

Change Your Brain, Change Your Life

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Assess Your Brain

Different areas of your brain control different functions and affect how you feel, operate and relate to others

FILL OUT THE FOLLOWING CHECKLISTS USING THE KEY BELOW

Rate the statements as they apply to you within each category and add them up for category totals. Once all categories are completed, identify your highest score and refer its related brain section information.

0 Never **1** Rarely **2** Occasionally **3** Frequently **4** Very Frequently

DEEP LIMBIC CHECKLIST

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feelings of sadness | <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive guilt |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Moodiness | <input type="checkbox"/> Suicidal feelings |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Negativity | <input type="checkbox"/> Crying |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Low energy | <input type="checkbox"/> Lowered interest in things usually considered fun |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irritability | <input type="checkbox"/> Sleep changes (too much or too little) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decreased interest in others | <input type="checkbox"/> Appetite changes (too much or too little) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feelings of hopelessness about the future | <input type="checkbox"/> TOTAL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feelings of helplessness or powerless | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feeling dissatisfied or bored | |

BASAL GANGLIA CHECKLIST

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Feelings of nervousness or anxiety | <input type="checkbox"/> Avoidance of public places for fear of having an anxiety attack |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Panic attacks | <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive fear of being judged or scrutinized by others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Symptoms of heightened muscle tension (headaches, sore muscles, hand tremor) | <input type="checkbox"/> Persistent phobias |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Periods of heart pounding, rapid heart rate, or chest pain | <input type="checkbox"/> Low motivation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Periods of trouble breathing or feeling smothered | <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive motivation |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Periods of feeling dizzy, faint, or unsteady on your feet | <input type="checkbox"/> Tics |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Periods of nausea, or abdominal upset | <input type="checkbox"/> Poor handwriting |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Periods of sweating, hot or cold flashes, cold hands | <input type="checkbox"/> Quick startle reaction |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency to predict the worst | <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency to freeze in anxiety-provoking situations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fear of dying or doing something crazy | <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive worry about what others think |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict avoidance | <input type="checkbox"/> Shyness or timidity |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Low threshold of embarrassment |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> TOTAL |

PREFRONTAL CORTEX CHECKLIST

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inability to give close attention to details or avoid careless mistakes | <input type="checkbox"/> Lethargy |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble sustaining attention in routine situations (home-work, chores, paperwork, etc.) | <input type="checkbox"/> A feeling of spaciness or being "in a fog" |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble listening | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty remaining seated in situations where remaining seated is expected |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Inability to finish things, poor follow-through | <input type="checkbox"/> Conflict seeking |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor organization of time and space | <input type="checkbox"/> Talking too much or too little |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Distractibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Blurting out of answers before questions have been completed |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Poor planning skills | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty awaiting turn |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Lack of clear goals or forward thinking | <input type="checkbox"/> Interruption of or intrusion on others (e.g., butting into conversations or games) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty expressing feelings | <input type="checkbox"/> Impulsivity (saying or doing things without thinking first) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty expressing empathy for others | <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble learning from experience; tendency to make repetitive mistakes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive daydreaming | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Boredom | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Apathy or lack of motivation | <input type="checkbox"/> TOTAL |

CINGULATE SYSTEM CHECKLIST

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Excessive or senseless worrying | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulties seeing options in situations |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being upset when things do not go your way | <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency to hold on to own opinion and not listen to others |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Being upset when things are out of place | <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency to get locked into a course of action, whether or not it is good |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency to be oppositional or argumentative | <input type="checkbox"/> Being very upset unless things are done a certain way |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency to have repetitive or negative thoughts | <input type="checkbox"/> Perception by others that you worry too much |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency toward compulsive behaviors | <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency to say no without first thinking about the question |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Intense dislike of change | <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency to predict negative outcomes |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Tendency to hold grudges | |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble shifting attention from subject to subject | <input type="checkbox"/> TOTAL |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Trouble shifting behavior from task to task | |

TEMPORAL LOBE CHECKLIST

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Short fuse or periods of extreme irritability | <input type="checkbox"/> Sensitivity or mild paranoia |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Periods of rage with little provocation | <input type="checkbox"/> Headaches or abdominal pain of uncertain origin |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent misinterpretation of comments as negative when they are not | <input type="checkbox"/> History of a head injury or family history of violence or explosiveness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Irritability that tends to build, then explodes, then recedes; person often feels tired after a rage | <input type="checkbox"/> Dark thoughts, such as suicidal or homicidal thoughts |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Periods of spaciness or confusion | <input type="checkbox"/> Periods of forgetfulness |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Periods of panic and/or fear for no specific reason | <input type="checkbox"/> Memory problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Visual or auditory changes, such as seeing shadows or hearing muffled sounds | <input type="checkbox"/> Reading comprehension problems |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Frequent periods of déjà vu (feelings of being somewhere you have never been) or dajais vu (not recalling a familiar place or person) | <input type="checkbox"/> Preoccupation with moral or religious ideas |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> TOTAL |

*Your highest scored checklist is
your brain area that needs attention*

My top score is in Brain Area: _____

Change Your Brain

Refer to your target brain section below to learn more about your brain area and what you need to do to optimize it to create changes in your life and your relationship.

From your target brain section, select two Enhance Experience Prescriptions and identify a Nutritional change to implement. Immediately integrate into your lifestyle as necessary.

Looking Into Love and Depression

Brain: The Deep Limbic System

FUNCTIONS OF THE DEEP LIMBIC SYSTEM

- Sets the emotional tone of the mind
- Filters external events through internal states (creates emotional coloring)
- Tags events as internally important
- Stores highly charged emotional memories
- Modulates motivation
- Controls appetite and sleep cycles
- Promotes bonding
- Directly processes the sense of smell
- Modulates Libido

PROBLEMS IN THE DEEP LIMBIC SYSTEM

- Moodiness, irritability, clinical depression
- Increased negative thinking
- Negative perception of events
- Decreased motivation
- Flood of negative emotions
- Appetite and sleep problems
- Decreased or increased sexual responsiveness
- Social isolation

CHANGE YOUR BRAIN: ENHANCING POSITIVE THOUGHT PATTERNS AND STRENGTHENING CONNECTIONS

Prescription 1: Kill the Ants

Prescription 2: Kill the Ants/ Feed your Anteater

Prescription 3: Surround yourself with people who provide positive bonding

Prescription 4: Protect your children with limbic bonding

Prescription 5: Build people skills to enhance limbic bonding

Prescription 6: Recognize the importance of physical contact

Prescription 7: Surround yourself with great smells

Prescription 8: Build a library of wonderful memories

Prescription 9: Consider limbic medications

Prescription 10: Try physical exercise

WATCH YOUR LIMBIC NUTRITION

Our deep limbic system needs fat in order to operate properly, such as omega-3 fatty acids that can be found most prevalently in fish. Protein is also essential to a healthy “deep limbic” diet. It is essential to eat enough protein in balanced amounts with fats and carbohydrates. The richest source of protein are lean fish, cheese, beans and nuts. To enhance serotonin levels, eat balanced meals with complex carbohydrate snacks (such as whole-grain crackers or bread). Amino acid L-tryptophan is a naturally occurring amino acid found in milk, meat, and eggs. To enhance norepinephrine and dopamine levels, it is better to have protein snacks (such as meat, eggs, or cheese) and to avoid simple carbohydrates, such as bread, pasta, cakes, and candy. Take natural amino acids such as tyrosine for energy, focus and impulsivity control and DL-phenylalanine for moodiness and irritability.

BRAIN PATTERNS THAT INTERFERE WITH INTIMACY

Positive Limbic Relational Statements

“We have a lot of good memories.”
“Let’s have friends over.”
“I accept your apology. I know you were just having a bad day.”
“Let’s have fun.”
“I feel sexy. Let’s make love.”

Negative Limbic Relational Statement

“Don’t look at me that way”
“All I can remember is the bad times.”
“I’m too tired.”
“Leave me alone. I’m interested in sex.”
“You go to bed. I can’t sleep.”
“I don’t feel like being around other people.”
“I don’t want to hear you’re sorry. You meant to hurt me.”
“I’m not interested in doing anything.”

Statements from the Partners of People with Limbic Problems

“She’s negative.”
“He’s often depressed.”
“She looks on the negative side of things.”
“He doesn’t want to be around other people.”
“She tends to take things the wrong way.”
“He’s not interested in sex.”
“She can’t sleep.”
“There’s little playfulness in our relationship.”

Looking Into Anxiety and Fear

Brain: The Basal Ganglia

FUNCTIONS OF THE BASAL GANGLIA SYSTEM

- Integrates feeling and movement
 - Shifts and smoothes fine motor behavior
 - Suppresses unwanted motor behaviors
 - Sets the body's idle speed or anxiety level
 - Enhances motivation
 - Mediates pleasure/ecstasy
-

PROBLEMS WITH THE BASAL GANGLIA SYSTEM

- Anxiety, nervousness
 - Panic attacks
 - Physical sensations of anxiety
 - Tendency to predict the worst
 - Conflict avoidance
 - Tourette's syndrome/tics
 - Muscle tension, soreness
 - Tremors
 - Fine motor problems
 - Headaches
 - Low/excessive motivation
-

CHANGE YOUR BRAIN: MASTERING FEAR

Prescription 1: Kill the fortune-telling ants

Prescription 2: Use guided imagery

Prescription 3: Try diaphragmatic breathing

Prescription 4: Try meditation/self-hypnosis

Prescription 5: Think about the "18/40/60 Rule"

Prescription 6: Learn how to deal with conflict

Prescription 7: Consider Basal Ganglia medications

WATCH YOUR BASAL GANGLIA NUTRITION

Eliminate caffeine, as it may worsen anxiety. Withdrawal from alcohol causes anxiety and places a person with anxiety more risk for alcohol addiction. Herbal preparations such as kava extract and valerian root have also been reported to help anxiety and likely have a calming effect on the basal ganglia. B vitamins, especially vitamin B6 in doses, it is important to take a B complex supplement as well. Essential oils such as chamomile and lavender are also found to be calming.

BRAIN PATTERNS THAT INTERFERE WITH INTIMACY

Positive Basal Ganglia Relational Statements

"I know things will work out."
"I can speak out when I have a problem. I don't let problems fester."
"I usually feel physically relaxed."
"I'm usually calm in new situations."

Negative Basal Ganglia Relational Statements

"I know this isn't going to work out."
"I'm too tense."
"I'm scared."
"I'm too afraid to bring up problems. I tend to avoid them."
"I can't breathe. I feel really anxious in this situation."
"I can't make love – I have a headache (chest pain, backaches, muscle aches, etc.)."
"You're going to do something to hurt me."

Statements from the Partners of People with Basal Ganglia Problems

"She's anxious."
"He's nervous."
"She's uptight."
"He cares too much about what others think."
"He predicts the worst possible outcomes to situations."
"She complains of feeling bad a lot (has headaches, stomachaches)."
"He won't deal with conflict."
"She won't deal with problems head-on."

Looking Into Inattention and Impulsivity

Brain: The Prefrontal Cortex

FUNCTIONS OF THE PREFRONTAL CORTEX

- Attention span
 - Perseverance
 - Judgment
 - Impulse control
 - Organization
 - Self-monitoring and supervision
 - Problem solving
 - Critical thinking
 - Forward thinking
 - Learning from experience
 - Ability to feel and express emotions
 - Interaction with the limbic system
 - Empathy
-

PROBLEMS WITH THE PREFRONTAL CORTEX

- Short attention span
 - Distractibility
 - Lack of perseverance
 - Impulse control problems
 - Hyperactivity
 - Chronic lateness, poor time management
 - Disorganization
 - Procrastination
 - Unavailability of emotions
 - Misperceptions
 - Poor judgment
 - Trouble learning from experience
 - Short-term memory problems
 - Social and test anxiety
-

CHANGE YOUR BRAIN: BECOMING FOCUSED

- Prescription 1: Develop and maintain clear focus (the one-page miracle)
- Prescription 2: Focus on what you like a lot more than what you don't like
- Prescription 3: Have meaning, purpose, stimulation, and excitement in your life.
- Prescription 4: Get organized; Get help when you need it
- Prescription 5: Consider brain-wave biofeedback training
- Prescription 6: Try audiovisual stimulation
- Prescription 7: Don't be another person's stimulant
- Prescription 8: Consider Prefrontal Cortex medication
- Prescription 9: Try Mozart for focus

WATCH YOUR PREFRONTAL CORTEX NUTRITION

High-protein, low-carbohydrate diet that is relatively low in fat for patients with ADD. Protein such as lean meats, eggs, low-fat cheeses, nuts, and legumes. Eliminate simple sugars (such as cakes, candy, ice cream, pastries) and simple carbohydrates that are readily broken down to sugar (such as bread, pasta, rice, potatoes) will have a positive impact on the energy level and cognition. Nutritional supplements such as a combination of tyrosine (500-1500 ML two to three times a day); OPC (oligomeric procyanidius) grape seed or pine bark; found in health food stores (1 ml per pound of body weight); and ginkgo biloba (60-120 ML twice a day) will increase dopamine and blood flow in the brain, energy, focus and impulse control.

BRAIN PATTERNS THAT INTERFERE WITH INTIMACY

Positive Prefrontal Cortex Relational Statements

"You're important to me. Let's do something tonight."
"I love you. I'm glad we're together."
"I love to listen to you."
"I'll be on time for our date."
"Let's get these chores done so that we'll have more time together."
"I don't want to fight. Let's take a break and come back in ten minutes and work this out."
"I made that mistake before. I'm not making it again."

Negative Prefrontal Cortex Relational Statements

"I'm only a half hour late. Why are you so uptight about it?"
"If you want the checkbook balanced, do it yourself."
"I'll do it later." "I find it hard to listen to you."
"Go ahead and talk to me. I can listen to you while I'm watching TV and reading this book."
"I can't express myself."
"My mind goes blank when I try to express my feelings."
"I didn't mean to have the affair (overspend, embarrass you at the party, make hurtful comments, etc.)."
"I just can't sit still."
"The noise bothers me."
"I get so distracted (while listening, during sex, when playing a game, etc.)."
"I need the answer now."
"I want it now."
"I'm so mad at myself. I've made that mistake too many times."

Statements from the Partners of People with Prefrontal Cortex Problems

"He's impulsive."
"She blurts out and interrupts."
"He doesn't pay attention to me."
"She won't let me finish a comment. She says she has to say whatever thought comes into her head or she'll forget it."
"He has to have the fan on at night to sleep. It drives me crazy."

"She often seems to start a problem for no particular reason."
"He loves to challenge everything I say."
"She gets so distracted during sex."
"He teases the animals, and it makes me furious."
"She can't sit still." "He puts things off and tends not to finish things."
"She's always late, rushing around at the last minute."

Looking Into Worry and Obsessiveness

Brain: The Cingulate System

FUNCTIONS OF THE CINGULATE SYSTEM

- Ability to shift attention
 - Cognitive flexibility
 - Adaptability
 - Movement from idea to idea
 - Ability to see options
 - Ability to “go with the flow”
 - Ability to cooperate
-

PROBLEMS WITH THE CINGULATE SYSTEM

- Worrying
 - Holding on to hurts from the past
 - Getting stuck on thoughts (obsessions)
 - Getting stuck on behaviors (compulsions)
 - Oppositional behavior
 - Argumentativeness
 - Uncooperativeness; tendency to say no automatically
 - Addictive behaviors (alcohol or drug abuse, eating disorders)
 - Chronic pain
 - Cognitive inflexibility
 - Obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD)
 - OCD spectrum disorders
 - Eating disorders
 - Road rage
-

CHANGE YOUR BRAIN: GETTING UNSTUCK

- Prescription 1: Notice when you're stuck, distract yourself, and come back to the problem later
- Prescription 2: Think through answers before automatically saying no
- Prescription 3: Write out options and solutions when you feel stuck
- Prescription 4: Seek counsel of others when you feel stuck
- Prescription 5: Memorize and recite the serenity prayer when bothered by repetitive thoughts
- Prescription 6: Don't try to convince someone else who is stuck; take a break and come back later
- Prescription 7: Try making paradoxical requests
- Prescription 8: Learn how to deal with oppositional children
- Prescription 9: Consider cingulate medications
- Prescription 10: Exercise

WATCH YOUR CINGULATE NUTRITION

Foods high in carbohydrates, such as pastas, potatoes, bread, pastries, pretzels, and popcorn, increase l-tryptophan levels (the natural amino acid building block for serotonin) in the blood. The calming effect of serotonin can often be felt in thirty minutes or less by eating these foods. Cerebral serotonin levels can also be raised by eating foods rich in tryptophan, such as chicken, turkey, salmon, beef, peanut butter, eggs, green peas, potatoes, and milk. Nutritional supplements with l-tryptophan are naturally occurring amino acid found in milk, meat, and eggs. Take 1000-3000 ML at bedtime. Inositol, from the B vitamin family, should be taken in doses of 12-20 ML a day (shown to decrease moodiness, depression and problems of overfocus).

BRAIN PATTERNS THAT INTERFERE WITH INTIMACY

Positive Cingulate Relational Statements

"It's okay." "I can roll with this situation."
"How would you like to do this?"
"Let's collaborate."
"Let's cooperate."
"What would you like to do?"
"That was in the past."

Negative Cingulate Relational Statements

"You hurt me years ago."
"I won't forgive you."
"It'll never be the same."
"I'm always worried."
"I get stuck on these bad thoughts."
"Do it my way."
"I can't change."
"It's your fault."
"I don't agree with you."
"No. No. No."
"I won't do it."
"I don't want to do it."
"I have a lot of complaints about you."
"I've never hated anyone more than you."
"This will never change."

Statements from Partners of People with Cingulate Problems

"Nothing gets forgiven or let go."
"She brings up issues from years and years ago."
"Everything has to be the way he wants it."
"He can't say he's sorry."
"She holds on to grudges forever."
"He never throws anything away."
"She's rigid."
"If things aren't perfect, he thinks they are no good at all."
"I don't help her because I have to do it exactly her way or she goes ballistic."
"He argues with everything I say."
"She tends to be oppositional."
"He doesn't like to try new things."

Looking Into Memory and Temper

Brain: The Temporal Lobes

FUNCTIONS OF THE TEMPORAL LOBES

Dominant Side (usually the left)

- Understanding and processing language
- Intermediate-term memory
- Long-term memory
- Auditory learning
- Retrieval of words
- Complex memories
- Visual and auditory processing
- Emotional stability

Nondominant Side (usually the right)

- Recognizing facial expressions
- Decoding vocal intonation
- Rhythm
- Music
- Visual learning

PROBLEMS WITH THE TEMPORAL LOBES

Dominant Side

- Aggression, internally or externally directed
- Dark or violent thoughts
- Sensitivity to slights; mild paranoia
- Word-finding problems
- Auditory processing problems
- Reading difficulties
- Emotional instability

Nondominant Side

- Difficulty recognizing facial expressions
- Difficulty decoding vocal intonation
- Implicated in social-skill struggles

Either or Both Sides

- Memory problems, amnesia
- Headaches or abdominal pain without clear explanation
- Anxiety or fear for no particular reason
- Abnormal sensory perceptions, visual or auditory distortions
- Feelings of déjà vu or jamais vu
- Periods of spaciness or confusion
- Religious or moral preoccupation
- Hypergraphia, excessive writing
- Seizures

CHANGE YOUR BRAIN: ENHANCING EXPERIENCE

Prescription 1: Create a library of wonderful experiences

Prescription 2: Sing whenever/wherever you can

Prescription 3: Use humming and toning to tune up your brain

Prescription 4: Listen to classical music

Prescription 5: Learn to play a musical instrument

Prescription 6: Move in rhythms

Prescription 7: Consider temporal lobe medications

Prescription 8: Get enough sleep

Prescription 9: Eliminate caffeine and nicotine

Prescription 10: Try EEG biofeedback

WATCH YOUR TEMPORAL LOBES NUTRITION

Aggressive behavior is much worse after a high sugar load. A high protein/lower simple carbohydrate diet is likely to be very helpful. If the aggressiveness is associated with ruminations, moodiness, and depression, then a balanced diet of equal amounts of carbohydrates and protein is likely to be the best.

BRAIN PATTERNS THAT INTERFERE WITH INTIMACY

Positive Temporal Lobe Relational Statements

"I remember what you asked me to do."
"I have a clear memory of the history of our relationship."
"I feel stable and even."
"I can find the words to express my feelings."
"I can usually tell when another person is happy, sad, mad, or bored."
"I have good control over my temper."
"My memory is good."

Negative Temporal Lobe Relational Statements

"I struggle with memory."
"I blow things way out of proportion."
"I get angry easily. I have a bad temper."
"My moods tend to be volatile."
"I tend to get scary, violent thoughts in my head."
"It's hard for me to read."
"I often misinterpret what others say."
"I tend to be too sensitive to others or feel others are talking about me."
"I tend to misread the facial expressions of others."
"I frequently have trouble finding the right words in a conversation."

Statements from Partners of People with Temporal Lobe Problems

"He can be physically or verbally very aggressive."
"She's volatile."
"His memory is very poor."
"She misreads situations."
"He's very moody."
"She takes things the wrong way."
"He spaces out easily."
"She doesn't seem to learn by reading something or hearing directions. You have to show her what to do."

To Your Brain Health!