

An aerial photograph of a large, curling ocean wave. The water is a vibrant blue, and the wave's crest is white with foam. The sun is shining brightly from the upper right, creating a shimmering effect on the water's surface.

MIND, BODY
and **EMOTIONS**

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Here is an interesting question to ponder:

What if you were raised to be aware that there is a possibility that physical problems manifest in your body simply to warn you that there are un-resolved emotions that you might need to resolve?

Years ago, it was quite a stretch to state that your emotions and thoughts have a direct impact on your physical health. Now we know through award winning scientific work by elite scientists such as NIH's Dr. Cadace Pert's book - *Molecules of Emotion*, Your emotions undoubtedly affect every cell in your body.

Dr. Pert's groundbreaking work can be explained in this way:

Emotions, Dr. Pert explains, are not simply chemicals in the brain. They are electrochemical signals that carry emotional messages throughout the body. These signals, a mixture of peptides, have far reaching effects.

“As our feelings change, this mixture of peptides travels throughout your body, your peripheral nervous system and your brain. And they're literally changing the chemistry of every cell in your body – and sending out messages and/or vibrations which in fact then get relayed to other people.”

As Pert explained in her earlier book, *Molecules of Emotion*, neurotransmitters called peptides carry emotional messages. These messages change the chemistry of our body's cells. This is all mainstream science one might say, but it doesn't explain how one person's emotions can affect another person and the larger world. Pert States, “ So many in the field are still thinking about this as chemistry,”“Of course it is chemistry, but it's also physics and vibrations.” Neurotransmitters are chemicals, but they carry an electrical charge. The electrical signals in our brains and bodies affect the way cells interact and function.

Electrochemical messages are passed between brain cells. Similar signals are passed to every cell in the body. Each is coded with “receptor sites,” a kind of “mail box” for these electrochemical messengers.

“You have receptors on every cell in your body. They actually are little mini electrical pumps.” When the receptor is activated by a matching “molecule of emotion” the receptor passes a charge into the cell changing the cell’s electrical frequency as well as its chemistry.

Pert says that just as our individual cells carry an electrical charge, so does the body as a whole. Like an electromagnet generating a field, Pert says that people have a positive charge above their heads and a negative charge below. “So we’re actually sending out various electrical signals – vibrations.”

“We’re all familiar with one kind of vibration: When we talk, we send a vibration through the air that someone else perceives as sound. As she explains in her book, we’re also sending out other kinds of vibrations. It’s a basic law of physics that when you are close to an energy source it has a greater effect and that diminishes as you move further away. But when you are far away there is no effect.”

“It’s not something you can say in 25 words or less. It is a whole new paradigm shift that basically leads you to realize you’re not alone. You are connected to everybody else. Your emotions are key. And you are leaving a wake, changing the world around you in a huge way.”

Pert’s earlier book, *Molecules of Emotion*, is part science, part autobiography as she tells the story of her process of discovery and learning. Pert explains that the molecules of emotion, a kind of neuropeptide, change the chemistry and electricity of every cell in the body and mind. Feelings literally alter the electrical frequencies generated by our bodies producing a nonverbal communication.

She also studied how we can not only be wired for fear as many espouse, but rather she scientifically proved the importance of what is called The “bliss response” that is closely connected to Pert’s original work on the opiate

receptor. Just as the receptors for other neuropeptides trigger a cellular response, opiate receptors pick up the presence of a neurotransmitter for euphoria. The naturally occurring “bliss chemicals” are called endorphins, and they are released in the brain and body in response to emotional states and to physical activities (including exercise and nursing).

The prefrontal cortex is responsible for complex, evaluative decisions. This part of the brain is loaded with opiate receptors – so structurally, our most sophisticated reasoning is linked to bliss.

Pert says the way endorphins work is evidence of bliss as an evolutionary necessity. “That’s why endorphins are such highly conserved molecules. It’s the same in simple one-celled creatures and in humans. In her book she talks about the evolution of the opiate receptor and how it’s in our frontal cortex, the most advanced part of our brains.”

It’s like we’re designed to make choices around pleasure. The very highest, most intelligent part of our brain is drenched in receptors to make us use pleasure as a criterion for our decisions. So it’s okay to feel good.

While it’s clear that the “bliss receptors” are centered in the prefrontal cortex, the part of the brain that makes evaluative and complex decisions, there isn’t a clear reason.

Pert goes on to say; “Scientists can never ask why. They can only ask ‘what’ and ‘how.’ But we know that the vibration in these receptors mediates, or leads, to the whole organism feeling bliss. And then I talk in the book about how that endorphin vibration is really the bliss of union and divine union.”

So when we create that kind of resonance internally, we are in line with that divine self. True bliss represents an optimal state of functioning. “This state is the natural function, but our society interferes. You don’t have to teach this to native peoples. Most of us have lost touch with that reality. Most of us seem to be locked in a grim struggle constantly rushing off to the next thing. So while it may be natural to be in bliss, we have to learn again to feel our natural state of bliss, to feel the nature of everything around us, every moment. This doesn’t

have to do with a formal religious setting. It doesn't have to do with whether you were bad or good. It's about having the access to feel good."

After studying Pert's work, I have often thought about how our unhealed emotional wounds are held in our cellular composition. Pert has taught us that if they are not cleared they will repeatedly manifest into a physical issue to make us aware of their presence. Your emotions must be released for long-term wellness to ensue.

Initially, our suppressed emotions can take the form of life dramas, fear, anger, hurt, grief, shame, guilt, pain, shock, or resentment. When a person (unconsciously) fears that the release of emotional pain will be too uncomfortable, because they have not yet developed good internal coping skills, they will instinctively suppress the emotions to self-protect. And there I have seen issues stay un-resolved until the inner healing journey begins cracking the door to the emotional pain that desperately longs for freedom.

Here is a thought that is so relevant in today's times. Poor emotional health will weaken your body's immune system. However, good thoughts and feelings, scientists now know, have healing effects on the body. Researchers studying everything from the flu to HIV continue to find eye-opening evidence that a person's thought patterns can influence their immunity and the rate at which they heal from injuries and illness.

Avoiding dealing with emotional wounds is understandable, but know that you have the courage within to remove the band-aids to your pain. It can be much more possible than one realizes. As a health practitioner for elite athletes, for executives and the general public, I have the opportunity to see people who are on life-long medications and suffer with debilitating emotional and health concerns eventually return to a harmonious state. You are more resilient than you possibly have imagined . . . and you are powerful.

Exercise and physical movement like swimming, yoga and tai chi can help to release the emotions in your energy field and body. Movement for twenty minutes a day can be instrumental in helping discharge stress and anxiety versus suppressing it.

Crying is one of the healthiest things you can do for yourself. This of course seems odd to many and is often avoided or judged. I have seen that at times the deeper the release of the pain, the more your body will reap the rewards. Think of crying as a beautiful gift to your soul.

Daily meditation is one of the best ways to allow the energy behind your emotions to release. It is proven to alleviate stress and anxiety and even improve cardiovascular health as it promotes a deeper state of peace and contentment.

Sometimes when working with a client we may discuss what it means to shift out of their anger. I may say scream in your car, hit a pillow, or do an anger release technique to help you move out your anger in a healthy way before it turns into long-term resentment. There is something so relieving about releasing primal patterns that are often repressed.

Journaling your uncensored thoughts, anger, and pain is a good option to help discharge emotions. Guard these personal feelings with secrecy or simply discard them carefully once they are put onto paper.

Seek out a community or therapist or get a massage or energy repatterning. Your emotional wounds will heal more quickly when you partner with healing practitioners who are skilled at listening with their hearts, minds, ears, and sometimes therapeutic hands.

For five intentional minutes every day, give yourself a healthy dose of compassion and self-love. Then visualize love moving through every cell in your body to promote a positive healing environment. You can take 300 seconds a day simply to relish your own gifts and talents. You can even do this in a mirror gazing upon yourself, maybe slightly uncomfortable. This is an opportunity and a powerful exercise in acceptance.

I want to truly share that the beliefs you hold about yourself and the world, your emotions, your memories, and your habits all influence mental and physical health.

For centuries, healers have pondered the connection between mental and physical health. In recent years, science has begun to recognize the powerful

connections through which emotional, spiritual, and behavioral factors can directly affect health outcomes. As research in the field of mind-body medicine is finding, emotions and thought patterns can contribute to imbalances within the body, and therapies like hypnosis, visual imagery, meditation, yoga, and biofeedback are being used to reestablish balance and promote health.

The beliefs you hold about yourself and the world, your emotions, your memories, and your habits all can influence mental and physical health. These connections between what is going on in your mind and heart, and what is happening in your body, form the psycho-emotional roots of health and disease. Let's take a closer look.

The mind-body connection happens on both a physical and chemical level. The brain is the hardware that allows you to experience mental states that are labeled the "mind." This concept of the "mind" encompasses mental states including thoughts, beliefs, attitudes, and emotions. Different mental states can positively or negatively affect biological functioning. This occurs since the nervous, endocrine, and immune systems share a common chemical language, which allows constant communication between the mind and body through messengers like hormones and neurotransmitters.

For example, as we discussed with Dr. Pert's work, neurological pathways connect parts of the brain that process emotions with the spinal cord, muscles, cardiovascular system, and digestive tract. This allows major life events, stressors, or emotions to trigger physical symptoms. You may have experienced this aspect of the mind-body connection when you feel butterflies in your stomach when you feel nervous, or when your heart feels like it is pounding out of your chest when you are under intense stress.

These intersecting systems help to establish the mind-body connection that influences the maintenance of health or the development of disease. For example, emotions like anxiety can trigger increased stress hormones, which may suppress the immune system and set the stage for the development of infections or cancer.

The Impact of Vibration

Thoughts and emotions also carry vibrations that impact your biochemical, cellular, and overall physiological state. At a physical level, the body is made up

of atoms and water, which are in a constant state of motion. The type of movement or frequency at which atoms within a cell vibrate creates a form of wave energy that influences their structure and function.

Science demonstrates that thoughts, words, and feelings can change the crystal structure of water and cells, which can change their function. Positive, kind, and inspiring thoughts and emotions vibrate in harmony with your cells since they share a similar frequency that allows them to function optimally. In fact, one study has found that the type of vibrations or energy patterns that are carried by certain words and intentions are able to cause physical changes in DNA structure, which affect how the genetic code is translated to make different proteins that become the building blocks of your body.

This may explain why techniques like affirmations and hypnotherapy can have such strong effects on the human body. Often, your thoughts are also expressed as words, which carry these energetic vibrations and are then put into action as repeated habits and behaviors that further impact health.

The Body Feels Emotion

Emotions like anger, fear, guilt, anxiety, sadness, resentment, jealousy, depression, and stress can manifest within the body and contribute to imbalance and disease. For example, you are likely already familiar with the way that fear can contribute to digestive upset or how tension can lead to headaches.

When you experience emotional states like sadness, joy, or anger, physiological sensations occur in different areas of your body. Scientists have created maps of emotions, showing areas of the body that are activated when study participants experienced different emotions.

This connection is multidirectional. Emotional experiences affect the way you behave and the physiology within your body. In the other direction, your perception of these emotion-triggered bodily changes also influences your consciously felt emotions.

Stuck or repressed emotions appear to be especially harmful to physical health. One study showed that people who repress their emotions are more likely to have disruptions in the normal balance of the stress hormone cortisol compared

to people who freely express emotion. Over time, chronic psychological stress can change the way the body functions at a hormonal and immunologic level, contributing to the development and progression of cancer and cardiovascular disease. For example, studies show that having imbalances in the way that the nervous system regulates the overall stress response, such as producing too high or too low levels of stress hormones like cortisol and epinephrine /adrenaline, may predict early death in patients with metastatic breast cancer.

What You Believe Can Lead To Disease

Due to the mind-body connection, the way you think, feel and the deep-seated belief patterns you hold can all contribute to the development of disease. If you do not explore and deal with painful emotions, they can create an underlying sense of anxiety, depression, or anger that can physically disrupt the body's natural ability to heal itself.

One common way you may experience this interaction of belief and physical sensations is when dealing with chronic pain. In essence, pain is a combination of the physical sensations you experience, the emotions you feel, and the meaning the pain has for you.

Emotional suffering, physical pain, and other sensations share similarities in their neural pathways. For example, feelings of anger or insecurity can disrupt the regular beating of the heart and the calm flow of the breath. This further activates the sympathetic nervous system in the same way that occurs when you are facing a threat, creating an even greater sense of unease and pain. You can see this type of physiology playing out in people with a lack of social support, who are more likely to have cardiovascular and other health problems than those with consistent and supportive relationships.

Another example of the powerful link between mind and body is that decreasing symptoms of depression may improve survival rates from cancer. Psychological support is important for dealing with emotions and changing beliefs and can help reduce depressive symptoms as well as inflammation. This suggests that emotional and social support positively impact mind-body health.

Healing Mind, Body, and Spirit

Healing and preventing disease requires a combination of physical, spiritual, and emotional approaches. There are a variety of mind-body approaches that can help you process your emotions and develop inner peace.

To avoid the buildup of toxic emotions, it is key to stay steadfast and committed to being present and aware. Paying attention allows you to identify emotions as they arise, process them, and choose how you react. One way to effectively express, feel, and get your feelings out is to talk about them. This can be done out loud by speaking with a trusted friend or therapist—or on paper through a journaling practice.

Meditation is another valuable mind-body practice for becoming more present and centering the mind. A regular meditation practice is a particularly effective way to help the body modulate emotional responses and the accompanying neurochemical patterns that can otherwise flood the body with harmful stress hormones.

Other techniques that focus on the interaction between the body, mind, and behavior include:

Yoga

Mindful Breathing Practices

Tai chi

Guided Imagery

Hypnotherapy

Biofeedback

These can all be valuable tools for increasing awareness of the body's biological processes, such as heart rate and breathing patterns, in order to help you become empowered to manage emotions and mitigate their neurophysiological impacts.

Using these mind-body approaches can help you regain control of your psycho-emotional health and create an environment within your body that supports health rather than disease.

You are incredible, resourceful, resilient, and unique. I celebrate your passion to create a higher quality of life. Now don't just think of this as a hobby, really Dive in - you can do it! I promise you that you will never be the same. In fact, I can pretty much gurantee it.

Enjoy and in health.

Dr. J
