

Understanding your Brain

Chapter 1



It is really important that you have a good understanding of how your brain works to develop a winning mindset. There are 2 main reasons for this:

1. It will strengthen your belief that you can develop a winning mindset (belief is critical)
2. It will motivate you to use the techniques in this guide and be persistent with them

Most people let their brains rule their life. They think that they are in control but they are not. It is an illusion for them that they can choose how they want to feel at any time. Unless you take control of your brain then it will definitely control you. You will be in reaction mode all of the time and your mood will change with each situation.

You must take conscious control of your brain if you want to be successful. When you do this you will be able to dictate your moods and your motivation. Failure to do this will leave you at the mercy of the chemicals that your brain releases and having very little control over your life.

Structure of your Brain

There are billions of neurons in your brain. These neurons are small cells that have tendril extensions that reach out to all of the different areas of your brain. You can create new neurons, destroy old ones and change existing ones.

These changes are brought about by your experiences. The neurons in your brain make up your memories and are responsible for the thoughts in your head. Electrical impulses fire through the neurons and these are signals that command your body to feel and act in a certain way. Your neurons are all interconnected and if two neurons fire at the same time often then they have a connection. So if a single neuron fires then it is likely that others will fire as well dependent upon the strength of the connection between them.

You have clusters of neurons in your brain that are connected and responsible for specific behaviors. It is possible for a single neuron to reach from one end of your brain to the other. So when you experience something in your life some of your neurons will fire up based on your memory and your understanding of the situation.

If there is a strong connection with other neurons then they will fire too. You form these connections throughout your life. The end result of particular neurons firing together is an emotion. Your neurons have synapses which they use to communicate. There are neurotransmitters that include chemicals that are released into surrounding cells.

There are different types of neurotransmitters. Some of them will make more neurons fire around them and others inhibit the firing of other neurons. It gets more complicated as some neurotransmitters will help you to commit something to memory while others while evoke an emotion in you such as happiness or sadness.

Every situation that you face in your life will lead to certain neurons firing. They will then release neurotransmitters to perform a specific function. The neurotransmitters are chemicals such as cortisol and dopamine and the amount of chemicals released depends on the situation.

If you were facing a dangerous situation then the neurotransmitters released would affect your central nervous system. In turn this will put you on high alert and make physical changes in your body to prepare you to tackle the danger. This is all automatically programmed in your brain. In a dangerous situation the firing neurons and subsequent neurotransmitters released are designed to protect you. You experience an instant change in your body due to chemical and hormonal changes.

The Power of Neurotransmitters

The neurons in your brain cannot tell real danger from irrational fear. If you suffer from stress due to areas of your life that you don't feel that you are in control of then your brain sees this as a threat. Some people suffer from stress due to the most minor things and this is all to do with the way that their neurons fire and the neurotransmitters released.

When we are stressed it is normal for dopamine to release into your body. In a way this is a good thing because it helps to focus your mind on the thing that is causing the stress. Did you revise for exams at the very last minute? The day before the exam the stress was so great that a dopamine release helped you to concentrate on the exam revision.

Having some stress in your life is natural but too much is bad for you. The dopamine release will only allow you to focus on the thing that is causing the stress at the expense of everything else. The good news is that you can control your stress.

Other Neurotransmitters

There are a number of different neurotransmitters in your brain released in response to different things such as: