

**Move Toward Better Health –  
Unlock the Power of Your Brain  
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It's time to stop the war between the body and the mind. Our goals should be focused on promoting balance and developing the tools to reclaim a process that is one of wholeness—one which addresses the individual on the level of the spirit/mind/ body, instead of only the body as if it were a machine. Unlike machines, humans have personalities, thoughts, feelings and emotions all of which can powerfully impact our immune system and affect our resistance to illness and our ability to heal. So let's think about the command center..our brain.

Our brain communicates with and controls all of our other organs and bodily functions. It regulates our body's temperature, blood pressure, pulse rate, perspiration and much, much more. When healthy, it allows us to perceive life accurately, perform tasks effectively and make real choices instead of relying on reactions.

Recently I had to opportunity to study with Dr. Joel C. Robertson of the Robertson Institute. The Robertson Institute has devoted more than 20 years to develop models of behavior and programs that offer practical steps for maximizing our brain's potential—giving us the power to enhance our productivity and quality-of-life.

Our brain has a physiological reward center, certain behavior allows us to feel good. That reward center may be different from our psychological reward center. Such as, we may decide to begin a program of exercising, psychological desire, but find that we get no reward for doing this since our brain isn't used to all the extra physical activity. Although we know the exercise is good for us, our body isn't comfortable with this new behavior.

Repeated over time, behaviors become natural tendencies if they provide physiological rewards in the brain.

Brain chemicals called neurotransmitters work together to define our physiological reward center. Serotonin and dopamine play key roles in how we feel, act and react in any given situation. If the delicate balance of

these neurotransmitters is disturbed, problems occur. Perhaps you will recognize one of the following:

Serotonin provides us with feelings of well-being, personal security and relaxation. A shortage may leave us feeling very tired, needing excessive sleep, with feelings of low self-esteem, negative thinking, and even difficulty concentrating. Low serotonin has been associated with behaviors as compulsive overeating, procrastination and perfectionism.

Dopamine stimulates alertness and awareness. However excess levels can cause an increased heart rate, muscular tension and disrupt sleep patterns, and can result in grandiose thinking, excessive self-confidence, and a shortened attention span. Excess levels have been associated with ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) and risk-taking behavior.

Serotonin and dopamine are always present in our brain, but we can increase or decrease the levels by making behavior changes. Nutrition, spiritual well-being, diet and activity all affect our brain chemistry. Brain chemistry affects our moods, natural tendencies and addictions. So through evaluating and adjusting our nutritional intake, exercise, spiritual and behavioral patterns, we can affect our brain chemistry and modify our neurotransmitters to think more clearly; react more quickly; overcome stress and anxiety and function more effectively and efficiently.

It is a time to explore the powerful and exciting new healing potentialities creating a “synergistic dance,” if you will—to create everyday miracles of healing.