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# Better Brain Health As You Age

## MISSION

Provide specialized care, support and education for individuals in all stages of memory or cognitive impairment, their partners and the community.

## VISION

A community where those living with memory or cognitive impairment and their care partners can achieve the highest quality of life.

## Leader in Dementia Care in Northern Virginia

Insight is a nonprofit started in 1984 that supports families on their dementia journey.

### **Care**

Specialized adult day programs for people in all stages of their dementia journey.

### **Connection**

Building relationships and supporting care partners on their journey.

### **Creativity**

Dementia experts sharing their knowledge and resources because every journey is unique.

# What is Brain Health?

**Brain health** refers to how well a person's brain functions across several areas, including **cognitive, sensory, social-emotional, behavioral and motor domains.**

- **Cognitive**: how well a person can think, learn, and remember
- **Sensory**: how well a person can feel and respond to sensations of touch – including pressure, temperature, and pain
- **Motor**: how well a person can make and control movements, including balance
- **Emotional/Behavioral**: how well a person can interpret and respond to emotions (both pleasant and unpleasant)

## **Brain health can be affected by many age-related changes in the brain including:**

- Injuries such as stroke or traumatic brain injury
- Mood disorders such as depression and anxiety
- Substance abuse and addiction
- Cognitive degenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's disease and other dementias.

According to the National Institute on Aging (NIA),  
around 20-25% of older adults can expect  
Mild Cognitive Impairment.

An estimated 1 out of 10 older adults  
will experience some form of  
memory loss or dementia.



# Ways to Keep Your Brain Healthy

# Taking Care of Health



- Get annual health screenings, including recommended ones
- Manage chronic health problems like diabetes, hypertension, high cholesterol, mental-health, etc.
- Consult with health care provider about the medicines taken and their possible side effects on overall brain function and sleep
- Reduce risk for brain injuries due to falls and any other accidents

- Reduce intake of alcohol, (take strong caution of mixing medication with alcohol)
- Quit smoking (if you currently smoke), in addition to avoiding other nicotine products such as chewing tobacco
- Get enough sleep, aiming for 7-8 hours every night

Studies have shown that having hypertension between the ages of 40 to early 60s increases the risk of cognitive decline later in life.

*For example, the SPRINT-MIND study,* a nationwide clinical trial, concluded that **intensive lowering of blood pressure lowers the risk for mild cognitive impairment (MCI),** which is a risk factor for dementia.

# Eating Healthy



A healthy diet can help reduce the risk of many chronic diseases, including diabetes and heart disease.

A healthy diet can also lead to better brain health.

## Healthy Foods Include:

- **Fruits** (mixed berries, pineapples, kiwis, bananas, etc.)
- **Vegetables** (dark leafy greens, broccoli, beets)
- **Meats and Fatty Fish** (salmon, sardines, chicken, beef, etc.)
- **Whole-grains and Legumes** (oats, quinoa, chickpeas, lentils, kidney beans, etc.)

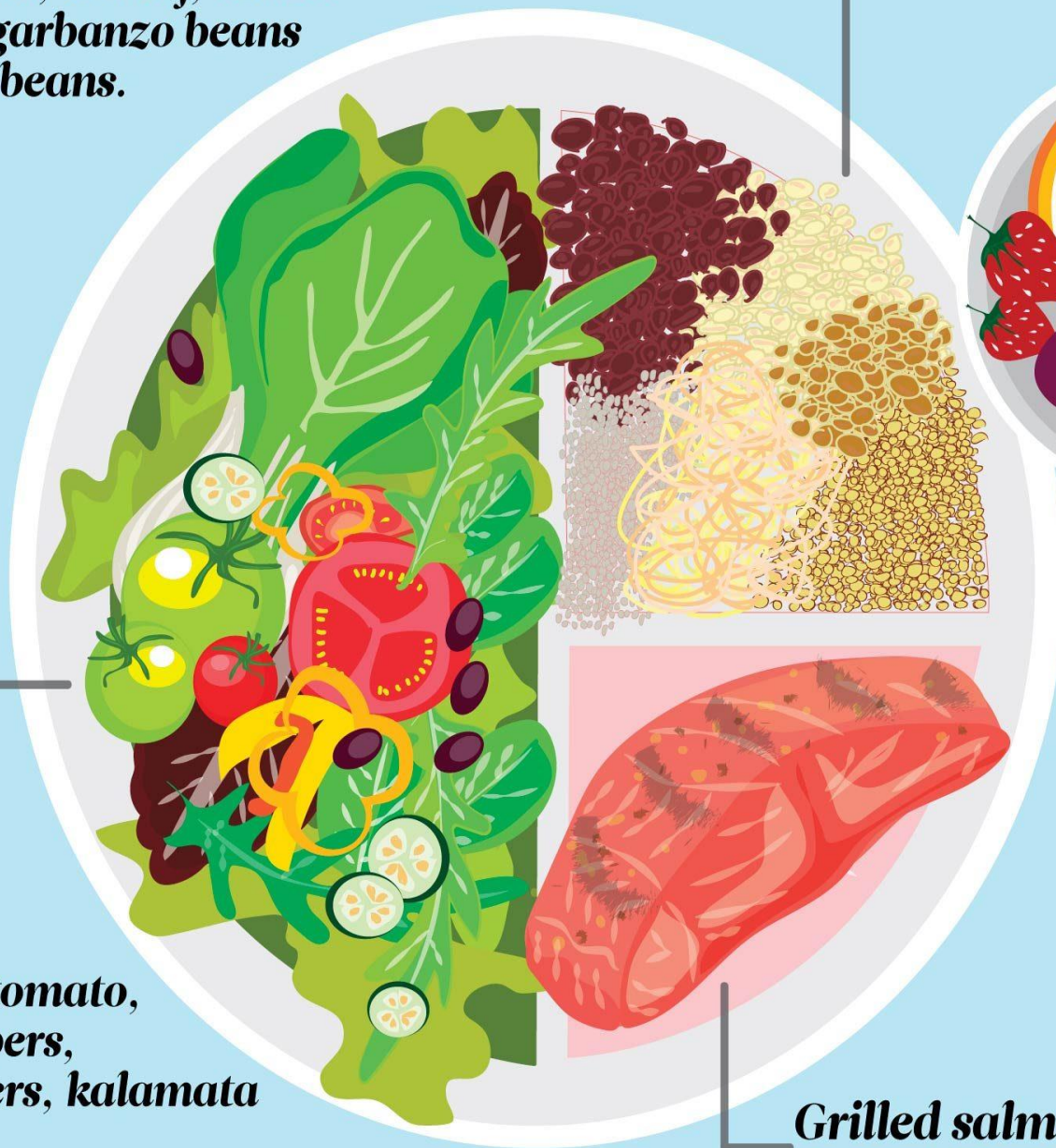


## Healthy Foods Include:

- **Healthier Fats** (olive oil, nuts, avocados, etc.)
- **Herbs or Seeds** (cocoa seeds, rosemary, mint, sesame seeds,
- **Calcium** (dairy, vegetables, tofu, fruit)
- **8-12 Cups of Water a Day** (fruits and vegetables help too)

**Couscous, barley, wheat  
pasta, garbanzo beans  
kidney beans.**

**Orange, fig,  
strawberries.**



**Water**



**Grilled salmon**

**Greens, tomato,  
bell peppers,  
cucumbers, kalamata  
olives .**

# Getting Active



Being physically active through regular exercise, household chores, or other forms of movement — has many benefits. It can help you:

- Keep and improve your strength
- Have more energy
- Improve your balance
- Prevent or delay heart disease, diabetes, and other concerns
- Perk up your mood and reduce depression

Adults aged 65 and older need:

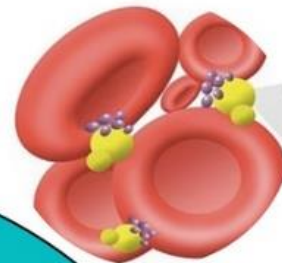
- At least **150 minutes a week** (for example, 30 minutes a day, 5 days a week) of **moderate-intensity activity** - such as brisk walking. Alternatively, they can do 75 minutes a week of **vigorous-intensity activity** such as hiking, jogging, or running
- At least **2 days a week** of activities that strengthen muscles
- Activities that improve balance or flexibility, such as yoga, for example



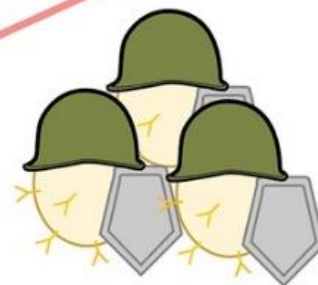
Improved Body Composition



Improved Blood Lipid Profile and Vascular Function



Improved Blood Pressure



Improved Immune System Function

Improved Blood Glucose and Insulin Sensitivity



Increased Muscle Mass and Strength

Improved Physical Function and Mobility



Greater Oxidative Capacity



# BENEFITS OF EXERCISE



IMPROVE YOUR MENTAL HEALTH AND MOOD.



REDUCE YOUR RISK OF HEART DISEASES.



HELP YOU CONTROL YOUR WEIGHT.



HELP YOU QUIT SMOKING.



STRENGTHEN YOUR BONES AND MUSCLES.



REDUCE YOUR RISK OF FALLS.



## Some Exercises Great to Include Are:

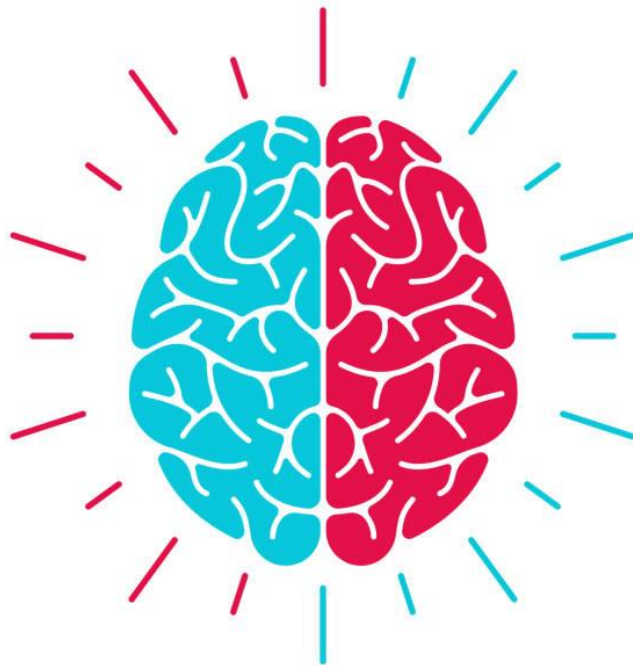
- Brisk Walking
- Light Jogging
- Strength-Training
- Water-Aerobics
- Biking
- Pilates
- Yoga



Speak with your doctor before starting any regimen.



# Cognitive Exercises



# Can Cognitive Exercises Prevent Dementia?





**TRIVIA**  
QUIZ



**In what book did  
Rudyard Kipling  
introduce readers to a  
mongoose named  
Rikki Tikki Tavi?**



## ***The Jungle Book***



**In what country was  
Arnold Schwarzenegger  
born?**



**TRIVIA**  
QUIZ

**Austria**





**Who was Germany's first  
female chancellor?**



**Angela Merkel**



**What is the main source  
of food for the  
Bald Eagle?**



**TRIVIA**

QUIZ

**Fish**



**What language do  
natives call Farsi?**



**Persians**



**What was the first toy  
advertised on television?**



**Mr. Potato Head**



Studies suggest that informal cognitively stimulating activities, such as **reading or playing games**, may lower the risk of cognitive impairment and dementia.



Participating in **games, crafts, computer use, and social activities** for about 4 years was associated with a lower risk of MCI.





Scientists think that some of these activities may protect the brain by establishing “reserve,” the brain’s ability to **operate effectively even when it is damaged, or some brain function is disrupted.**



**Memory Café & Reconnections** for those living with mild cognitive impairment (MCI) or in the early stages of memory impairment.

Small groups participate in

- Discussion groups
- Recreational therapies
- Learning
- Socialize



# **The Power of Socialization**



# AS WE AGE, FEELING CONNECTED + PURPOSE IN LIFE = BETTER BRAIN HEALTH



## Experts agree...

Keeping and building relationships over your lifetime  
can help to keep your thinking sharp



## HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO...



Join a group



Get a pet



Teach someone  
something



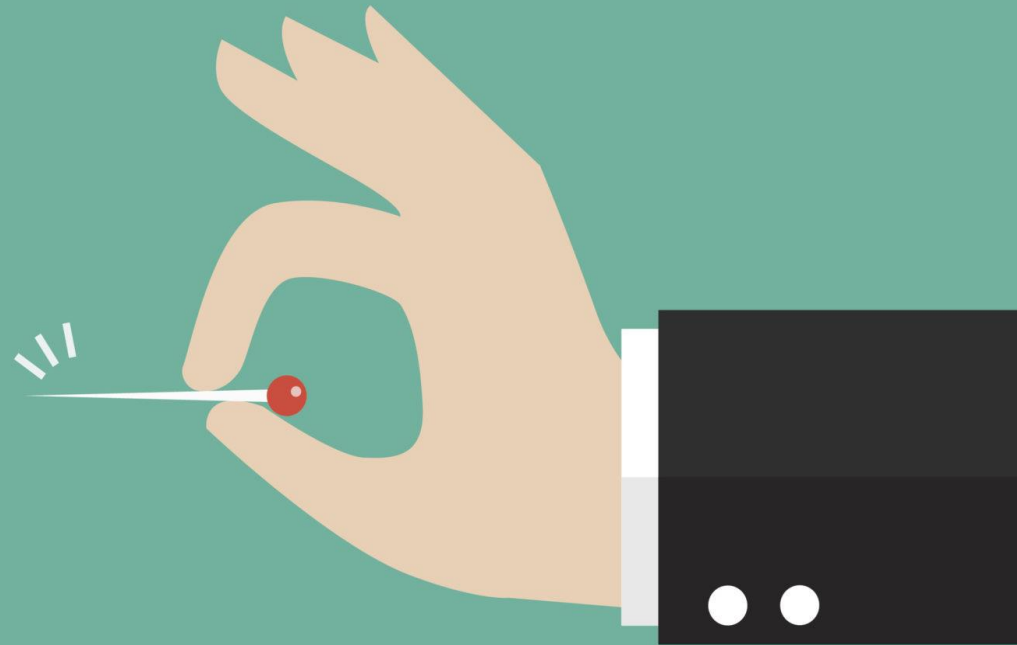
Volunteer  
or help others



Use technology to  
stay connected



Share  
a smile!

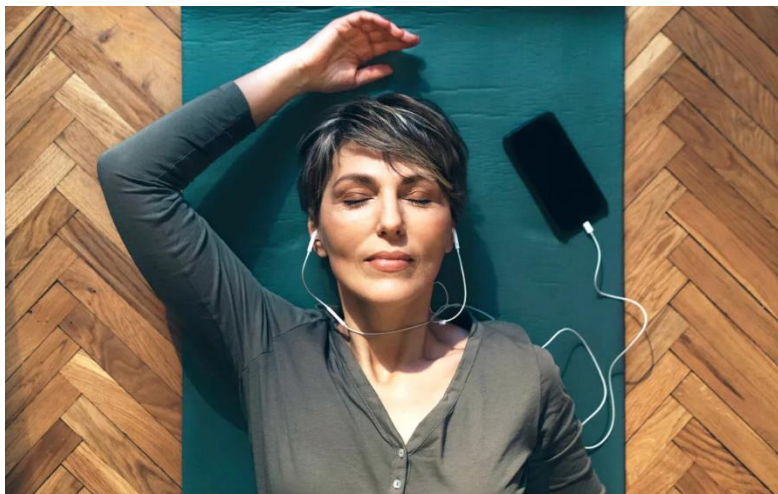


Chronic stress can change the brain, affect memory, and increase the risk for Alzheimer's and related dementias.

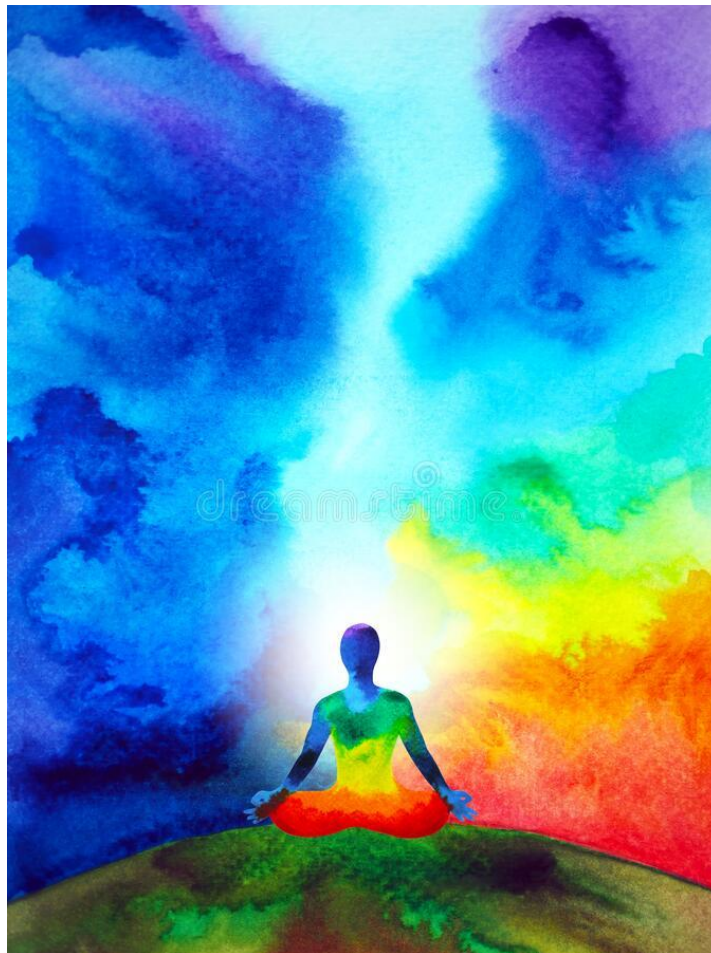
To help manage stress and build the ability to bounce back from stressful situations, there are many things you can do:

- **Exercise regularly.** Practicing tai chi or walking, especially in nature, can restore a sense of well-being.
- **Write in a journal.** Putting your thoughts or worries on paper can help you let go of an issue or see a new solution.
- **Practice mindfulness meditation**— which involves focusing awareness on the present moment without judgment — or breathing exercises that can help your body relax. These can help lower blood pressure, lessen muscle tension, and reduce stress.
- **Release grudges or things beyond your control,** practice gratitude, or pause to enjoy the simple things, like the comfort of a cup of tea or the beauty of a sunrise.





# Meditation



- Boosts Immune System
- Pain Management
- Improves Sleep
- Helps Stave off Depression
- Increased Attention Span
- Lowers Blood Pressure
- Helps Memory
- Reduces Anxiety and Stress

*mental*

*physical*

**Sleep Benefits**

**Promotes Healthy Cognitive Aging**

**Enhances Concentration**

**Maintains Healthy Blood Pressure**

**Promotes Normal Cholesterol Levels**

**Assists in Pain Management**

Meditators fall asleep sooner and stay asleep longer with less daytime fatigue than those that don't.

Meditation allows you to relax which causes blood vessels to open up and influences blood pressure.

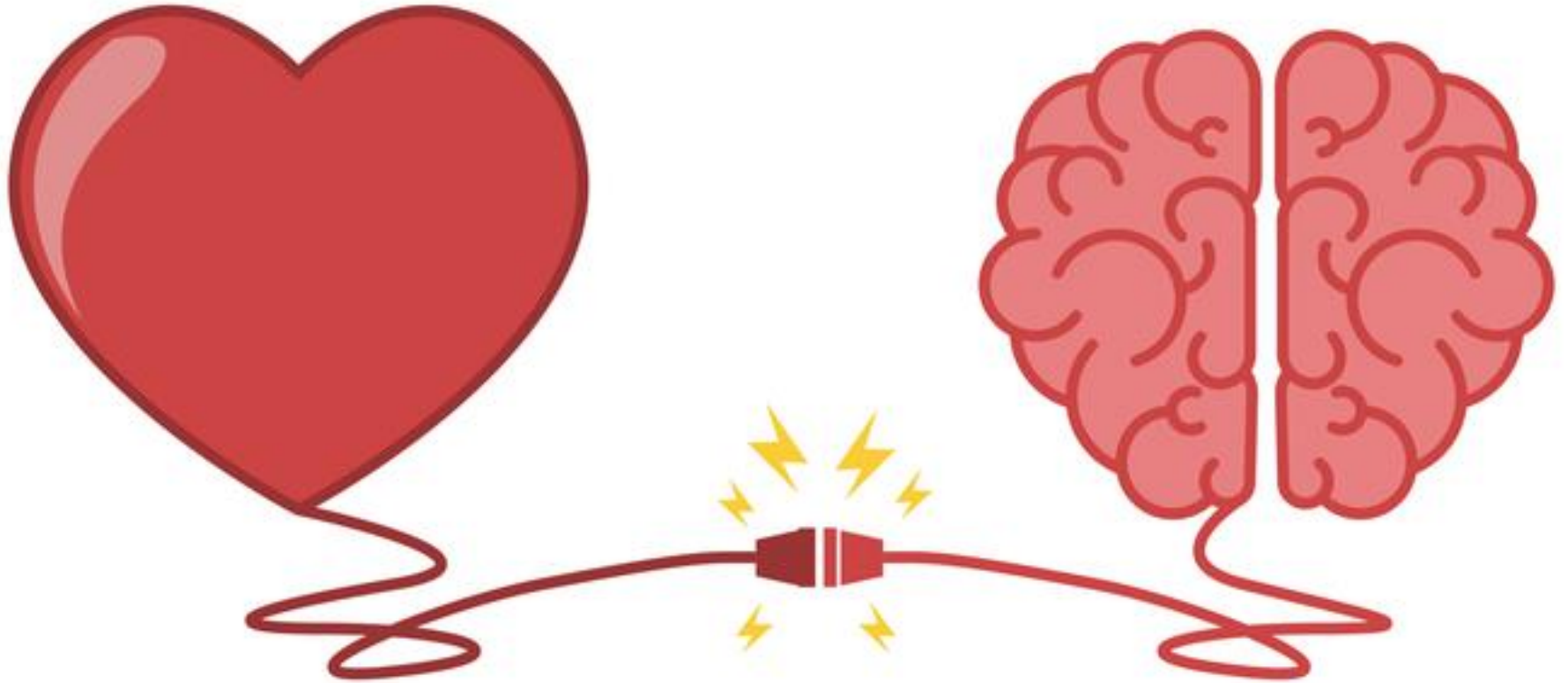




# Reduce Risks to Cognitive Health



# Reminder



# Supporting Families on the Journey

Insight is a nonprofit organization that relies upon the generosity of people like you to engage people with dementia and support their care partners.

*“I support Insight because I think this is one of the premier organizations to help people with dementia and their caregivers. I am extremely impressed with their staff and the services provided.” - Family Member*



# Ways to Support



## IRA and Other Gifts

Anyone 70.5 years or older can give a tax-free Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) from their IRA account.



## Monthly Donation

A gift of \$10 a month makes a difference. It's easy to set it up online today or from your bank account.



## Workplace Giving

Give through your Company or the Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) #35282. Companies also make matching gifts.

[www.Insightmcc.org/Donate](http://www.Insightmcc.org/Donate)



## Fundraising Events



Attend Paintings & Pairings Gala to network with over 300 attendees in the aging industry. Enjoy live and silent auctions, 3-course meal, gala program with sponsor recognition and award announcement. Sponsorship opportunities available.



The Legacy breakfast is a one-hour complimentary breakfast with a fast-paced program designed to raise funds. The room is filled by table hosts. Each Table Host agrees to fill a table of 10 people by personally inviting guests to join them for breakfast.

[www.Insightmcc.org/Events](http://www.Insightmcc.org/Events)



**InsightMCC.org**  
**703-204-4664**

