NATURE AND NURTURE: A GOLDEN CONCEPT FOR HEALTHY BRAIN AGING

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Introduction: Given the huge challenges arising from the global population aging and from the increasing incidence of mental illnesses, healthy brain aging is a commandment as difficult as mandatory.

Aims: Brain aging is a multifactorial event the management of which requires a multifactorial preventive and corrective approach from scientists, clinicians and ultimately from educated individuals.

Methods: Nature and nurture concept can provide valuable insights for brain aging management. Their thorough consideration may conceptually reorder the current knowledge and thinking related to understanding brain aging and the prevention of related pathology.

Results: Firstly we have to deal with normal versus pathological brain aging debates. Secondly, the bio-psycho-social model of age-related neurodegenerative events may also be the heuristic skeleton of understanding and delaying normal brain aging. We further present a holistic but integrative research paradigm dealing with the bio-psycho-social model in brain aging and certain preliminary research outcomes.

Conclusions: While the current huge technological progress enables us to deal more and more with abnormal expressions of critical genes (inner vulnerability to aging), similar achievements must be acquired in deciphering those mechanisms through which critical environmental factors trigger gene expression alterations characteristic for brain aging.