

## **NOVEMBER 2015 - TOPS Norfolk and Bristol Counties**

**Gail Lewis - Area Captain**

It's already November - wow what a quick summer AND fall. Have you started thinking of creative ways to get through the holidays with a loss? Start planning and sharing at your meetings. You can do it - let me know if you need some suggestions.

### ***FALL RALLY***

Thank you for everyone who was able to get to Fall Rally. Your support is so appreciated. Just in case you were not there, SRD next year will be down at Sea Crest in Falmouth on April 1 and 2. None other than Barbara Pacheco and your's truly will be co-chair people for the event. The theme is "BUCHANNEER'S BASH". Nothing more appropriate than a Pirate's theme on the cape. More coming up on this. If you and/or your chapter are interested in helping out in any way, please let me know. We can use all the help we can get. Fun forecasted for the future!!!

### ***RD CONTEST***

See the attached regarding our Regional Director's Contest. There are a lot of ways to get points.....see if you qualify.

### ***TOPS AP***

There's a new TOPS AP - here is a message from our president Barb Cady: I just wanted to give everyone a progress update on our newest TOPS tool currently under development. The TOPS Exchange App that was developed based on the TOPS Exchange Cards which is being created for Android phones is now in the beta testing phase among several of our trusted, techy field staff to check the functionality and ease of use for our members. When released, the app will be available for purchase at a very modest cost through the Google Play Store. It will be used to track daily food intake and other benchmarks of progress when released. Stay tuned for more news! From Barbara Cady

### ***INFORMATION - INSPIRATION***

This month is a little different than other months. Instead of something that has to do with weight loss or support, I thought something different needed to be printed. I attended a workshop the other day and it focused on the brain and it's functions. It was very interesting and it really concentrated on using your brain and the benefits of it. I then got this

article from a dear friend of mine in Pennsylvania and I thought nothing could be more perfect. I hope you can use this and enjoy it.

### **Use Your Brain**

It's true: Use it or lose it. Stretching your brain keeps your mind sharp. People who are more active in mentally challenging activities are much less likely to get Alzheimer's disease. Try these:

Read a book.

Go to a lecture.

Listen to the radio.

Play a game.

Visit a museum.

Learn a second language.

### **Mix Things Up**

Remember trying to talk backwards as a child? Researchers at Duke University created exercises they call "neurobics," which challenge your brain to think in new ways. Since your five senses are key to learning, use them to exercise your mind. If you're right-handed, try using your left hand. Drive to work by another route. Close your eyes and see if you can recognize food by taste.

### **Work Out to Stay Sharp**

Exercise, especially the kind that gets your heart rate up like walking or swimming, has mental pluses, too. Although experts aren't sure why, physical activity might increase the blood supply to the brain and improve links between brain cells. Staying active can help memory, imagination, and even your ability to plan tasks.

### **A Healthy Diet Builds Brainpower**

Do your brain a favor and choose foods that are good for your heart and waistline. Being obese in middle age makes you twice as likely to have dementia later on. High cholesterol and high blood pressure raise your chances, too. Try these easy tips:

Bake or grill foods instead of frying.

Cook with "good" fats like oils from nuts, seeds, and olives instead of cream, butter, and fats from meat.

Eat colorful fruits and veggies.

Eat fish.

### **Watch What You Drink**

You know that too many drinks can affect your judgment, speech, movement, and memory. But did you know alcohol can have long-term effects? Too much drinking over a long period of time can shrink the frontal lobes of your brain. And that damage can last forever, even if you quit drinking. A healthy amount is considered one drink a day for women and two for men.

### **Video Games Train Your Brain**

Grab that joystick. Several studies found that playing video games stimulates the parts of the brain that control movement, memory, planning, and fine motor skills. Some experts say gaming only makes you better at gaming. The verdict may still be out, but why let kids have all the fun?

### **Music Helps Your Brain**

Thank your Mom for making you practice the piano. Playing an instrument early in life pays off in clearer thinking when you're older. Musical experience boosts mental functions that have nothing to do with music, such as memory and ability to plan. It also helps with greater hand coordination. Plus, it's fun -- and it's never too late to start.

### **Make Friends for Your Mind**

Be a people person! Talking with others actually sharpens your brain, whether at work, at home, or out in your community. Studies show social activities improve your mind. So volunteer, sign up for a class, or call a friend!

### **Stay Calm**

Too much stress can hurt your gray matter, which contains cells that store and process information. Here are some ways to chill:

Take deep breaths.

Find something that makes you laugh.

Listen to music.

Try yoga or meditation.

Find someone to talk to.

### **Sleep and the Brain**

Get enough sleep before and after you learn something new. You need sleep on both ends. When you start out tired, it's hard to focus on things. And when you sleep afterward, your brain files away the new info so you can recall it later. A long night's rest is best for memory and your mood. Adults need 7-8 hours of sleep every night.

### **Memory Helpers**

Everyone spaces out now and then. As you get older, you may not remember things as easily as you used to. That's a normal part of aging. Some helpful hints:

Write things down.

Use the calendar and reminder functions in your phone, even for simple things (Call Dad!).

Focus on one task at a time.

Learn new things one step at a time.

### **The Name Game**

Have trouble recalling names? Always repeat a person's name while you're talking to them -- at least in your head, if not out loud. Or invent a funny image or rhyme that you link with their name. For example, think of Bob bobbing out in the ocean.

That's it for November.

Have a great month. Let me know if you need anything.

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