

[IMAGE]

## Your Brain Needs Positivity

By Editorial Staff

We all have negative thoughts from time to time, particularly with the current chaos surrounding us. Between the coronavirus pandemic and social unrest, who wouldn't let a little negativity – or a lot – creep into their brain? It's a completely natural reaction to what's been going on lately.

Here's why too many negative thoughts can be bad for your brain, whether it's during a pandemic or your "normal," day-to-day existence. Research suggests repetitive negative thinking, particularly as we age, can increase the risk for cognitive decline, including Alzheimer's disease.

In the study, published in *Alzheimer's & Dementia*, the official journal of the Alzheimer's Association, researchers evaluated nearly 300 older adults. Subjects, each of whom had previously undergone a cognitive assessment brain scan, completed questionnaires that asked about repetitive negative thoughts, anxiety and depression. Repetitive negative thoughts were associated with declines in global cognition, delayed memory, and increased deposition of specific proteins in the brain that have been linked to the development of Alzheimer's disease.

We can't always control a negative thought from entering our brain, but we can certainly take steps to reduce the likelihood that one will "pop up" – and reduce the chances that we'll obsess on it, creating a string of negative thoughts. Surrounding ourselves with positive, nurturing relationships; expressing our gratefulness on a daily basis; continually striving to enrich our lives by learning new skills, pursuing new hobbies, etc.; and developing a clear-cut plan of how to process a negative thought when you have one is a great start. Your brain needs positivity, so give it what it needs and reap the mental health benefits today!

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