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Harvesting the Dream

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Chapter 1

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Your Brain and You- Learning to Think

This can be a very complicated subject because only a small fraction is really known about our brains. How they work, store information and effect retrieval is wide open for debate.

In recent years, brain-imaging techniques, such as functional magnetic resonance imaging (fMRI) have allowed scientists to observe the brain in action and determine how groups of neurons function.

They have located hubs in the brain that are responsible for certain types of tasks, such as fleeing danger, processing visual information and storing long-term memories. However, understanding the actual mechanics of how the neuronal networks work together to allow such tasks have remained elusive.

We are not going to delve into all the parts of the brain. What we are going to concern ourselves with are the two hemispheres of the brain.

The Left and Right.

Left Brain- for the most part, logic is formed on the left side of the brain.

Right Brain - Abstract, colours, music and shapes. The creative side.

Now that is not to say that the left side is not creative it is, however, ruled by logic it tends to take a straight path to produce a result. The right brain tends to wander around when allowed and interprets differently, more concerned with how things look then what is being looked at.

Betty Edwards has several books out that teach people how to draw. Her conclusions indicated that anyone can be taught to draw well. The main reason for this is that she wants the user to force control over to the right side of the brain. When it is in control drawing becomes quite easy and natural. There are stacks of evidence that this is true. She has a lot of valuable insight into how and why this works. Suffice it to say that it does work, and you can control both sides of your brain.

This brings us to the point of how this is all relevant. In school's most programs that would engage the right side of the brain have been curtailed or dropped entirely. They insist on teaching you facts as they know them or believe them to be. You are not taught to be creative, only to arrive at a logical conclusion. To be able to repeat said facts. This is very bad method of teaching, and the fault is not with the teacher or the student. It is the system for education that is outdated at best. The main aim is only to produce a working force for the nation. Most of the humanity is wasted with this poorly conceived notion.

Why would you only use half of something? If you live in a house would you only occupy and use half of it. That would be rather silly. You need to use all of your brain, both sides and produce a harmony in them. This will allow you to look at everything more clearly and have a better understanding of the world.

There are a lot of exercises for bringing the right side of the brain into play. My favorite is a drawing exercise. You take a simple drawing and turn it upside down. Then on a new piece of paper you slowly start to draw the upside-down image. Remember the key, here is to look at how the lines bend and curve. What the relationships of the lines are to each other. You never turn either to the up position until it is complete. Now anyone can do this. No drawing skill is required. You may find out that you can draw a lot better than you thought.

This is why it works. The left side of the brain wants to name everything, eyes, nose, mouth, table, road, etc. It doesn't like the upside-down image because it is not logical. The right side of the brain doesn't care and because the left side has given up, it can happily take control. You can use any image you like, even those from children's colouring books. The most important aspect of all of this is allowing the two sides of your brain to function in harmony. This will give you a much fuller picture of the world around you.

What I was taught many years ago was that you had to earn an opinion. Most people think that it is their right to have one. That is just wrong. The problem stems from someone with very little information forming an opinion about it. This creates mass problems for the world.

I was taught that you had to look at something from every angle possible and then ask other people about it. You may have missed something important and asking someone else may provide more insight. Now back then I knew nothing about the functioning of the left-right brain. If I had, it may have changed some of my opinions in subtle ways.

Opinions are like a bad disease and are responsible for wars, hatred, man's inhumanity to man. This is a result of poor teaching methods for the masses. You are not born to hate, not born to go to war, not born for any higher purpose. You were simply born, the rest you have been taught. Un-teaching is a harder road than teaching it right in the first place. The sole responsibility is firmly on you. You now have to make a choice.

This will involve you rethinking everything. How and why you respond to stimuli the way you do. Why you sit passively while the world goes around you? Why you are content to sit back and do nothing? We have a world filled with drugs, violence, wars, disease, poverty, intolerance and suffering.

One person cannot really do anything about it. One billion people can.

This is possible only if people learn to think differently. Learn to see the world around you as it truly is and not the white-washed version presented in the media. It really is time to take the government to task, to stand up and be counted. You need to learn to think for yourself. You have been spoon fed garbage for years and the only reason that works is because you have never been taught to think.

You have the right to be creative. You have the right to create. You have the right to see beauty in all of its forms. When you were a small child almost everything amazed you. It was all new. It was bright and shiny. When was the last time you took the time out of your day to see a sunset, to see flowers explode into bloom, to smile at a stranger? Instead, we lock our doors in fear; we go to and from work avoiding looking at anyone in the eye. We lie to ourselves and say that my world is ok. Even if you recognize a problem you think that there is nothing you can do about it.

You can do everything about it.

It really saddens me to say that we have a term called SPIN DOCTORS. They are the professional liars. They take something bad and spin it so it looks better. Then the population falls for it, and everything is ok now. Well, no, it isn't. If you took the time to look at it, thoroughly examine it, it will fall apart as the lie that it is. It is time to stop being sheep, to take control of your life. Look around and see the world for what it truly is.

However, you say, "What can I do? I am only one person". On a one to one basis, the vital thing to change is you. That is what is needed. People, one at a time, making changes in perception. If you can start to think for yourself, other people will notice. There is a domino effect, the world changes. You have to stop taking everything for granted; you have to stop believing in the lies. You have to start to THINK.

Thinking, hmm, a bizarre concept because you assume that you do that all the time, and you do, sort of. Mainly, you get lazy and you see something and believe it. The News says something about something, and you accept it as fact. The government says something, and you accept it as fact. You never even think about it. You accept it as fact. There are very few if any facts being presented, and you need to realize that. You need to question all the information that is presented to you. You have to look at all the details, find out more.

Here are some facts:

Journalism is written for an eighth-grade reading level.

Government is sponsored by big business.

Religion is opium for the masses.

Schools are where you go to learn to go to work.

Sex Sells.

We all live in fear.

We all live in a police state.

You will work for forty years and then hopefully die quick.

Now I don't ask anyone to take my word for any of the above statements, do your own research.

We have allowed all of that to happen, we, not the government, not the media nor the schools. I say we because we should have been paying attention and should have been from the very beginning. When man first learned to walk upright, we should have started. What we did instead was to let someone else take the responsibility for us. We called him Leader or maybe Chief. We gave him power over us. We let him have power over us because it was easier than doing it ourselves. There are certain aspects of that, that could be correct, but we slowly gave them more and more power over us.

It is time for all of that to end. We need to put in a government that is responsible to the people and not too big business. It is time to take control and responsibility for our own lives; it is time to think for ourselves.

How you do that is not simple and not an easy path. It involves relearning most things that you think you know. You must involve both sides of your brain. You must look at everything like it is new. Learn to stop and smell the flowers. Do Not accept everything you are told as a fact, make them prove it. Do your homework on the subject; analyze it from every direction possible. Remember that real truth is hard to come by and involves work.

Some simple exercises for the left brain are to look at everything in a new way. Pick up an orange and study it in all of its detail. Now you may have seen thousands of these in your lifetime. However, you want a fresh look. The left brain already has all the information so when you look at it, you know what it is. That is an ORANGE, nothing new here. This is what I want you to do. Pick it up and talk out loud. This is an orange. Oranges are round, and all oranges are slightly different. Now feel the texture by rolling it around in your hand. Say what it feels like out loud. This brings us to the right side of the brain. The left side likes to name and categorize, but the right does not. Toss the orange slightly in the air and watch how it spins, watch the shape of the orange while following it with your eyes. Look at the curves and the roundness. Watch as it catches light slightly differently. Do not say its name out loud. Do this exercise several times.

Feel the orange in your hand, separate all the textures that you feel as you roll it around in your hand. Close your eyes and put a slight pressure on the orange and feel how it loses some of its roundness and how the textures feel in your hand. Now I want you to imagine a new name for the orange, it can be anything that you want.

You will need to try this for several common objects. After you have done 10 or 15, think about how you feel. Do you have a moment of excitement about something? Can you recall the new name for the orange, you gave it? Do your hands feel a bit more sensitive to things you touch? The real goal

here is to make things new again and create a sense of wonder. This exercise is a repeatable thing, something that you should try to do several times a day. If you strive to see the newness in regular things, you will begin to see everything around you with a new clarity. You should also practice the upside down drawing as often as possible as well.

Another good exercise to awaken the right brain is to draw the lines in your hand. This is what you do. Take a piece of paper and tape it to the table in front of you but off slightly to the right so that you cannot easily see it. (reverse all of this if you are left handed) Now in your right hand pick up the pencil. Look to the left and stare at your left hand. Using the pencil you will draw the lines without looking at the paper. Look very closely at the lines in your left hand and trace each line that you see. Do them one line at a time. See how each line is in relation to the other lines. Keep this up for at least 10 to 15 minutes. Do not look at the paper until you are done. Now what you have is not a pretty picture, but you did let the right side of your brain do all the work.

The act of seeing, perception is perhaps one of the hardest concepts that you have to acquire. New ways of seeing everything become difficult because everything has been ingrained on how you view reality. The left side of your brain has spent a lifetime naming and categorizing the world around you. It seems it is difficult to have an original thought because somehow you have already thought of everything.

There's a huge version of the world out there that is totally unknown. Science is limited. Language is limited. As well most other aspects of what we know are also limited. Most people have never been taught at any time in their life how to look at things around them with clarity and understanding. Debate's rage over details of science, archaeology, psychology and all the aspects contained therein. There would be no debate if everything was a fact.

In this world around us, we have very few facts; we do, however, have an imagination. Imagination is the key that sets us apart from the more static elements of our reality. We are limited only by what we can imagine.

The best test is to try something you have never tried before and then view the results. You may think that you cannot draw because you haven't drawn before or somebody else has told you that you can't. At some point, you have decided that you have no talent for it. You have stopped yourself from ever accomplishing. If you can wipe away all that negativity, and perhaps you will find you can.

The endeavor of this chapter is to illustrate and utilize your imagination. When you begin to look at things from entirely new directions, they become different things.

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