to trying something new helps increase your self-esteem, gain a better sense of who you are, and boost your creativity. So try something new today – your brain will thank you for it!

“Develop a passion for learning. If you do, you will never cease to grow.” – *Anthony J. D’Angelo*

