

**Alzheimer's Association**  
**13<sup>th</sup> Annual Dementia Care Conference**  
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**Brain Enhancement Strengthening Treatment (BEST)**  
**The Serper Method™ of Rehabilitation for Persons with Early Stage Alzheimer's Disease**

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The study aim of the BEST Pilot program, conducted in affiliation with the Boston University School of Medicine, was to investigate the hypothesis that a well-coordinated, intellectually stimulating environment can improve memory and cognitive and social functioning for persons with early stage Alzheimer's disease. Study participants were randomly assigned to control and intervention groups. Participants assigned to the intervention group were exposed to the Serper Method™ Cognitive Educator™ program for six (6) months. Using a series of standard neuropsych tests and one performance evaluation, participants were expected to test higher than the comparison group in selected cognitive, social and memory skills. The quality of life of participants in the intervention group was also expected to be enhanced.

**Summary of BEST Study Results**

- The Serper Method™ is a pro-active program that teaches persons affected by age-related memory challenges that they can still learn and grow.
- Participation in the program can currently be recommended based upon qualitative study results. Focus groups and open-ended questionnaires revealed that both BEST participants and their care partners believed that their treatment had a positive effect in self-image (being able to still learn and solve problems), conversation, socialization and interest in daily experiences and many continued using the skills they acquired through the program long after it ended.
- Persons with age-related memory problems should view Serper Method™ and other proven cognitive rehabilitation programs as one major component in a multi-faceted plan for brain health.
- BEST participants noticeably improved or maintained cognitive skills.
- Standard neuropsych tests do not capture the experience.  
(A conclusion consistent with recently reported studies by David Loewenstein, PhD, University of Miami Center on Aging and Cameron Camp, PhD, Myers Research Institute, Cleveland, Ohio).
- Future studies should include performance evaluations to measure skills actually taught and gained.
- The pilot study research design, modified to include performance evaluations, is suitable for a larger scale study.
- Based upon the skills taught in the Serper Method™ program utilized in the study, before and after performance assessments may include problem solving skills; strategies to compensate for memory deficits; geography and spatial relation skills; balanced math equations and math word problems; word puzzles and reading/writing exercises; history events and dates matching procedures; and improved skills in scheduling appointments and tasks as well as in handling social interactions (despite loss of short-term memory).

(For details of BEST Study results, contact Dr. Nancy Emerson Lombardo at [nemerson@bu.edu](mailto:nemerson@bu.edu) ;  
For details of The Serper Method™, contact Dr. Lynn Lazarus Serper at [lynnserper@serpermethod.com](mailto:lynnserper@serpermethod.com))