There are specific ways we can preserve our minds to delay and even prevent the onset of dementia. Last week we talked about the incredible brain research that is changing the way the world ages. This week our focus is on one of the cognitive domains that is impacted during cognitive decline, Executive Function. Executive Function is the cognitive process that controls our ability to understand broad concepts, organize thoughts, prioritize tasks, reason, problem solve, make judgments, and complete small steps to achieve a goal. When we begin to lose functioning in this area that were once simple tasks, complete small steps to make judgments, and reason, problem solve, thoughts, prioritize tasks, ability to understand process that controls our function. According to the National Center for a person struggling with a deficit in executive behaviors typically change at home versus a response with that information that is appropriate allow us to both observe, gather, and organize components, organization and regulation, which a fire on the stove. Executive Function has two instruction guides, or knowing what to do with caregivers to help with these activities and even inquire as to what type of activities caregivers can provide that will help to increase motivation. Caregivers can help in a variety of ways by taking time with their clients to engage in targeted activities designed to help with executive function. Caregivers can help in a variety of ways by taking time with their clients to engage in targeted activities designed to help with executive function. There are some tips that can be utilized to help a person struggling with a deficit in executive functioning. According to the National Center for Learning Disabilities several behavioral changes can make a big difference. For example, breaking tasks down and focusing on one step at a time, using visual organizational aids, using to-do lists, calendars, personal organization apps on a smart phone, planning for additional time to complete tasks, creating task lists with a time element to adequately plan activities like appointments or shopping, minimizing clutter in your life, and asking others for help when needed along those lines, individuals relying on others, through care giving organizations or even family members can ask caregivers to help with these activities and even inquire as to what type of activities caregivers can provide that will help to increase motivation. Caregivers can help in a variety of ways by taking time with their clients to engage in targeted activities designed to help with executive function. Strategy games, such as chess and checkers or Sudoku, involve making decisions based on ever changing information. Word association games involve making decisions on the best word for the clue can also help. When we think about all the ways we use our brains the opportunity to make positive changes are all around us. Caregivers, with some training, can help to modify existing games and activities that specifically target the deficits identified through assessment or your medical provider. There is never a better time to start caring for yourself or your loved ones than today, and again- what are you willing to do to protect your most valuable asset!

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