



February 2009 News Flash

More Good News About the BRAIN!

I recently had the good fortune of running into an old colleague and friend, Jessie Jones, at the International Council on Active Aging conference in Texas. Jessie specializes in gerokinesiology, the science of how exercise and aging interact. She's a professor of health science and co-director of the Center for Successful Aging at California State University, Fullerton.

The timing of our meeting was serendipitous. For the last year I've been fascinated by new research about the regenerative powers of the aging brain. I touched on this topic in last month's News Flash. As Jessie and I were getting caught up with each other's lives, she told me she had just published a book with Ilchi Lee called, *In Full Bloom-A Brain Education Guide For Successful Aging*. The book's main premise is based on the same emerging paradigm about the brain that has been at the forefront of my recent research interests.

After the conference Jessie sent me an autographed copy of her book and I haven't put it down since! I highly recommend it to everyone over the age of 50. Not only is it extremely readable, but it is filled with practical exercises for nourishing the mind and body. It's exciting and empowering to know that we can actually create new cells and neural pathways in our brain as we age, keeping our mental capabilities vital and strong!

Here's one simple exercise from the book called "Quick Clap". Give it a try!

Quick Clap

This is a great exercise to do in the morning to wake up your brain. Both the sound and the motion will stimulate your brain.

- 1) Clap once behind your head.
- 2) Clap once behind your back.
- 3) Clap once in front of your chest.
- 4) Repeat this sequence 10 or more times, as quickly as possible.

Next month, I'll share more brain/body exercises that we've come up with for you to practice at home. In the meantime, keep in mind that anyone who exercises regularly has not only a more fit body but also a more fit brain!

Best wishes for your good health and happiness!

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Ann". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial 'M' and 'A'.