

Are You Using Your 'Higher' Brain.

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The frontal cortex is the most advanced part of your brain. In fact it is the only part of the brain that is unique to humans. The brain of a chimpanzee is about 96% the same as ours, it only lacks this small part on the front. This 'higher' aspect of the brain is associated with consciousness, which is what separates us from other mammals. Consciousness means 'awareness of self'. Consciousness does not think or feel, because it allows you to observe your thoughts and feelings. It is the part of you that can observe all aspects of yourself and assess the appropriateness of behaviors. As the frontal cortex is evolution's most recent and advanced creation in the animal kingdom, it seems that the development of consciousness is a primary strategy for evolution.

The more conscious we are the more 'present' we can be with all the internal and external factors of the moment to come up with the most successful response possible in any situation. This is what we call adaptability, which is the secret to evolution and progress. All unsuccessful choices we make in life are based on unconsciousness. The subsequent pain of unsuccessful choices will hopefully wake us up to be more conscious of something.

One problem with the frontal cortex however is that it requires time to process all information internal and external regarding specific circumstances. When the information received by your body and brain are perceived to be threatening you will feel the need to protect yourself. The blood supply to the higher frontal cortex is diminished and the signals are detoured to the more primitive and reactive lower brain. This part of your brain has already decided its action or behavior before the higher (more evolved) brain has had the chance to interpret all the data, integrate the experience and choose a response most appropriate for your long term wellbeing. This is what we call a state of defense. So when we are in defense, full consciousness is bypassed because we don't feel safe to be fully conscious or 'present' with the experience. Stress is your defensive reaction to a life experience which doesn't feel safe.

So defense occurs when the number of messages per second overwhelms the frontal cortex. It may be in response to a physical, chemical or emotional trauma. For example when you are in a car accident, the messages about the position of your head, neck, shoulders, muscles, spinal joints and spinal cord are massively and instantly reorganized. The higher brain is protected from sorting through all this data. The brain and body lock into defense mode and the spine moves into a defense posture.

Another way this may happen is when the information received by the brain is in conflict with our belief or expectation of how things should be. This is the source of emotional trauma. When someone or a circumstance violates our expectation of what should be, a

similar defensive process occurs with the same result; defensive body physiology and compromised consciousness.

When in defense, the more primitive parts of your brain are predominantly in control of your experience, your body and your life. As a result, you are more reactive, protective and defensive in your thoughts and behaviors. It becomes difficult to see the 'bigger picture' in your life or to be creative, compassionate and loving. Your body is tense. You may feel powerless, become ill or have physical symptoms.

When any event occurs that our brain perceives as not being safe to fully experience consciously, the energy and information of the event is translated into vibration which is then stored as tension in the body. Our body then walls off the offending energy and tension over time with muscular spasm, spinal distortion, reduced breathing into the area and reduced motion.

Until it is safe to experience that energy again and our body develops a strategy to accomplish this, we cannot digest the information from the trauma nor can we feel whole or be truly well.

Your capacity to heal is greatly reduced in defense as is your ability to 'find' those parts of your body that are the physical anchors to the alienated, isolated or denied energy that was never fully dealt with. Your ability to connect with, or direct breath and attention into those areas of your body also becomes impaired. You are unable to free this energy to be used for something positive.

Posture, muscular tension patterns, spinal alignment and life choices are emotional reactions to a hostile and defensive perception of the world. Many of us remain in defense throughout our lives and the higher (more evolved) brain rarely has the opportunity to develop its unique properties and evolve new strategies for living and experiencing life in a healthier and more adaptable way.

With somato-respiratory integrations exercises (SRI) you use your hands to contact parts of your body, adding specific breath patterns, movements and focused awareness. This allows you to reconnect in safety to the stored energy and unlock its healing and wisdom. The body then moves away from defense and towards growth. At this point, it has the ability to reorganize.

When feeling more safe, the frontal lobes of the cortex may be given access to the previously unavailable files which were locked away with vibration anchors to the musculo-skeletal system. This re-connection allows us to re-evaluate present and past actions for appropriateness. We can find ways to release tension, trapped energy and distorted structure. We can feel more profoundly and use the subtle information within to make healthier choices. We can be more compassionate to others and to ourselves. We can activate 'internal software' for experiencing life differently, changing our course, and for healing. Our brain can pay attention to the bodies tension patterns, its spinal alignment, its posture and its current state. We have moved from defense and stress to safety and from safety into GROWTH.

In order to fix something, we must first find it. Our bodies can make positive internal change as our brains feel safe to experience. SRI seeks to activate these self-observational and self-correcting strategies along with liberating the energy within to act as fuel for the internal transformation.

We do not have to re-experience an event in our lives in order to heal. Instead, we need to connect with the body part that was blocked at the instant we went into defense. This will enable us to use the energy once directed towards keeping parts of us separate from ourselves to facilitate the process we know as healing.