

A COVID-19 Learning Pack: 10 TED Talks to Teach You Something New By Arin Jayes

The COVID-19 pandemic has confined most of us inside our homes. Desperate for ways to distract ourselves from the fear and anxiety this pandemic is causing, many of us are using this time to study a new subject or learn a new skill. BIAMD will be providing members with “Learning Packs” designed to provide opportunities for thought provoking discussion and growth during these uncertain times. Below you’ll find 10 TED Talks on topics including brain injury, disability, brain health, harm reduction, and homelessness.

[You aren't at the mercy of emotions – your brain creates them](#)

Lisa Feldman Barrett

Can you look at someone's face and know what they're feeling? Does everyone experience happiness, sadness and anxiety the same way? What are emotions anyway? For the past 25 years, psychology professor Lisa Feldman Barrett has mapped facial expressions, scanned brains and analyzed hundreds of physiology studies to understand what emotions really are. She shares the results of her exhaustive research -- and explains how we may have more control over our emotions than we think.

[My Stroke of Insight](#)

Jill Bolte Taylor

Jill Bolte Taylor got a research opportunity few brain scientists would wish for: She had a massive stroke, and watched as her brain functions -- motion, speech, self-awareness -- shut down one by one. An astonishing story.

[When we design for disability, we all benefit](#)

Elise Roy

"I believe that losing my hearing was one of the greatest gifts I've ever received," says Elise Roy. As a disability rights lawyer and design thinker, she knows that being Deaf gives her a unique way of experiencing and reframing the world -- a perspective that could solve some of our largest problems. As she says: "When we design for disability first, you often stumble upon solutions that are better than those when we design for the norm."

[Can the damaged brain repair itself?](#)

Siddharthan Chandran

After a traumatic brain injury, it sometimes happens that the brain can repair itself, building new brain cells to replace damaged ones. But the repair doesn't happen quickly enough to allow recovery from degenerative conditions like motor neuron disease (also known as Lou Gehrig's disease or ALS). Siddharthan Chandran walks through some new techniques using special stem cells that could allow the damaged brain to rebuild faster.

[The brain-changing benefits of exercise](#)

Wendy Suzuki

What's the most transformative thing that you can do for your brain today? Exercise! says neuroscientist Wendy Suzuki. Get inspired to go to the gym as Suzuki discusses the science of how working out boosts your mood and memory -- and protects your brain against neurodegenerative diseases like Alzheimer's.

[Our fight for disability rights – and why we're not done yet](#)

Judith Heumann

Four decades ago, Judith Heumann helped to lead a groundbreaking protest called the Section 504 sit-in -- in which disabled-rights activists occupied a federal building for almost a month, demanding greater accessibility for all. In this personal, inspiring talk, Heumann tells the stories behind the protest - and reminds us that, 40 years on, there's still work left to do.

[The surprising connection between brain injury and crime](#)

Kim Gorgens

Here's a shocking statistic: 50 to 80 percent of people in the criminal justice system in the US have had a traumatic brain injury. In the general public, that number is less than five percent. Neuropsychologist Kim Gorgens shares her research into the connection between brain trauma and the behaviors that keep people in the revolving door of criminal justice -- and some ways to make the system more effective and safer for everyone.

[I'm not your inspiration, thank you very much](#)

Stella Young

Stella Young is a comedian and journalist who happens to go about her day in a wheelchair — a fact that doesn't, she'd like to make clear, automatically turn her into a noble inspiration to all humanity. In this very funny talk, Young breaks down society's habit of turning disabled people into "inspiration porn."

[The Housing First approach to homelessness](#)

Lloyd Pendleton

What do you think would happen if you invited an individual with mental health issues who had been homeless for many years to move directly from the street into housing? Loyd Pendleton shares how he went from skeptic to believer in the Housing First approach to homelessness -- providing the displaced with short-term assistance to find permanent housing quickly and without conditions -- and how it led to a 91 percent reduction in chronic homelessness over a ten-year period in Utah.

[The harm reduction model of drug addiction treatment](#)

Mark Tyndall

Why do we still think that drug use is a law-enforcement issue? Making drugs illegal does nothing to stop people from using them, says public health expert Mark Tyndall. So, what might work? Tyndall shares community-based research that shows how harm-reduction strategies, like safe-injection sites, are working to address the drug overdose crisis.

