



The Spiritual Brain

How to develop your own sense of connection and balance

Helping clients develop connection and balance

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Meditation

- Awareness of the Breath

I. Formation of Self Concept

A. Freud: described the best outcome of psychoanalysis as “Ordinary human unhappiness.”

B. Has psychology helped us find True Self that is beyond the ordinary human unhappiness?

C. Our ego self: who we see ourselves to be based on previous conditioning & experiences.

II. Formation of Self Concept

- 1) Our world view.
- 2) Our paradigm – our map
- 3) Our story reveals how we made agreements (adaptations & adjustments) with our environment.
- 4) The brain is a camera – recording significant pictures of our reality.

Dan J. Siegel, M.D.

- “We are our attention”
- “What you do with your mind can change your brain”.
- Our self concept is built on our mental representations:
 - Emotions, thoughts, perceptions, memories, sensations, images, intentions, attitudes, beliefs, hopes, dreams, longings, & desires.

II. Formation of Self Concept

D. Identifying with our Story

- 1) Creates familiarity (substitute for security)
- 2) Creating our own reality
- 3) Our Reality – pictures impacted with emotion.

II. Formation of Self Concept

- E. Most of us operate with 3-4 encompassing themes of our reality.
 - a. Example of themes (Scarcity, Fear, Inadequacy)
 - b. Defenses (Avoid all that hurts, projection, etc.)
 - c. Blocked emotion (Anger, Fear, Pain).

II. Formation of Self Concept

- “This is called implicit memory, and it includes your expectations, models of relationships, emotional tendencies, and general outlook. Implicit memory establishes the interior landscape of your mind – what it feels like to be you – based on the slowly accumulating residues of lived experiences.
- Hanson and Mendius, p. 67, (2009)

II. Formation of Self Concept

F. This brain (ego) is a program system of our reality – it is placed on a disc – inserted in the computer.

- 1) All we can do at this point is review the past &/or project it into the future.
- 2) When we use this level of mind for self reflection or to solve self issues we will only reproduce a new version of the old self.

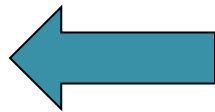
II. Formation of Self Concept

The ego Self

- 1) Internal self concept of being inadequate.
- 2) External efforts or attainment to achieve acceptance.
- 3) Example: The story of Jacob & Esau
- 4) What are our efforts to gain acceptance, validation – to achieve a homeostasis of well-being.

II. Formation of Self Concept

- 6) The internal, inadequate self seeks forces to find well-being.



- x Love from others
- x Money – value of _____
- x Status
- x Accomplishments



MINDFULNESS

Meditation

- Loving-kindness

Mindfulness

- Developing your own practice
 - Mindfulness of Breathing
 - Settling the Mind in it's natural state
 - Maintaining Awareness of Awareness itself
 - Alan Wallace – “The Attention Revolution”

Qualities of Practice

- Loving-kindness
- Compassion
- Empathetic joy
- Equanimity

Two Obstacles

- Dullness
- Agitation

Goal of Mindfulness

- Shamatha – directed attention

Daniel J. Siegel, M.D. – The Mindful Therapist

- 9 middle pre-frontal functions:
 - 1. Regulating our bodies
 - 2. Attuning to others (attuned communication)
 - 3. Having emotional balance
 - 4. Calming fear (fear modulation)
 - 5. Pausing before acting (flexibility of response)
 - 6. Having insight
 - 7. Having empathy
 - 8. Being moral in our thinking and actions
 - 9. More access to intuition

Interpersonal Neurobiology

Daniel J. Siegel

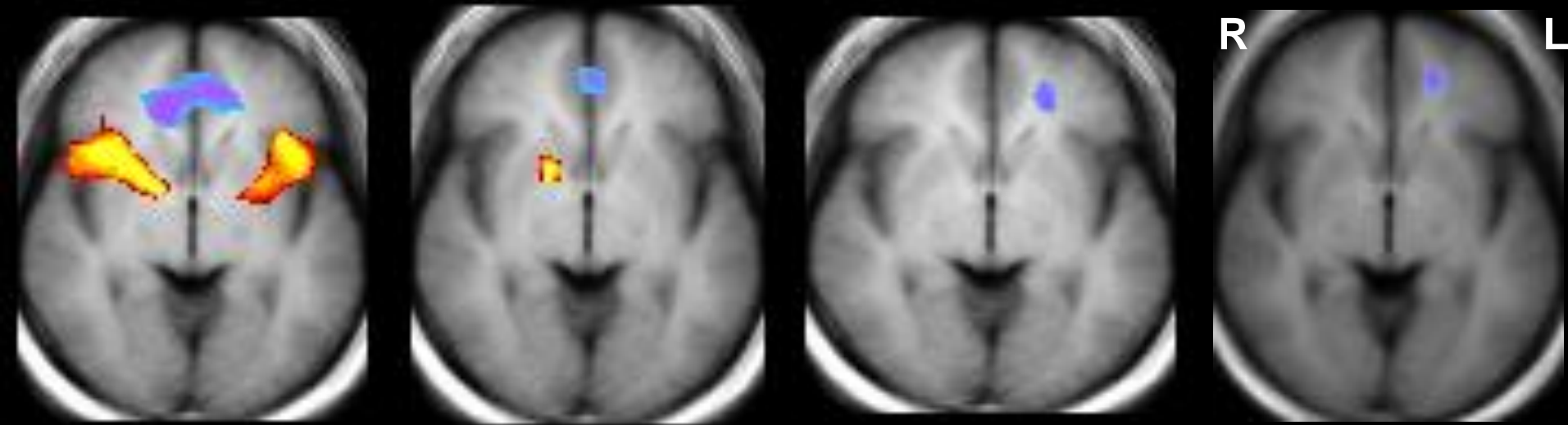
- “These nine middle prefrontal functions are a result of *neural integration*- and so these findings suggest that mindfulness, *secure attachment*, mental health, and living a wise and kind life may each be the result of and also cultivate neural integration”.
- P. 6-5

Interpersonal Neurobiology

Daniel J. Siegel

- Neural Integration – the working together of the cortex, limbic, brainstem, anterior and posterior cingulate, orbitofrontal cortex, and all aspects of the prefrontal cortex.

Left vmPFC Implicated During Stroop Performance In PG



PG

Control

PG - Control

Bipolar

Mindfulness:

- The practice of being present with self, others, and creation because there is no real separation.
- “Mindfulness involves the skillful use of attention to both your inner and outer worlds. Since your brain learns mainly from what you attend to, mindfulness is the doorway to taking in good experiences and making them a part of yourself...” Hanson and Mendius, p. 13, (2009)

Mindfulness: Daniel Siegel

- Mindful Awareness: “Awareness of present-moment experience, with intention and purpose, without grasping on to judgments. Traits of being mindful are having an open stance toward oneself and others, emotional equanimity, and the ability to describe the inner world of the mind”.
- P.AI-51.

FLOW

- Refers to the state of being immersed in an activity and losing one's sense of self-consciousness as the boundaries of self and activity become permeable and one gets lost in an experience.
- Siegel, p.A1-32
- Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi – “FLOW”



Meditation

- Compassion

True Self

- Our effort as helpers is to help clients find the True Self, thus developing the observer self that lives in connection with life, the life energy, and in relationship with all people and things.

True Self

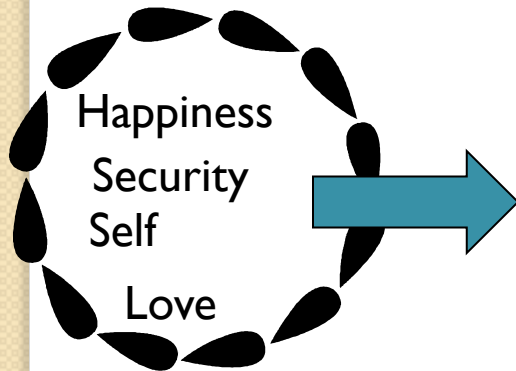
- Traits we develop to overcome normal suffering:

- Virtue
- Mindfulness
- Selection

By following the fundamental functions of:

- Regulation
- Learning
- Selection

Living from the Inside-Out



Basic life needs and desires are by-products of inner connection to what makes us alive.

- 1) The Energy that makes us alive:
 - a. Is energy in motion
 - b. Has its own awareness/consciousness
 - c. Has a path or direction.
 - d. Is guided by LOVE. Fred Alan Wolfe – Learning to see love & to express that love is the purpose of living this life.
 - e. Creates constant change.
 - f. That which animates all things.

Mindfulness

- Mindfulness is harmony and balance practiced by the therapist in the counseling session, producing an environment of:
 - 1. nonjudgmental.
 - 2. equanimity (evenness of temper even under stress).
 - 3. awareness of what is happening as it is happening.
 - 4. ability to describe with words our internal world

Mindfulness

- In turn, our clients develop:
 - 1. Flexibility
 - 2. Adaptive
 - 3. Coherence
 - 4. Energized
 - 5. Stability

III. The True Self

C. Spirituality is: the lived art of experiencing what is actually happening while living from awareness of the God within.

Meister Eckhardt – “The one who knows God best is the one who recognizes God equally everywhere.”

III. The True Self

D. True Self

I. Joseph Campbell – “The hero (heroine) is symbolic of that divine creative & redemptive image which is hidden within us all, only waiting to be known and rendered into life.”

Hero With a Thousand Faces, p. 39

III. The True Self

2. Svetasvatara Upanishad – “God is found in the soul when sought with truth and self-sacrifice, as fire is found in wood, water in hidden springs, cream in milk, and oil in the oil fruit.”

III. The True Self

3. The True Self lives in relationship to the invisible plane of existence, the animating energy that makes all things possible, and lives with joy in the mystery of life. The True Self is our hidden nature, beyond duality and is found in the process of embracing and then letting go of the ego self.

III. The True Self

Seeking Ego

Focus: Outside creation

Issues: "Inner Child" needs

Theme: Healing

Perspective: Victim of Life

Avoid pain

Answers & solutions

Blames others

Stuck

Holding On

Familiar

Destiny

Facts

God as Father

Dependent

Religion

Womb

Self Perspective

Ego-Sufficient Self

Self

Ego Boundaries

Ideal Self

Command of Self

Accept Pain

Life as a predicament

Realizes responsibility for self

Linear

Letting Go

Different

Goals

Ideas

God as Spirit

Sufficient

Skeptic

Self

Regional Perspective

True Self

Connection of self w/all

Freedom

Grounded/Growth

Emptiness of Self

Growth through pain

Understanding

Acceptance

Spiral

Unknown

Creative

Journey

Experience

God everywhere

Intra-Dependent

Spirituality

Universe Perspective

Planetary Perspective

III. The True Self

Seeking Ego

All or none

Forced

Needs

Fear & Desire

Unaware

Knowledge by Definition

Tillich: Striving to Be

Judgmental

Hates to chop wood and
carry water

Ego-Sufficient Self

Either/Or

Choice of duality

Wants

Learning

Consciousness

Knowledge by Doubt

Courage to be apart from

Stuck in paradox

Ok, so long as I have to

True Self

Both/And

Choice beyond duality

Being/Enough

Contentment

Gnosis (Inner Knowing)

Knowledge by
Experience

Courage to be a part of
Beyond duality

Loves to chop wood and
carry water



Meditation

- Empathic Joy

IV. Therapeutic Interventions

Based on the simple formula of:

Recognition

Acceptance

Letting Go

Anonymity

Compassion

IV. Therapeutic Interventions

A. Recognition of Mental Dimension:

- 1) What are the client's old agreements?
- 2) 3-4 themes that unconsciously make up the client's world view and create repetitive issues.
- 3) Clinical example.
- 4) Ideas:
 - a. What are the mental pictures
 - b. Cases of trauma
 - c. What emotions are dominant that match the themes.
 - d. What are physical symptoms that have manifested.
 - e. What is the clinical assessment – diagnosis
 - f. Beliefs about self and others

IV. Therapeutic Interventions

5) Recognition: E-motion – emotions are energy in motion

- a. When emotions are held in the body – the natural flow of life energy is blocked – the held energy (emotion) will create.
- b. The natural flow of the life energy creates life, vitality, is characterized by love and service and known by its by-products; happiness, security, sense of True Self, Love.
- c. When we block the flow or hold emotions in the body we attach our Story with this experience. The blocked or held emotion will create:

symptoms are the expression of the block

illness can be a manifestation

the energy is coming out sideways

- d. Check out Candice Pert, Ph.D. and Paul Pearsal for research on how emotions and pictures (mental concepts) are held and stored in cellular memory. Research of transplant recipients.

IV. Therapeutic Interventions

B. Acceptance

- Developing the observer self to see our Perceptions – how we see the world and why.
- Most issues are not our stuff – mental concepts and emotional states were learned responses to our environment. The ingenious adaptive self found a way to survive or make sense of the environment.
- We can only change our perception – acceptance of the issues and our response to them, is a key step.
- Cease trying to change others – let them be.
- Cease trying to do for others what they have to do for themselves
- Accept that others gave us what they had.
- Changing our perception is dependent on uncovering our adaptations and how it is no longer serving our evolution/process of emergence.

IV. Therapeutic Interventions

C. Letting go

- A constant process.
- Not allowing others/situations to create our reality.
- Forgiveness is letting go of the perceived harm done to us.
- Of our set and constantly rehearsed mental pictures of reality.
- Of our emotional blocks (anger, fear, pain).
- Of our story as our defining self reality.
- Of our ego self as the dominating force of identity.

IV. Therapeutic Intervention

Letting Go – cont.

- Ken Wilbur – the whole point – “...is to create a self strong enough to die, not to create a self strong enough to brag about it.” The Atman Project.
- Of my mind – brain’s desire to judge everything I experience and everything I perceive.
- Of my ego’s desire to turn all reality into a duality – i.e. right/wrong; good/bad. Rumi – “Over there is a field that is beyond right or wrong. I’ll meet you there.”
- Of attachments; to my story as my identity, to my emotions, my pictures, my view of God.
- Of outward efforts to build a self.
- Of expectations – give from the free flowing infinite source without need.

IV. Therapeutic Interventions

- Help clients see that letting go is feared by the ego self because it feels like an annihilation. The fruits of letting go are peace, serenity, to live in the world with the mess that it is, or, move on.
- Letting go is the launch pad, the catapult of True Self awareness. I still exist, I still have awareness when I let go of the past.
- Fred Alan Wolfe – “What we call the past only exists in the windmills of our mind. We in the present are responsible for our pasts, not the other way around. We are the creators of history.”

IV. Therapeutic Interventions

- Amit Goswami – “If you are able to handle the uncertainty of being beyond ego, you are ready for inner creativity.” “We use the ego to go beyond ego.”
- Letting go of shame – deep fear of inadequacy.
- Letting go of blame – If we blame – we miss the opportunity of freedom.

IV. Therapeutic Interventions

D. Anonymity

- “Tao abides in non-action, yet nothing is left undone.”
Tao Te Ching #37
- “It is not so much a control of one part of man by another, but the peaceful integration of all man’s power into one perfect actuality which is his true self, that is to say his spiritual self.” Thomas Merton, The New Man, p. 9
- Experience helps us compare the difference between a self thought and a God thought. To have my job or the job that life wants me to have, etc.
- To practice letting go of self thoughts, judgments, etc. to let life’s energy flow.

IV. Therapeutic Interventions

-Anonymity is the state of living in a world without separation. There is no separation between us and what we want.

“If we understood how deeply God was within us our lives would change.” Meister Eckhardt.

- This state is found in emptiness.
- This state is found in no time & no space.
- This state is an experience of true beauty.
- “Beauty is life when life unveils her holy face. But you are life and you are the veil. Beauty is eternity gazing at itself in the mirror. But you are eternity and you are the mirror.” Rumi

IV. Therapeutic Interventions

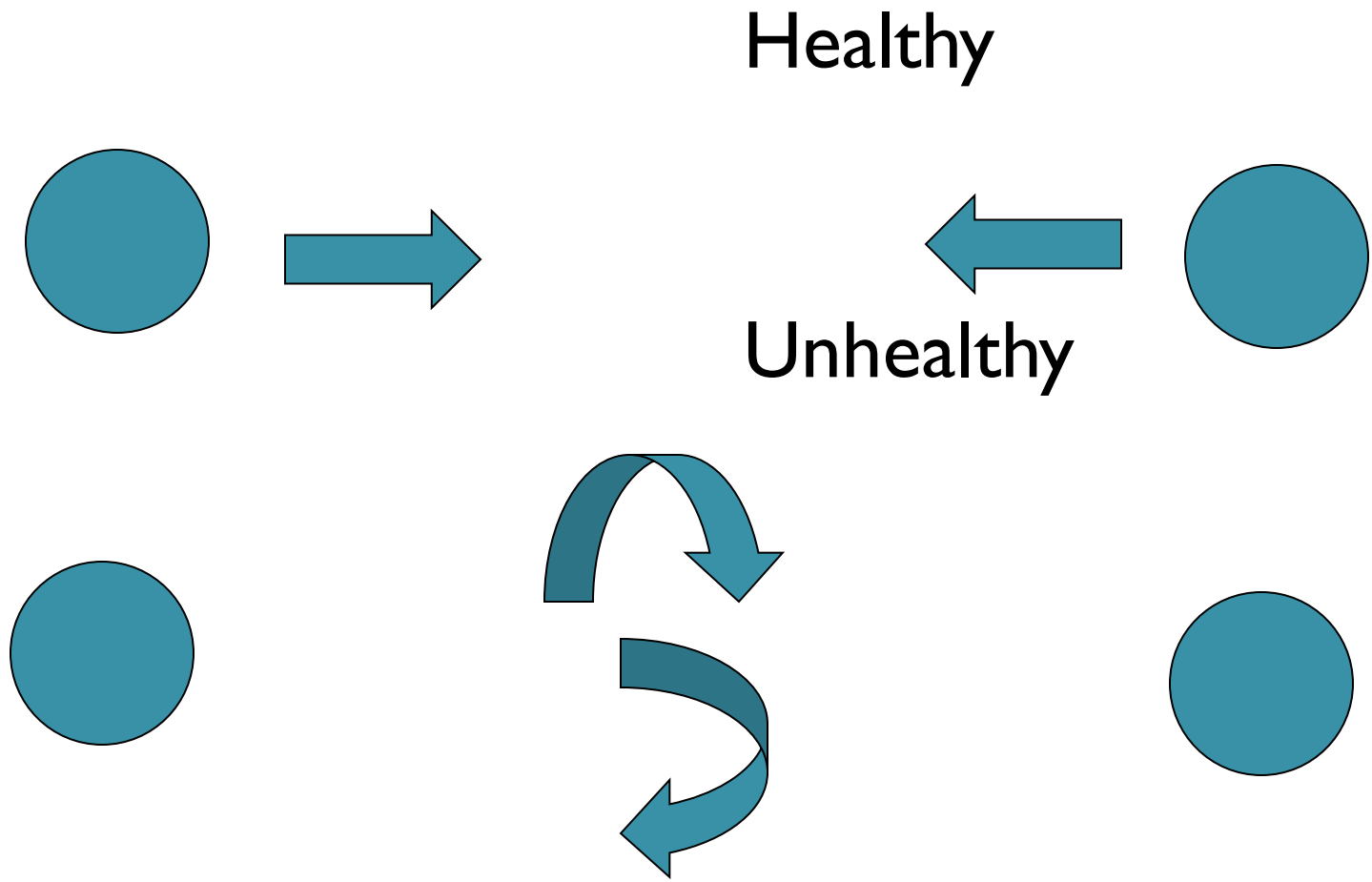
- Compassion
 - The ultimate concern for the suffering of self and others
 - Simulating or experiencing the actions, feelings, and thoughts of self and others
 - Wish for happiness and well being

IV. Therapeutic Interventions

- Living in the world of none of my business is to live in the flow with mindfulness. Voluntarily letting go of choice. “It is not I but Christ through me.”
- Awareness that healer and healing is anonymous.
- Personal experience of illness. Being willing to be here in time and space with the knowledge of the world of no time and no space.
- It's None of My Business is the creation of I-THOU relationships, no judgment.

IV. Therapeutic Interventions

E. Healthy relationships from True Self Awareness



IV. Therapeutic Interventions

Unhealthy relationships:

- Trying to do for others that which is a self responsibility.
- Trying to get from others that which I believe I need.
- Dysfunctional relationships produce:
Shame – deep fear of inadequacy
Blame – accept responsibility for others.

V. Therapeutic Symbols of the Anonymous Healer

- Helping clients develop an observer self – to see the story without judgment. To not be the by-product or result of the story.

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Oshamalaya – sometimes translated “have pity on me.” Language teachers explained the meaning is a prayer in one word – “Tunkashila, make a connection with me, a human being.”

V. Therapeutic Symbols of the Anonymous Healer

- A. We practice this by connecting with the client.
 - B. We practice this by reserving judgment.
 - C. We feel this in the quiet awareness of True Self and mindfulness.
 - D. We experience this in all places and people.
- No time & No space – being present in pure awareness. Living the miraculous without fanfare, living in the Great Mystery as if it were normal.

Compassion

Meditation

- Equanimity

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