Efficacy of Cognitive Training for Aging Adults

Presented by:

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When:
Tuesday, SEPTEMBER 29, 2015
4:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Where:
HMRI Research Conference Center
734 Fairmount Avenue
Pasadena, CA 91105

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TOPIC SUMMARY:
Aging has been associated with neuronal loss and cognitive decline, including changes in executive functioning, processing speed, and memory. Initially, researchers believed that nothing could be done to reverse or slow cognitive decline associated with age; however, with better techniques and methodologies, and converging evidence from animal and human studies, neurogenesis can indeed occur in the brain throughout the lifespan (Fuchs & Flugge, 2011), and the neuroplasticity of the brain suggests that older adults can benefit from training and learning experiences. Thus, the impact of cognitive exercises as a means of mitigating cognitive decline in the aging brain has become a topic of great interest to consumers, clinicians, and researchers. In this talk, Dr. Miller will explore the efficacy of cognitive training for various populations (normal aging, mild cognitive impairment, dementia), and discuss the differences of classroom vs. computerized programs for the aging brain.

ABOUT THE SPEAKER:
Dr. Karen Miller, Associate Clinical Professor and Clinical Neuropsychologist at Ronald Reagan UCLA Medical Center, has been part of Dr. Gary Small’s research team at the Longevity Center for the past 21 years. As Director of the UCLA Practicum Training Program, she oversees 23 psychotherapy/assessment tracks throughout the medical center, where dozens of graduate students receive training on a yearly basis. Her clinical and research career has focused on early detection of Alzheimer’s disease, mild cognitive impairment, and memory enhancement for age-related memory decline. In addition to her book, The Estrogen-Depression-Connection, Dr. Miller co-authored the curriculum and workbook for the Memory Fitness Program and was the principal investigator for the clinical trials of Dakim BrainFitness, a computerized memory training program for older adults by Dakim Brain Fitness, Inc. In addition, Dr. Miller has received several awards, including: the National Academy of Neuropsychology Award for Exceptional Educator (2013), American Psychological Association · Blue Ribbon Award for Research (2012), and UCLA Outstanding Housestaff Teaching Award (2011). Dr. Miller is the director of UCLA’s Memory Care program and the lead presenter for UCLA’s Brain Boot Camp program.

TARGET AUDIENCE: Researchers and clinicians interested in cognitive changes associated with aging and memory training research.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:
1. Identify the types of cognitive rehabilitation that exist.
2. Identify the efficacy of cognitive training for individuals experiencing cognitive changes related to normal aging.
3. Be able to compare and contrast the strengths of classroom based programs to computerized brain fitness.
4. Identify what areas of the brain have been shown to be activated when participating in cognitive training.