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Better Communication by Using All Your Brains

By Susan Dunn

Better Communication by Using All Your Brains by Susan Dunn, MA, Emotional Intelligence

Coach

If you use your brain, you can communicate better, but what "brain" are you going to use? Why not use them all?

Standard understanding of the brain right now is that it is "triune," with three parts - the reptilian, or primitive brain; the limbic brain; and the neocortex. Further, the neocortex is divided into two hemispheres, the right and the left.

REPTILIAN

Briefly, the reptilian brain is responsible for keeping us alive and evolved millions of years ago. We share it with reptiles. This brain operates territorial defense and aggression, sex drive, and rudimentary life-maintaining systems such as breathing and heartbeat. It's automatic. We have no control over it.

EXAMPLE

When someone pushes you out of line in the movie theater, although it isn't really life-threatening, our reptilian brain acts as if it were. It is always lurking there, ready to flare up and "protect" us. It's responsible for a lot of fear we feel during the day.

LIMBIC

The limbic brain evolved next and we share it with mammals. It's responsible for the look we see in the dog's eyes, and the way horses attune to us. It gives us the parenting urge (reptilians abandon their young at birth), bonding, compassion, family-ties, and things like that.

EXAMPLE

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When the baby cries at night and you'd rather be sleeping, you get up. Why? Because those parental emotions are tugging at you.

NEOCORTEX

The neocortex, or thinking brain was the last to evolve, and belongs exclusively to humans. It is divided into two halves, the left hemisphere (left-brain) and the right hemisphere (right-brain). They aren't isolated or separate. They are divided by something called the corpus callosum, which allows us to switch from one to the other.

The corpus callosum is typically better developed in women. This is why women can generally move from talking about feelings to talking about thoughts more easily than men can, though of course there are exceptions.

You will either be left-brain dominant, or right-brain dominant, but you can develop both sides and the communication between them by developing your emotional intelligence. I have worked with many people who have developed both sides of their brain so they are very balanced between the two. However, under stress, you will always revert to your dominant mode.

Here is a website where you can take a free assessment to see which you are:
<http://www.susandunn.cc/assessments.htm> .

Left-brain

The left-brain is verbal, sequential, linear, and logical. People who are left-brain dominant respond to word meanings (more than how it's said), plan ahead and go by steps, recall people's names, and speak with fewer gestures and less expression.

Right Brain

The right brain is visual, holistic, and random. People who are right-brain dominant process in varied order, respond to emotion and tone of voice (more than the actual meaning of the words spoken), are more impulsive, remember people's faces (more than their names), and use more gestures and expressions.

COMMUNICATION

This is how this helps with communication. The hemisphere that's dominant affects how the person hears, learns, relates and problem-solves, as you can see.

EXAMPLE

If you want to explain a project to a left-brained person, give them a step-by-step outline, with a timeline and accountability. Right-brained people prefer to be told what to do, but not how to do it. They're adept at figuring out how. Right-brained people, being visual, prefer to see something like a

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mind–map - it gives them the points to be covered, but does not dictate the order.

Since right–brained people are more flexible, if you're right–brained, you may need to accommodate to the left–brained people with whom you work. That's just the way it works. Whatever it takes to get a project done, right?

TAKE THE TEST

Here's a test to see if you understand the difference. Which "brain dominant" is talking in each of these examples, "right" or "left"?

1. First you put a cup of flour in a bowl. Then you add a teaspoon of salt. Then you cut in a cup of shortening. Right or Left?
2. Mix up some flour and salt and shortening in a bowl. A cup or 2 of flour, some salt. Right or Left?
3. The first step is to do some general market research so you can get the big picture. Right or Left?
4. The first step is to write down your goals and objectives. Then do a timeline. Then do an accountability chart. Then do a budget. Then call me. Right or Left?
5. No one ever accomplished anything without a dream. Right or Left?

6. No one ever accomplished anything without a plan and a lot of hard work. It's in the details. Right or Left?
7. Personal hygiene means brushing your teeth, washing your hair, putting on deodorant, and wearing clean clothes. Right or Left?
8. Personal hygiene means keeping yourself clean. Right or Left?
9. You're driving me nuts with details. Just give me the ballpark figures. Right or Left?
10. Making a business projection is like throwing a dart at a board. You can't predict what's going to happen. Right or Left?
11. Stop yelling at me. It isn't what you say, it's the way that you say it. Right or Left?
12. Will you stop jumping around and tell me what you do one step at a time, please? Start at the beginning and go one by one. Right or Left?
13. Yes, I'd like to hear what's bothering you. Start anywhere you like. Right or Left?
14. I don't care what the figures indicate. I'm going with my gut instinct. Right or Left?
15. Draw me a picture. I can't figure out what the heck you're talking about. Right or Left?
16. I want a flow chart. I want to know the hierarchy and the sequence of events, and I want a logical explanation for each step. Right or Left?
17. I can't concentrate. It's too quiet in here. Right or Left?
18. Help me figure out who Ben Adams is. I know he's here because he's the CFO, but I can't remember what he looks like.
19. I know that guy over there. I saw him last week at Rotary. But what's his name? Right or Left?

ANSWERS:

Right - 2, 3, 5, 8, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 17, and 19.

EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE

Emotional Intelligence means understanding how the brain works, how we process information, how to manage emotions, and how to communicate better. When you study EQ, your problem-solving skills, teamwork, leadership and interpersonal skills will improve, as well as your resilience. You'll function better at work and at home, with better relationships, and better health. You'll be more effective, more efficient, and you'll handle stress better.

Take an EQ assessment: <http://inyurl.com/z94t> . Then take The EQ Foundation Course, which is on the Internet and interactive. Then work with a certified emotional intelligence coach. EQ is not something you can "just" read about.

Improve your EQ and you'll notice positive results in your life immediately.

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Shift Happens

By White Feather

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Are you tired of hearing about "the shift;" this big shift in consciousness we are supposedly going through right now? Are you tired of hearing about it and now want to actually see and experience it? If this big shift is really occurring, then why does so much of life still seem the same?

Our brains can be a lot like a computer. For purposes of speed, our personal computers have what is known as caches. This is storage of all the web-pages you regularly visit. So that sites come up fast, the cached version of a page will come up at times.

Our brains are a lot like that, too. Let's say that we walk by a certain building practically every day. At first, we look at it and imprint it on our memories, but after time we stop paying attention to it and instead of actually looking at the building we now just see a cached version of the building which is a composite of all the imprinting we had done the first times we consciously looked at it. Like the computers, our brains do this for the matter of speed and economy.

We do this even with people who are a regular part of our lives. Spending time with someone over long stretches of time, we build composite images of them and we routinely see those images instead of any updated versions. We build a cache of default images that our brains can use very quickly and what happens is we get out of the habit of actually looking and seeing and imprinting.

You see, imprinting takes a little bit of energy; not much, just a little zap. But using cached default images takes no real energy at all. Everything is already on file there in the noggin and all we've got to do is click on the default image we want.

This same idea can be applied to thoughts and beliefs and emotions.

So one way of looking at things would be to say that if one is not seeing the shift then one is seeing cached default images instead. By "clearing out our cache" we are coaxing ourselves to open our eyes and see and feel anew. By learning to feel with our eyes and see with our feelings we can stay out of default mode and we can open ourselves to unlimited beauty and joy and undeniable evidence of a very major shift in awareness.

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