

# The Healthy Mind Platter



*The Healthy Mind Platter, for Optimal Brain Matter*

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The seven essential daily mental activities are:



## **Focus Time**

When we closely focus on tasks in a goal-oriented way, taking on challenges that make deep connections in the brain.



## **Play Time**

When we allow ourselves to be spontaneous or creative, playfully enjoying novel experiences, which helps make new connections in the brain.



## **Connecting Time**

When we connect with other people, ideally in person, or take time to appreciate our connection to the natural world around us, richly activating the brain's relational circuitry.



## **Physical Time**

When we move our bodies, aerobically if possible, which strengthens the brain in many ways.



## **Time In**

When we quietly reflect internally, focusing on sensations, images, feelings and thoughts, helping to better integrate the brain.



## **Down Time**

When we are non-focused, without any specific goal, and let our mind wander or simply relax, which helps our brain recharge.



## **Sleep Time**

When we give the brain the rest it needs to consolidate learning and recover from the experiences of the day

The **Healthy Mind Platter** has seven essential mental activities necessary for optimum mental health in daily life. These seven daily activities make up the full set of 'mental nutrients' that your brain needs to function at its best. By engaging every day in each of these servings, you enable your brain to coordinate and balance its activities, which strengthens your brain's internal connections and your connections with other people.

There's no specific recipe for a healthy mind, as each individual is different, and our needs change over time too. The point is to become aware of the full spectrum of essential mental activities, and just like with essential nutrients, make sure that at least every day we are nudging the right ingredients into our mental diet, even for just a little time. Just like you wouldn't eat only pizza every day for days on end, we shouldn't just live on focus time and little sleep. Mental wellness is all about giving your brain lots of opportunities to develop in different ways.

A fun use of this idea is to map out an average day and see what percentage of your time you spend in each area. Like a balanced diet, there are many combinations that can work well.

In short, it is important to eat well, and we applaud the new healthy eating plate. However as a society we are sorely lacking in good information about what it takes to have a healthy mind. We hope that the healthy mind platter creates an appetite for increasing awareness of what we put into our minds too.

*The Healthy Mind Platter was created in collaboration by Dr. David Rock , executive director of the NeuroLeadership Institute and Dr. Daniel Siegel , executive director of the Mindsight Institute and clinical professor at the UCLA School of Medicine.*