

Chapter 12

Therapy and the Mind Body Connection

When serious therapists mention about the mind - body connection, they usually end up being seen as less credible. Andrew Weil? An M.D.? Well okay. He can do it. But a talk therapist? Not really. The thing is, of all the concepts a talk therapist could possibly explore, the mind - body connection turns out to be the most important of all. Why? This is what we'll be exploring in the next few chapters; what makes the connection between the body and the mind so potent and why do so many experts disdain this idea. Do you think you already know why? We're about to take a look, in this chapter of Plain Talk about Talk Therapy.

Main Streamers - 400, New Agers - 0

A war has been silently raging on now for hundreds of years. Do you know the one I mean? René Descartes inadvertently started it, early in the Seventeenth Century, when he proclaimed that the body and mind are separate. Even today then, this war continues, as knighted warriors dressed in alphabet soup armor and traditional deference do all they can to ruin the careers and lives of the unknighthed, less deferential warriors all the while claiming they are doing this to protect the lives of innocent people.

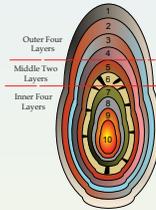
Doesn't sound familiar to you yet? Not sure who is fighting? It's simple re-



The Fractal for a Good Therapy

(how Emergence Personality Theory defines therapy)

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The Essence of All Good Therapies

Here, the idea is simple. All good therapies get past the Outer Four Layers; Layer 1 (personal non existence), Layer 2 (punishing questions, excuses and explanations), Layer 3 (time limited punishments), and Layer 4 (eternal punishments). They then work with Layers 5, 6, and 7, by contrasting and comparing what people can see (their symptoms) with what they logically know to be true but cannot see (their needs).

Layer 5 here are the symptoms

Layer 6

a block

contrast and compare

Layer 7 where is the need?

A good therapy contrasts and compares the symptoms of Layer 5 with the logically missing needs of Layer 7

ally. Main stream science is out to discredit anyone they pejoratively designate, “new agers.” And while these designations; the main streamers and the new agers, are not really official, the war itself is beyond official. It’s been going on for almost four hundred years.

What have these two factions been arguing about? Main stream science believes it is imperative to stop anyone who makes *helping people* more important than *explaining how they help people*. Incredible really. Central to this belief is the idea that if you cannot see something, it does not exist. Granted, science has finally progressed past the point wherein it limits this proof to what we can see with the naked eye. Still, if you can’t prove what you claim is happening with repeatable reliable data, then science sees your ideas as nonsense and you as a charlatan or worse; as a madman or a thief.

What amazes me here is that even when the methods in question help people, science still does not consider this to be proof. No numbers. No proof.

Where does René Descartes come in?

René Descartes spent much of his adult life doing all he could to learn about what to him was his most amazing discovery; that the experiences of the body and the experiences of the mind are two totally separate yet interactive experiences. And he was right. They are. The thing is, these two separate experiences are at the same time also the experiences of one individual. Which makes them also two parts of a single experience. The experience of being alive.

That both of these experiences (the two separate and the one whole) are equally valid and true is easily tested. Unfortunately what Descartes inadvertently did is he logically dissected the experiences of the mind and body but never got around to holistically reassembling them. At least in science’s eyes. And when I say inadvertently, I say this because I’m sure he never intended to destroy the credibility of everything other than physically logical, visible evidence. Unfortunately, other than the numerous philosophical arguments ongoing since then, for the most part, this is exactly what his ideas have accomplished. Until the late twentieth century that is, at which point a few of the less deferential scientists and M.D.s began to openly challenge Descartes and his love of this separateness. Some of them even going so far as to say that the mind body connection is the whole key to understanding health, healing, and human nature.

So is it?

Before I answer, I want to make it clear to you that I can see the value in science’s point of view here; that if you cannot understand a device then you should not trust what it is doing. At the same time I can also see the value in the so called New Age mind set wherein helping people matters more than measurements and math. In effect, if it works, then who cares how? Right? After all, isn’t helping people the main point?

Who is right then? And why bring up this war in a book about talk therapy?

I bring it up because talk therapists fall squarely in the midst of this battlefield. Partly because insurance companies demand that therapists prove their progress; efficiently and with nice neat numbers no less. Partly because science has a point about how some new age folks can be way off base. And partly because the main stream, good old deferential science boys continue to punish and berate anyone who does not kneel in deference to the god of linearity.

Where do I stand?

I am a talk therapist. Thus I too stand smack in the midst of this battlefield. Fortunately for me though I am also a personality theorist, and during my searches, I made a discovery which for me at least puts this conflict to rest. I discovered what René Descartes somehow missed seeing, and what his fellow philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz later hinted at. I discovered the actual mechanism which connects our separate experiences of the body and the mind.

Not sure what I'm saying? I'm saying that despite the preponderance of people who believe a mind body connection exists, no one ever says what this connection is. The actual mechanism. They argue only that this connection does or does not exist, along with what it does and does not affect. In fact, if you do an online search for the mind body connection, while you'll find hundreds of references to that it exists, I doubt you'll find a single person, scientist or new ager, who even mentions the existence of such a mechanism let alone how it works. They argue only whether a mind body connection does or does not exist. This includes even the fascinating new work of the social neuroscientists who claim that neurology and social science is the connection. Yes. Of course. Neurology and social science are connected. But how? What is the mechanism?

Ironically, the one person who did mention this mechanism is the one who started the whole thing; Descartes himself. Thus, in addition to his theories on the causal nature of mind body interactionism, he also hypothesized that these interactions occurred within the only organ in the brain that does not exist bilaterally; the pineal gland.

My point? It seems that while many folks believe a mind body connection exists, no one seems to say what it is, scientifically or otherwise. And while helping people is and should be the talk therapist's first concern, helping people should not have to rely solely on something as nebulous as intuition. Granted, no therapist can or should ignore his or her intuition. But therapists should also want to know what happens in the moments wherein they help someone. What was it your gut sensed that your mind could not see?

How then are the mind and body connected? It's simple really. It turns out that the body and the mind each have their own sense of time. Their own sort of internal clocks so to speak. Moreover, when these two internal clocks are not running in sync, problems occur. Things like the troubles folks with ADD have with mentally focusing on the topic at hand. Or the troubles folks who over eat have with being aware their stomachs are full.

What is going on in these conditions? The best clue we have lies in how these conditions are being treated. And in what affects the symptoms the most. How are they being treated? With medications which either speed up or slow down the body or mind's sense of how fast life is going. To wit, folks who have trouble focusing mentally get medications which speed up their minds. Ritalin. Strattera. Adderall and such. And folks who have trouble sensing their bodies get medicines which speed up their bodies. Ephedrasil. Myoffeine. And the now banned prescription drug Phen-Fen.

Know that when I say, "speed up" their minds or bodies, I am not saying this happens separately, as in just the mind speeds up or just the body. What I am saying is that, whenever you take a medication which speeds up your sense of time, you will sense the change more in whichever of the two clocks is slower.

In effect what happens is, people perceive a larger change in whichever of the two clocks was slower. Why? Because this change is actually bigger when measured percentage wise. Which makes the previously less noticed clock the more noticed clock and visa versa. In effect, the greater the change we perceive in a clock's speed, the greater we perceive the effect.

At this point, most folks would want to know what I am basing all this on. What am I basing it on? For one thing, on the easily observed and measured differences between these two clocks, reliably and empirically obtained. You can in fact test for these differences in people within minutes. Moreover, once people learn to *see and monitor* these differences in an ongoing way, their need for medication can decrease markedly, perhaps even to the point wherein they may no longer need it.

Does all this sound crazy? Well consider this. What I've just said about the meds we use to treat ADD and over eating is a fact. Nothing to argue about here. And yes, how these drugs alter peoples' perceptions of mind and body time differs. But that they both do this does not. This implies that the key to understanding at least a significant portion of the problem underlying ADD, and the key to understanding at least a sizeable portion of the problem underlying over eating, lies in exploring how we perceive time. Descartes style. Which is precisely what we are about to do in the next few chapters.

Okay. I can hear the crowd rumbling. But before you brand me with the scarlet letters NA (new age) though, consider the gist of what I have been saying

to you. I am saying that regardless of who has been right; the inquisitors of main stream science or the weirdos of the new age, to some degree, whoever is right no longer matters. We now have a way to observe and measure the connection between the body and the mind. Easily and reliably. Moreover being able to empirically discern and measure this connection means we now have the key to understanding a whole lot of things we deal with in therapy. Things as different as learning disabilities, over eating, drug addiction, and clumsiness.

Can you imagine?

All right. I admit. There's a whole lot more I need to say before anyone should consider my hypothesis fact. Add to this the idea that we would also need to do a tremendous amount of work in order to turn this hypothesis into positive therapeutic outcomes. At the same time, can you imagine what it would mean if what I'm saying is true? And yes, we would also need to find doable ways in which to teach ordinary folks, including children, how to observe and monitor their mind body connections. Still, if true, the possibilities for health and healing could be endless.

Have you yet made the connection between what I presented in previous chapters and what I'm now saying about the mind body connection? For instance, have you realized that what I have called the *psychophysical* connection is the very same thing as the mind body connection? And that what I wrote about in the two prior chapters on addictions is but one application for this discovery?

What then will I be showing you in this and the coming chapters? A whole lot really. Beginning in this chapter with the two basic skills you'll need to acquire in order to explore any of what I am about to show you; [1] learning how to recognize and monitor the degree to which your own body and mind clocks are out of sync, and [2], learning how to use the group you fall into; the "mind first group" or the "body first group," to better manage your life.

Please let me say this again.

In order to see and understand what I'm about to say, you must learn how to recognize and monitor the degree to which your own body and mind clocks are out of sync. Thus merely reading these words will not be enough. Moreover, in order to fully grasp the potential here, you must also learn to do this with other people as well.

As for the two ideas I've just mentioned, let me address the second idea first.

What do I mean by that there are two default groups; the Mind First group, and the Body First group?

Begin with that all people fall into one of these two groups depending on which of their clocks normally runs faster. Thus when people's mind clocks run

ahead of their body clocks by default, they belong to the Mind First group. And when peoples' body clocks by default run ahead of their mind clocks, they belong to the Body First group.

Now let me ask you. Can you guess yet which group you fall into, the Mind First group or the Body First group? Me? I'm in the Mind First group. Which means what exactly? Which means I tend to think way faster than my hand can write and often overestimate how well I have learned physical skills. Moreover, as far as I can see, I've been in this group all of my life. Along with all the other folks who have Asperger's.

How about the other group then, the Body First group?

It turns out that many people in the Body First group have the mirror condition to Asperger's. ADD. Hence the tendency of medical folks to see these people as having hyperactivity. Translation. The body clocks of people in the Body First group by default run ahead of their mind clocks. Which makes these folks better qualified in many ways to do sports and physical activities, but less qualified in many ways for intellectual pursuits. Why? Because these folks tend to move before they think. And overestimate how well they've learned intellectual things.

Obviously there's a whole lot more to know about how these two groups function. Know we'll talk in more detail about this in a moment. Before we do though, let's first address the first idea I mentioned, learning how to recognize and monitor the degree to which your body and mind clocks are out of sync. How exactly do you test for this? Actually, it's easier than you might think. Are you ready to find out how easy?

Learning to Test for Mind Body Sync

Has anyone ever tested people for body mind sync? As far as I can find, other than Leibniz' and his *psychophysical parallelism*, no one even infers that the body and mind might have separate clocks. To me, this seems incredible as even mere weeks into my learning how to do these tests, I already can find out of sync clocks in everyone I test. Including in myself.

I've also gotten pretty good at testing people to see which of the two default groups they fall into; the Body First group or the Mind First group. So what have I learned so far?

For one thing, this Mind First / Body First thing seems to play out very similarly to how being left handed and right handed affects people. What I'm saying is, most people are not aware of the handedness of those around them. Are you? For instance, can you name anyone close to you who is left handed? How about a second person? Have you even thought to look for this recently?

In truth, most people don't usually notice, even when asked about someone

they've know for years.

The body first mind first thing is similar. Thus despite the fact that this difference is among the easiest of all things to observe in human nature, even easier in fact than determining handedness, most people will have never noticed let alone considered the significance of it.

How then can you begin to test for these out of sync clocks? The easiest way is to have people do something simple which involves both speaking and moving their hands. Typing for instance. Or hand writing. Know that when I say *speaking*, I include the speaking you do with yourself in your own head; your thoughts. But when you are testing someone else, of course, you must rely on the spoken out loud type of speaking. Either way, for the purposes of determining mind body clock sync, having someone speak in sync with doing something physical is the easiest test.

What kind of things could you try then?

Probably the easiest test you can do is the *speak and write test*. What you do is, you to ask someone to speak something out loud. Something brief like his or her name. At the same time, tell this person he needs to finish writing these words in the same exact instant as he finishes saying them. As best he can.

Before you begin, tell him he is allowed to try as hard as he wants to pace these two things so as to make them both end in sync. Just no pauses in the middle though. Steady and continuous and together.

Now ask the person to try this test and as he does it, watch for which ends first. The speaking or the writing. Notice also which has a faster overall pace? And if you want, notice which begins first too?

What will you likely see? To begin with, in most people, you should see a very obvious difference. For instance, in Mind First people, you may observe their hands shaking as they try to keep up with the speed of their mind. And in Body First people, you will see their hands have a very obvious lead on their mouths. Which is to say, their minds will have to constantly try to keep up with their hands.

Now you should try this test for yourself while someone watches you. At first, it would be best if you relied entirely on the other person's observations as this would free your mind and body to focus entirely on the test.

Know that no matter which group you fall into, you are perfectly normal. We all fall into one of these two groups. Moreover, knowing which will allow you to consciously affect your mind body sync in ways which may allow you to change your whole life.

Now try doing the test again only this time try to also notice your own mind body sync. Can you in fact notice a discernable difference between the speed of your speech and the speed of your hands? Again, if you do, don't be alarmed.

You are perfectly normal no matter which comes first. In fact, I've yet to observe a single person who does not have noticeable differences between the timing of their minds and hands. Including me.

How did I come to see this in the first place. Actually, it's a long story. What might be relevant here though is how I came to know about this particular test. How? I was explaining something to one of my clients by drawing it on a pad. As I did, this woman remarked on how she could see my hands shaking as I tried to keep up with what my mouth was telling her.

This event has now become my reference experience for testing for mind body sync, in that prior to this woman saying this to me, I had never noticed, let alone tried to see, this difference in anyone. Including in myself. The minute she pointed out what was happening to me though, I had an emergence as to what it meant and knew she was right about me; I do tend to think way faster than my hand can write, both when I hand write and when I type. Which explains why I can be so smart and yet have had such a hard time learning to write.

What about if the *speak and write test* does not yield an obvious difference? Then here's another. I call this one the *say the word five - hold out five fingers test*. How does this test work? Simple. All you need to do is to fully extend one of your arms and hold up five fingers while in the same instant saying the word, "five." That's it. Just extend your arm and five fingers fully while saying the word "five," and have them both end in the same exact moment.

Know that unlike the previous test wherein using your mind to alter the test is fine, in this test, in order for it to be valid, you must do it without thinking.

Know also that when I say "ends the same point," I mean that you should try to have your arm and fingers finish at exactly the same instant as you finish saying the word five. And again, it would probably be best if, when you are learning this test, you first asked someone else to do the test while you watch, and only then have them test you.

What will you see if you do this trust? Most people will either finish saying the word five long before they fully extend their hand (Mind First people), or they will fully extend their hand before they finish saying the word five (Body First people). Either way, you should be able to see which of the two clocks is the default faster clock. Mind (speech), or body (arm and fingers).

And if you are still having trouble seeing a difference? Then try doing this. Try sorting the results of what you see into only two groups; the results in which you can say you are certain you saw a difference and those in which you can say with certainty you are uncertain. Certain and uncertain. Only two possibilities. Which means that if you are not absolutely certain, then say you are uncertain about the results.

Why limit what you see to what you are certain and uncertain of? Because

many people struggle at first to be certain they see what they think they see. Here again, this uncertainty is normal. Almost everyone goes through it at first. In fact, this uncertainty is the direct result of having a mind and body clock out of sync. In effect, these two ways of sensing what you see do not agree, resulting in an inner uncertainty.

Know also though that if you will practice this even for just a few hours, you will almost certainly see a noticeable improvement in your ability to witness these tests. In fact, most people, even after an hour or less, begin to feel that being certain is beginning to affect your whole personality. More on this to come.

What happens once you can discern which group you fall into then? The Body First group or the Mind First group? We'll talk about this in a moment. Before we do, let me briefly mention a few more ways in which you might test for mind body clock differences in people.

One of the easiest ways is to watch them play a sport. Best is a sport which involves a ball. Play golf. Shoot pool. Play tennis. Whatever. Any and all sports which involve balls involve mind body coordination, which means watching people plays these games can reveal their default clock sync conditions. In addition, any sport in which you must throw, catch, kick, or run in a coordinated way will also be good. Hit a ball (paddle ball) or hit a body (martial arts). Catch a ball (lacrosse) or capture the flag (tag). Kick a ball (soccer) or kick up your heels (ballroom dance). All these activities involve mind body sync. Thus they all can make wonderful tests.

Know I'll be offering you many more ways in which to determine peoples' clock sync conditions. For now, let's briefly consider what these differences mean to people out in real life.

Having Mind Body Differences Out in Real Life

To start with, we'll look at what Mind First people are like. Beginning with the down side.

If you are a Mind First person, while you are likely seems by your peers as smart, you will also tend toward physical clumsiness as well as coordination problems. Not always. And not terribly. But often enough. Especially when you need to do something requiring physical coordination while under pressure. Things like lifting a ladder. Or jumping rope. Or carrying an open paint can. Or moving heavy boxes.

If you are a Mind First person then, all these things will to seem degree feel awkward. Not every time. But often. And always with less confidence that your body first counterparts.

Another biggie in the Mind First downside is how you feel when you're playing sports. Everything from baseball and soccer to ballroom dancing and

Tai Chi. Do you have a hard time learning new dance steps or remembering what you the pro taught you in your last tennis lesson? If so, you may be a Mind First person.

Of course, if you are really smart, you may have learned long ago how to compensate for some of your physical awkwardness by mentally preparing yourself. Getting good at estimating where a ball will land or knowing which board on the bowling alley lane you need to line your ball up to would be common examples. As would learning to read your opponent's body when you play tennis or your own body when you cast a fly fishing rod.

My point is, if you are a Mind First person, you will make a less than an ideal athlete. No reflection on your mental intelligence mind you. Only a statement about your body IQ. This means even when you learn to intellectually compensate for your physical flaws, when you play sports, you'll still need to exert effort and will power to keep your body and your mind in sync. As well as suffering from a constant fragility with regard to your levels of confidence.

And the up side?

If you are a Mind First person, you will be seen by the world as smart. And intellectually powerful. Quick to respond with pen and tongue. Sometimes even too quick perhaps. But always at the ready.

You'll also be more likely to advance in your career. Especially if your career requires you to know a lot of technical knowledge. Whatever the case though, if you are a Mind First person, you will command more respect in general from others than those in the Body First group.

What about if you are a Body First person? What is that like? Again, let's start with the down side.

If you are a Body First person, you'll excel at things like yoga and tennis and most ball games but have trouble coordinating intellectual endeavors, such as balancing you check book and personal time management. Thus, you may have been the greatest athlete your high school ever had. But if you are a Body First person, someone likely had to help you with your studies in order for you to stay on the team.

Respect? On the playing field only. In life, you are seen as slow or dumb. And this holds true even for how you see yourself. For instance my friend John is one of the smartest men I know. He's also one of the slowest to respond mentally. He, and everyone around him also misread this slow mental uptake as his being unintelligent. Yet John was the first in my teaching group to grasp the true meaning and potential of fractals. No small feat for anyone, regardless of IQ.

Confidence? In sports, yes. But in a classroom, you'll likely want to be elsewhere. Anywhere but in a situation wherein your perceived lack of intelligence may be exposed.

Fidgety? Yes. Often. Even to the point wherein you get the dreaded DX; hyperactivity.

Trouble focusing on what teachers say? Often times, more than you can cope with. Which like being fidgety, may net you one of those wonderful self esteem building label; an ADD diagnosis.

And the upside?

Body First people excel at trusting their gut. In fact, visceral reactions in general are good things for these folks to watch. Why? Because your faster clock is your body clock. Thus you “think” better with your body than your mind. Which despite what much of the world believes, is a sure sign that you have a good intuition.

What makes me say that Body First people in general have a good intuition? Here the main clue lies in the words we already use for intuition. Things like what I just said. “Trust your gut,” for instance. Which means what exactly? Which means trust your body. And if you are currently more body conscious than mind conscious, this will help build your self esteem tremendously. As well as pointing you in the right direction as to what part of your sensory input you should trust most.

This Chapter's Session Notes

As you may already suspect, there is so much more to know here that we literally will need many chapters to even begin to explore it all. This then is what we will be exploring in the coming chapters; the ways in which we can use a knowledge of peoples’ mind body clock differences to improve how they live life and connect to others.

We’ll also be exploring things like ADD in more depth. Especially how people might use a knowledge of their two clocks to help them to better manage learning situations. And mental life in general.

To do this, we’ll be interacting with the four of my Emergence Master Teachers who themselves have ADD. And to be honest, two of them have already had what they tell me are some of the most profound realizations of their lives. Full body cries about how they’ve suffered all their lives from feeling less intelligent than others.

We’re also going explore how being aware of mind body time differences can alter peoples’ efforts to lose weight. Can being aware of mind body clock differences alter a person’s need to over eat? I’m pretty sure it can. To what extent? Who knows. But already, I have a whole bunch of folks who have asked to be included in this little exploration.

I’m going to explore how self awareness of mind body time might improve the recovery experiences of several addicts. Here, I probably will have only pre-

liminary findings to offer. Short term findings. Still, whatever we can learn will be a valuable addition to what they can do to better manage their recoveries.

In addition, I plan to explore along with our resident artist and fellow teacher, Austin, how self awareness of mind body time can alter the experiences of art students in college. Austin currently teaches art classes and he and I have been co developing what we call a Curricula for Conscious Creativity. With this Mind Body Time discovery, it seems we may now have the core principle with which to accomplish this curricula.

Finally, I also plan to explore how self awareness of Mind Body Time can improve a peoples' ability to learn sports. Specifically Tai Chi and Aikido. Being as the two Body First teachers I mentioned are masters of these two martial arts, I'm sure this will also be an interesting thing to explore as well.

Sound like there is a lot to do? There is. Considering how this could become the core process in a talk therapy though, I'm sure every effort will be well worth it.

Finally, let me offer you my answer to the Mind Body question. Is the Mind Body Connection the key to health, healing, and understanding human nature? I'm certain it is.

And you?

Until the next chapter then.

I hope you are well,

Steven

