10 Ways to Sharpen Your Mind

You know about the benefits of exercise and physical activity, but what about your mind? Here are 10 ways to help disrupt your daily routine to keep your brainpower in shape:

1. **Switch things up.** Challenge your mind and coordination by trying your non-dominant hand. If you're right-handed, brush your teeth—or write notes to yourself—with your left hand.
2. **Get your blood pumping.** Aerobic exercise helps replace protein in your body, which supports growth of new brain cells and boosts memory.
3. **Engage your brain.** Make word puzzles, number games, or brain teasers a new habit. You'll help disengage from "autopilot" and help your brain develop new pathways.
4. **Address your stress.** To combat the harm that stress can have on your mind, consider the benefits of regular meditation or yoga.
5. **Be a problem solver.** Whenever you're faced with a challenge or problem to solve, come up with at least three different ways to solve the problem, even if the solution is simple.
6. **Take breaks.** If you're stuck on a particular problem or decision-making challenge, unplug for a little while and give your mind a break, or engage it in a different way.
7. **Seek out a different point of view.** Seek opportunities to be around people who think differently than you do. Challenge yourself with rigorous conversation about big ideas.
8. **Make sleep a priority.** Do your brain a favor by making 7-9 hours of sleep a priority. Benefits include improving your memory, creativity, and problem-solving skills.
9. **Enjoy a good belly laugh.** Laughter engages several areas of your brain, which makes it unique. Plus, funny, witty banter incites us to think more creatively.
10. **Tap into your senses.** During your more "mindless" tasks, such as brushing your teeth or doing laundry, try focusing on sensations you don't typically pay attention to or even notice.

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