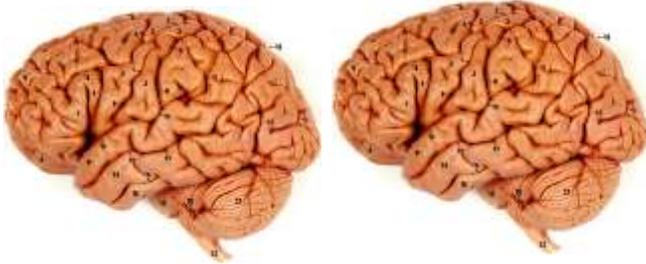


Your 2-Brains



We've all heard of the subconscious and the conscious, but for me, I didn't really understand the power it had over my thinking and what I did. One author calls the subconscious the "Primitive Guidance System" and the conscious the "Intelligence Guidance System". Another author uses

the metaphor of the subconscious being like an elephant (big & strong) and the conscious being the rider (not powerful, but able to guide).

I like to think of myself as having "2-Brains". My subconscious brain is like a massive library with huge bookcases and file cabinets that store all my experiences. Brain scientists say that everything you have ever done is stored here. That's hard to believe that EVERYTHING you've ever experienced is stored in your subconscious, but the fact is that a lot of the stuff your conscious mind long stopped remembering is still stored here. You may have forgotten what embarrassing things happened in 6th grade, but your subconscious still remembers!

A Protection mechanism

The design and main purpose of your brain is to avoid pain or dangerous situations that could cause pain. Without this mechanism of fear we wouldn't survive long. We'd all be driving through red lights, letting our kids play with loaded guns and doing other things we naturally fear that keep us out of danger. This part of our brain we share with animals. What separates our human brains from an animal brain is our advanced emotional abilities. A squirrel doesn't think: *"Dang, it's a beautiful sunny day; I don't want to miss out on enjoying the lake one more time before winter. I'll gather nuts tomorrow."*

Human brains avoid emotional danger just as much as physical danger—many times even more strongly! We have a uniquely human brain problem called "procrastination" which is just our thinking that causes an emotional feeling of what we want to do vs. what we should do at the present moment. Your brain's main function is to protect you from danger or pain—both physically and psychologically.



The power of your subconscious is based on emotion and repetition.

The “fuel” for a subconscious memory is emotion. The more emotion, the more that memory “sticks” with you, or the deeper it is imprinted in your subconscious. Your brain automatically associates the emotion with the event and everything around that event including the environment. If you try to remember things from your childhood, it will likely be memories that had the most emotion attached to them (birthday parties, injuries, embarrassing moments, etc.) However you don’t have to remember an emotional event for your subconscious to remember it. Most all adults live with different levels of the belief *“I’m not good enough”* from the emotional events of our childhood when our parents disciplined us or lost their cool with us. You may not be able to remember these emotional events of your past, but your subconscious brain does and that’s why you have your beliefs and feelings about who you are and the world you live in!

Furthermore, experiencing something over and over, creates a greater imprint in your subconscious memory than experiencing it once (assuming the emotional level was the same). You learned the alphabet this way and many other skills you have developed through repetition.

Your subconscious brain produces thoughts that you can accept or reject.

Your brain is an organ of your body, just like your heart. Your heart’s job is to pump blood with nutrients and oxygen to your body’s cells. Your brain’s main function is:

- 1. To create associations from experience to protect you from danger/pain**
- 2. To produce thoughts & beliefs based on that library of associations to guide your life.**

Certainly your brain’s function is also to store skills and knowledge, but its main function (that we share with animals) is the accumulation of associations from experiences that guide future behavior to avoid danger. The classic example is when a hot stove is touched for the first time, we store the association of: touch hot stove = physical pain.

Not only do we learn associations from direct experience, we can also learn associations from others. Your mother may have told you in a very serious tone of voice and look on her face that you should NOT touch the stove or you’ll get burned! The emotional intensity of your



mother and the fact that at an early age we idolize our parents (we want their approval), causes us to ADOPT the association: touch hot stove = physical pain. Or as an adult, you really admire someone who believes strongly that you don't need a college education to get ahead. You might adopt this belief and from it encourage your kids to not attend college or refuse to pay for it.

I lived my life with the belief that my subconscious thinking WAS MY thinking. What I learned is that in every event or situation I encounter, my subconscious brain instantly searches for past similar experiences and gives my nervous system the associated feelings from those past experiences as well as the learned solution to get out of any negative feelings or pain.

For example, when I was criticized by someone, my subconscious brain instantly gave me a jolt of feelings associated with past experiences of being criticized and provided me through a thought, what I learned from the past to get out of that negative feeling. This is what is referred to as a "pattern".

My emotional pattern to get back to feeling better when being criticized was to shoot back my own criticism. If my wife criticized me, I shot back a criticism of her. To my subconscious brain this gets me out of pain. As dumb as this sounds consciously, my subconscious thinking believes that if I'm stupid or wrong, I'll feel more comfortable if my wife is stupid or wrong too. Your brain only provides what programming (associations) it has created from past experiences—and it does this all day long, every moment of your life!

This example shows **the KEY UNDERSTANDING of your subconscious thinking**—its reactionary nature based only on how to avoid pain and get back to feeling good. It has no ability to think of the long-term consequences or all the potential outcomes of the pattern.

Now I get it!

Now I was starting to understand **WHY I could teach someone everything they needed to do to lose weight, but so few were able to do it.** People that love exercise subconsciously produce



automatic feelings of enjoyment, feeling great about themselves, sense of accomplishment, feelings of strength, etc. People who avoid exercise subconsciously produce automatic negative feelings of embarrassment, physical pain, waste of time, etc.

I now knew why I wanted to be a great parent but found myself wanting to work on my home projects rather than play "Barbies" with my daughter. My subconscious brain produced attractive feelings of pride, accomplishment, and money savings in getting my home projects done. My

brain associated boredom and missing out on other things with playing dolls with my daughter!

I now knew why I wanted to have a great marriage, but I just kept reacting and starting fights...even when I knew better! My subconscious produced automatic feelings of injustice & hurt when she vented or criticized me. My subconscious produced automatic feelings of equality when I shot back my own criticisms and judgments of her!

("aha" moment)

Everything I or others wanted to do, but had a hard time doing, had to do with the powerful feeling associations my subconscious had made from my past experiences. It had nothing to do with my character, my ability or my "willpower"!

These emotional subconscious patterns I had been running for years and years, so no wonder when my wife said something critical of me, I reacted the same way time after time after time, despite not liking the result and really, really wanting to change my reactions. No wonder I kept feeling like eating a ton of snacks when my favorite sports programs were on TV. No wonder I "felt like" a bowl of ice cream every night around 8pm! No wonder I "felt like" beer, fried fish, fries, a huge salad bar when Friday night rolled around! **It was just my brain doing what it was destined to do—producing thoughts to protect me from pain and patterns to follow to get out of pain and move me toward pleasure.**

So from now on, I knew that my brains thinking was not "my thinking", but my brain spewing out feelings based on past experiences. Thus by allowing my subconscious thinking to guide my life, rather than my conscious choice, I was letting my PAST CONTROL MY FUTURE! WOW...was this a wake-up call for me!

("aha" moment!)

If I kept seeing my subconscious reactionary thinking as MY thinking, I'd be forever stuck in the past! Understanding that I had "2 brains" changed my life... and it's essential for anyone looking to move into a new better future!

YOUR ASSIGNMENT:

Becoming aware of your brain's automatic thinking is the first step to know it's not "your thinking", but your brain just doing its job like any other organ in your body. Keep a list for the next couple of days of when and **what you caught yourself believing as "your thinking"** when it was really your brain shooting off a pattern.

To help you identify your brain's thinking versus YOUR thinking ask:

"Where did that thought come from?"

The thought I had: *"I think I should just give up on this damn diet."*

How I know it's not really "my thinking": *I know I can get past my habits, I'm learning a lot from Dave! I can't quit when I feel defeated, that's natural. I'll have ups and downs emotionally during this journey. I really don't want to quit, what a stupid thought! Sorry brain, I'm staying on the path!*

The thought I had:

How I know it's not really "my thinking":

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