

**Lunch & Learn Webinar:  
Prevention & Brain Health**

**PRESENTED BY**  
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## Educational Events

**Learning Objectives:**  
Our educational events are designed to make mental health knowledge accessible and actionable. Guided by trusted experts, you will:

- Break down complex topics into understandable, meaningful insights.
- Practice strategies you can immediately integrate into your personal, professional, or ministry setting.
- Strengthen your ability to respond with empathy and clarity when someone needs support.

**Continuing Education (CE):**  
Licensed Mental Health Providers May Earn Up to 1.0 CE hour



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## How We Help You Bridge The Gap

The **Hope and Healing Center & Institute (HHCI)** is a no-cost, comprehensive mental health resource serving the Houston community and beyond. Its mission is to expand access to care, education, and support for individuals and communities facing mental health challenges.

**Gateway to Hope (GTHU)** is the training arm of HHCI—created to equip people with the knowledge and skills needed to respond effectively and compassionately when mental health needs arise.

Through GTHU, participants gain access to:

- **Evidence-based mental and behavioral health training** delivered through our Learning Portal and grounded in peer-reviewed research
- **Practical tools and behavioral health resources** that support real-world application
- **Ongoing support** for individuals, faith communities, schools, and workplaces

Together, HHCI and GTHU help bridge the gap between **mental health need and meaningful support** by preparing you to recognize concerns, respond with confidence, make appropriate referrals, and foster healthier, more resilient communities.

**Be the Bridge Between Struggle & Support**



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## Explore Our Evidence-Based Training Programs

- Empower Faith Communities
- Empower Schools
- Empower Workplaces
- The 4 R's Training®
- Mental Health Coach
  - Specialty Trainings:
    - Addiction & Behavioral Health Disorders
    - Aging & Elder Care
    - Child & Adolescent Mental Health
    - Trauma
- Mental Health Champion
- Aging with Grace



SCAN ME

*All of our trainings are available in English and Spanish*



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## Mental Health Coach Training

- Evidence-based training incorporating ongoing research and feedback from GTHU network of Mental Health Coaches.
- Learn essential information, skills, practical scenarios, and actionable steps to compassionately respond to those in mental distress.
- Deepen your knowledge and response skills through our Specialty Trainings:
  - Addiction & Behavioral Health Disorders
  - Aging & Elder Care
  - Child & Adolescent Mental Health
  - Trauma



SCAN ME

*Go Beyond Awareness. Create Real Change.*



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## Mental Health Coach Benefits

**Designed to support you—before, during, and after training.**

- A personalized dashboard to manage your learning
- A coach-only forum for connection and shared learning
- A community resource map to support informed referrals
- Live coach meetings and online events for continued growth
- Certification to recognize your training and commitment







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### Brain Health Equation

The diagram illustrates the 'Brain Health Equation' as a sum of three components: a DNA double helix, a globe of the Earth, and a circular collage of various health-related icons including a heart, a brain, an apple, a water glass, a person, and a gear.

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### Blood Flow and Brain Function

- Approximately 15-20% of the blood pumped by the heart goes to the brain at rest.
- In practical terms:
  - The adult heart pumps about 5 liters of blood per minute at rest.
  - The brain receives roughly 750-1,000 milliliters per minute.
  - Despite accounting for only about 2% of total body weight, the brain consumes ~20% of the body's oxygen and energy.
- This disproportionately high blood flow reflects the brain's continuous metabolic demand and lack of energy storage. Cerebral blood flow is tightly regulated to remain relatively constant even when blood pressure fluctuates, within normal limits.

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### Threats to Brain Health

- Smoking
- Excessive use of alcohol
- Heart disease, diabetes, and other health problems
- Poor diet
- Insufficient sleep
- Chronic stress
- Lack of physical activity
- Little social activity and being alone most of the time

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### Conditions that Affect Brain Health

- Heart disease, high blood pressure
- Diabetes
- Alzheimer's disease
- Stroke
- Traumatic brain injury
- Depression
- Sleep problems



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### Diet and Nutrition

- Eat a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and healthy fats (e.g., olive oil, fatty fish), similar to a Mediterranean diet, while reducing processed foods, sugar, and saturated fats.
- Studies show people who closely follow a Mediterranean diet are less likely to have Alzheimer's disease than people who don't follow the diet.



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### Exercise Regularly

- Aim to exercise several times per week for 30 to 60 minutes. You can walk, swim, play tennis or do any other moderate aerobic activity that increases your heart rate.
- Research shows that moderate-to-vigorous physical activity improves cerebral blood flow, supports neurogenesis, and is strongly linked to reduced cognitive decline.



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### Prioritize Quality Sleep

- Get 7-9 hours of consecutive, quality sleep to help your brain clear waste and consolidate memories.
- Address sleep disorders like sleep apnea.



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### Mentally Active and Socially Engaged

- Keep your mind active with puzzles, learning new skills, reading, or hobbies. Activities that require effortful thinking promote neural plasticity more effectively than passive mental activities.
- Social interaction helps ward off depression and stress, which can contribute to memory loss. Look for opportunities to connect with loved ones, friends and others, especially if you live alone.



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### Avoid Smoking and Limit Alcohol

- Research indicates smoking harms the brain through vascular damage, inflammation, and oxidative stress, and cessation is associated with better preservation of cognitive function and brain structure.
- Keep alcohol consumption moderate (up to 1 drink per day for women and 2 for men); excessive drinking damages brain cells and impairs cognitive function.



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### Manage Chronic Conditions

- **Control Blood Pressure:** Hypertension damages blood vessels in the brain, increasing the risk of stroke, vascular dementia, and accelerated cognitive decline.
- **Manage Cholesterol:** Elevated LDL cholesterol contributes to atherosclerosis, which restricts blood flow to the brain and is linked to poorer memory and executive function.
- **Control Diabetes:** Poorly managed blood sugar increases inflammation and damages small blood vessels in the brain, raising the risk of cognitive impairment and dementia.



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### Reduce Daily Stress

- Prolonged stress elevates cortisol levels, which can damage brain regions involved in memory and executive function, including the hippocampus and prefrontal cortex.
- Mindfulness, controlled breathing, and regular structured downtime help lower cortisol, support emotional regulation, and protect long-term cognitive health.



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### Protect Your Head

- Traumatic brain injuries can cause lasting damage to memory, attention, and emotional regulation, and increase the long-term risk of cognitive decline and dementia.
- Wearing helmets while biking or engaging in contact sports and using seatbelts in vehicles significantly reduces the risk and severity of brain injury.



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## McCance Brain Care Score

- Physical Factors
  - Blood pressure
  - Hemoglobin A1C
  - Cholesterol
  - Body mass index (BMI)
- Lifestyle Factors
  - Nutrition
  - Alcohol intake
  - Smoking
  - Physical activity
  - Sleep
- Social or Emotional Factors
  - Stress
  - Relationships
  - Life purpose

<https://medcris.netcris.org/rolland/survey/?id=JN7441KW3FA2W6>

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## What Can You Do Today?

- Pick one thing you can do that may help your brain.
- Think of small, first steps such as:
  - Taking a 10-minute walk a few times a week.
  - Adding one serving of vegetables each day.
  - Making an appointment for a physical exam.
- Write down what you will do and when.
- Get support from family, friends, or community groups!

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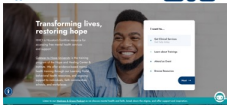
## Websites



**Mischer Behavioral Health Resource Center**  
[MischerBehavioralHealth.org](https://www.mischerbehavioralhealth.org)



**Learning Portal: Learn.GTHU.org**



**HopeandHealingCenter.org**

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## Resources

**The Hope Line**  
(832) 831-7337

Open daily, 9 PM - 8 PM CT

Relief. Just a Call Away.

**Grace, Friendly AI Assistant**  
Have questions about mental or behavioral health? Talk to Grace. Get health information on quality in supporting yourself at home.

Grace can provide you with information and resources for your behavioral health and addiction questions.

Visit the **Mischer Behavioral Health Resource Center** to refer or find support:

- Referrals from our Vetted Provider Network
- Innovators
- Mental Healthcare Providers
- Support Groups

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## Educational Resources

Listen to our **Madness & Grace Podcast**, from the Hope and Healing Center & Institute, with Matthew Stanford, Ph.D., and Madeline Stiers, Ph.D., LCSW-S.

**Lunch & Learn Hub**

Explore resources on relevant mental health topics to equip yourself with effective tools for growing mental health awareness in your community and for supporting those in mental distress.

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## Stay Connected With GTHU

Receive training reminders, coach updates, and helpful resources—delivered straight to your phone.

**To opt in to SMS updates:**  
 📱 Text "Sign me up" to (346) 449-8400

*Message and data rates may apply. You can opt out at any time.*

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Gateway to Hope  
Training Program of HHCI

**Follow Us on Social Media & Stay Connected**

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