

Suggested Changes to the Key Messages

by the MBI Leadership Council

January 31, 2019

The following are excerpts from the minutes of the October 24 Meeting of the Leadership Council during which they offered edits and changes to the Key Messages:

1. Add more 'specific examples' in the document – instead of just “cardiovascular disease”, add manage blood pressure, weight, cholesterol, etc. Sometimes specific examples can be helpful to audiences.
2. Put more emphasis on encouraging individuals to have open dialog with family members about any cognitive changes noted – the dialog should be in both directions.
3. While biological processes of aging are considered in the document that impact the brain and cognition – what was not explicitly stated is that there are other processes that also impact the brain and cognition such as environmental, social and socioeconomic factors and levels of stress that McKnight Brain Institute faculty are also exploring.

4. Reframe:

As scientists, we can definitely measure multiple cognitive changes that accompany normative aging – in a medical setting these may not be readily apparent to a clinician, but they are noticeable to the individual, and alleviating the severity of these changes would be welcome to most individuals.

Some of the statements could be 'less black and white', reframed to include a broader perspective. One example:

instead of:

“Three proposed scientific summary statements:

- **Cognitive aging refers to the effect age has on cognition.** Cognitive aging is therefore unavoidable and inevitable given that all humans age.
- **The effects, and therefore impact, of cognitive aging are not uniform.** *They can involve one cognitive domain (e.g., memory), or another (e.g., processing speed.) They may impact a person noticeably, or they may not. “*

maybe:

Three proposed scientific summary statements:

- **Cognitive aging refers to the effect that age has on cognition.**
- **The effects, and therefore impact, of cognitive aging are variable.** *They can involve one cognitive domain (e.g., memory), or another (e.g., processing speed.) They may impact a person in subtle ways that can be annoying, like not instantly finding the right word, or forgetting where you put your glasses.*

5. Delete:

This is a description of a significant change in activities of daily living, which is not a part of typical normal aging – but of MCI or AD. Please delete:

- Cognitive aging may impact your ability to complete daily tasks like paying bills, following recipes and sticking to a medication schedule and it may even challenge your ability to live independently. Often, it may have no noticeable impact on your day-to-day life.

We are never going to entirely 'prevent cognitive aging', but we hope to be able to optimize brain and cognitive health throughout life with our discoveries. Please delete:

- ...including what it is and the steps that can be taken to delay or **prevent** the effects of cognitive aging.”