

Lesson 9: The Physiology of Our Emotions

The lessons I have presented on this website thus far have been designed to help us raise our conscious awareness. When we learn how to shift our awareness onto a higher plane of thinking we soon discover that we become the beneficiaries of many desirable life experiences. Nothing occurs to us on the physical plane that cannot be overcome with the right knowledge in hand. Having the right knowledge affords us every opportunity to shift our awareness onto a higher plane of understanding the nature of our reality. So, it is important to understand that the act of raising our conscious awareness is not a top down endeavor but rather begins from the bottom up. The truth is that if you truly want to change your circumstances you have to first change how you feel about your circumstances which you begin to do by changing the way you think about them, what you believe and how you perceive your circumstances no matter where in life you are or what you have experienced along the way.

Unfortunately there is no one piece of knowledge that will lead us to the desired end result. The truth is that there are many pieces and each one serves as another piece in the grand puzzle of life. Gathering up these puzzle pieces becomes a journey of self-enlightenment that will lead us to the ultimate truth. The difficulty is in getting there but our scriptures tell us that “you shall know the truth and the truth shall set you free” just as the scriptures assure us that “my people die from lack of knowledge.” This is not just a promise, this is a guarantee because when you ask, and when you honestly seek to know the truth you will indeed find the truth, lest you should perish. However, the journey requires patience, persistence and determination. It requires a willingness to challenge our own thinking, to examine our own core beliefs and to look more closely at how we perceive our experiences as well as how we perceive the world we live in. The journey requires an open mind and the willingness to learn the difference between the realities we choose to create for ourselves vs the reality that we experience when left up to the whims of chance.

How you view your reality and the world around you depends on the lenses you are looking through. Unfortunately we are not always aware that we have a choice of lenses to look through or that we are perhaps looking through the wrong ones. And so it is with our emotions, our feelings, our thoughts and our perceptions. Combined they serve to create our individual realities as well as the reality of the world we live in, collectively speaking. Now, this is not to say that we are not exposed to undesirable and harmful external influences because we are and the reasons for such influences are far too varied and broad for the purpose of this lesson. However, they are very important matters of discussion because the behaviors of everyone in the world do shape our global reality; hence these matters will be woven into many of the upcoming lessons on the individual level. So as we continue in our endeavor to raise our conscious

awareness, I invite all my readers to come with me on an exploration into the physiology of our emotions.

I would like to make an apology up front. Typically I try to keep the lessons consistent in size but in this case and perhaps even in future lessons this will not be possible. The lesson material is broad enough that it will exceed the usual number of pages but nonetheless it is important that I squeeze in enough information to satisfactorily bring this matter to the attention of any readers who may be experiencing a difficulty in regard to the matter of the emotions or who perhaps never considered that their emotions could potentially be the underlying culprit responsible for their undesirable experiences.

There is a very precise and clear path that puts the matter of the emotions in its proper perspective so much so that when we get to the end of this lesson you may be quite surprised to discover just how easy it will be to begin affecting an unlimited number of positive changes in your own personal reality. You will learn that in spite of all the obstacles that *seem* to appear before you, you actually do possess the power to change the course of your life experiences. You may be even more surprised to learn that these obstacles are not really obstacles in many cases but are actually perceived obstacles, self-imposed and self-inflicted. But before we plow into a discussion on the physiology of emotions I would like to begin by defining the word emotions.

The dictionary defines emotions as an *affective* state of consciousness in which we experience certain feelings. We will examine what those feelings are in just a moment but first I want to enhance on what an affective state of consciousness is. What this means is that our cognitive state of consciousness (our mental processes) is influenced by our emotions. To break this down further is to say that although we have a conscious awareness of the events that take place all around us, we are also emotionally affected by those events whether or not those events are actually real or we have made them real as the result of our beliefs and perceptions. Now, this perception is not limited only to the events that occur in our day to day lives but also includes the matter of our own personal selves. For example if you hold the belief that you are not worthy of something in particular you will also experience that unworthiness emotionally speaking in that you will actually experience a 'feeling' that perfectly correlates to that perception. If you change your perception you also change the emotion you experience just as well as you change the 'feeling' experience and furthermore you do this on a biological level.

Now, the reason why this is such an important discussion is that our emotions can become like a runaway freight train if left unchecked or left in a state of unbalance. The matters of keeping the emotions in check were addressed in antiquity. Our most cherished ancient texts speak clearly to the importance of keeping the emotions in check. So before I get into the scientific aspects of the emotions I would like to first

bring to your attention the necessity of balance and order beginning with the emotions and then build up the lesson from here. From the Emerald Tablets:

“Look in thy life for this order. Balance and order thy life. Quell all the Chaos of the emotions and though shalt have order in LIFE” (Tablet 9).

Okay, so how do we quell all the chaos of the emotions? Well, first of all this requires a bit of honest self-examination. Yes, I said self-examination! I realize self-examination equates to looking inward and looking inward makes us squirm but that is where the problems originate. It begins inwards and extends outwards. We have a tendency to point fingers of blame at those we perceive are the transgressors simply because the surface evidence makes it appear that way but that is not always the case. So instead of looking inward we extend the affects of our emotions outward. We unknowingly create even more undesirable effects because we actually set up a domino-like affect of cause and effect. To stop the emotional train from running off the track we need to understand how our emotions are affecting our experiences.

First of all we are endowed with what is called an emotional guidance system. This is actually very good news because our emotional guidance system gives us leverage, that is, it acts as a kind of weather vane or a measuring gauge when we learn how to use this built in measuring device to our benefit. What this means is that we are not at the mercy of negative cause and effect where our emotions are concerned but that we actually do hold the reigns of control in our own hands. In addition when we are consciously aware of what is going on with our emotions we have the ability to become more aligned with achieving the things we desire. What this means is that it will become very difficult to achieve something we desire if our emotions are not in alignment with our desires. When our emotions are not aligned neither are our thoughts, beliefs or perceptions as they are all very intricately entwined. This misalignment actually produces a canceling affect of what we desire. If you know that a positive one minus a negative one equals zero then you can understand the canceling effect.

In many of the prior lessons we talked about vibratory frequencies so it might surprise you to learn that our emotions are actually indicators of what vibratory frequency we are on at any given moment. This begins to set the stage for understanding why like attracts like and why thoughts really do become things, desired or undesired while on those various frequencies. These frequencies do not just exist on the spatial planes in the universe but rather they exist right within us and they extend outward where they cohere with other wave functions on similar frequencies. A simple example is when you get up in the morning and you forget to turn on the coffee pot and then you burn the toast and then and then. Before you know it your day is already going downhill before you ever walk into the office or wherever is your place of employment. You walk into that place of employment in a bad mood because you've have a bad morning and it

never occurs to you that you could also be negatively affecting your co-workers, that you could be pulling them down onto your vibratory frequency.

Here's the thing, your day will not get better unless you make a conscious decision to make it better by doing something that will change your feelings which will then change your emotions. How you do that is up to you but the sooner you change your emotions the better off you will be otherwise you will be strongly inclined to blame someone or something besides the coffee pot and the toaster for the string of undesirable events that will occur throughout your day. That's law – like will attract like and thoughts will become things!

So when you make the conscious effort to change your feelings about your day which in turn affects your emotions it also changes your vibratory frequency. When you change your vibratory frequency you are perched above the lower feelings you came into work with that may have rubbed off on others and now they too will have to change their vibratory frequency. So, can you see how easily a group of individuals can be affected by one bad apple in the bunch? That is exactly how we are all entangled, no one is separate, and no person is an isolated individual. Consciousness does not recognize individuality but we on the other hand can choose how we affect collective consciousness by our own actions as I have described above. This is a very simplistic example but there is much more beneath the surface that we will begin to explore.

Picture if you will a thermostat. It has a range that measures heat or temperature by degrees according to the high – low settings on the scale. Your emotions have the same exact scale built right in. Your emotional guidance system is activated by your feelings. Your feelings are the ranges along the scale of your emotions from high to low. The highest feeling on the scale is joy and the lowest feeling on the scale is fear, grief, depression, despair, and powerlessness. When my book is in print you will read how I reached a point of disparity which meant that I was at the lowest end of the emotional scale and the feelings I described were the ones I just stated above. Needless to say the climb up hill was not easy because there were many challenges to overcome to get from despair to joy.

Now, many experts who deal with the matter of emotions strive to help people learn how to overcome their lower vibratory state of mind by helping them learn how to move up the emotional scale sometimes just one notch at a time. In other words if you are feeling despair, the next notch up (insecurity, guilt, unworthiness) is actually an improvement even though it is still a very low frequency. The idea is that with the elevation of just one notch at a time you can begin to assess your situation a little differently as you are ascending up the scale simply because each notch upwards causes to you experience a different emotion that is reflected by your feelings. So for example, if you are at level 22 (as described above) ascending to level 16 which is discouragement is a lot better than

feeling fear, grief, depression, despair or powerlessness. Feeling discouraged leaves room for the possible persuasion of hope even though you may still have to ascend above blame, worry, doubt, etc., etc. until you are able to reach level 6 which is hopefulness. Of course the goal would be to ascend up the scale to where you feel joy which is the ultimate level of self-actualization. When you reach this highest level on the emotional scale expressed by a feeling of joy you have fully realized your self-worth (Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs)! That accomplishment is well worth any investment of self-examination.

Since I don't know where on the scale every reader is at, I will have to take the liberty of assuming that hopefully no one is at level 22, is depressed or is feeling despair. If you are please contact me, lindaj@dragonofdrama.com or get help from a professional right away. These strong feelings can be alleviated under the right care; therefore, you are not bound to a perpetual state of experiencing these kinds of undesirable feelings and emotions. This very undesirable emotional state of mind is not your lot in this life.

Now, it is not enough to know how to move up the scale without knowing the effect your emotions may be having on your life experiences. When our emotions are loosed to such an extent that they actually rule our day to day lives it becomes an exercise in futility to expect to maintain balance or harmony not just with ourselves but with those who are in our circle of life. Again, going back to antiquity I would like to present some words of inspiration from Lao Tzu in the Hua Hu Ching;

Eliminate disturbed emotion in order to return to serenity." And, "One is to balance one's energy, for when one's energy is balanced, one's health improves, one's emotions are harmonious, and one's personality becomes smooth and even."

Our environment is not always the cause of our difficulties but rather our emotions are most often the cause of our own self-inflicted or self-imposed difficulties and limitations which all by itself can tip the energy balance too far down the scale. The reason is that we so often act on our feelings without being aware that we are – kind of like a knee-jerk reaction. The reason why we experience a comatose-like knee-jerk reaction is that our subconscious minds have been programmed by our own habitual thought patterns, beliefs and perceptions translated into emotions and expressed by feelings so we react a certain way in response to certain circumstances that we unknowingly have programmed into our subconscious memory database.

Studies in biomolecular medicine points to the fact that we do indeed map out a physiological path in our brain that actually creates repetitive like-kind experiences. These mapped out experiences are not subject to any form of involuntary determinism (outside of free will) but rather they will occur by the choices we make that are subjective to habit. In other words the more habitual are our intended thoughts and feelings which of course are based on our beliefs and perceptions; the more likely we will

experience certain situations repetitively until we change the incoming data. The physiological path that we unconsciously map out will always be a mirrored reflection of exactly how we are processing the matters of our lives - habitually.

When we talk about the physiology of our emotions we are talking about the neuronal pathways inside of our brain. Our brain consists of a very highly intellectualized system that processes the physiological effects of our emotions, our thoughts and feelings as well as what beliefs we hold fast too right along with our perceptions. As we feel and think we send messages to our brain which then sends an electrical signal to our neuronal pathway via a molecule on the cells called the opiate receptor. In the early 70's a little known scientist, Candace Pert, working in a laboratory discovered that the opiate receptor was not a hypothesis but that they actually did exist. Her laboratory findings established both the existence of these receptors as well as what purpose they serve in the human body and in the brain. Because Candace was so instrumental in bringing this information to the forefront of science I will use her findings as the basis for explaining the physiology of our emotions.

Candace states that if we are to understand what role our emotions may play in our health, then understanding the molecular-cellular domain is a crucial first step. In her book, *Molecules of Emotions*, Candace describes her own personal transformation that came about as the result of her scientific findings. So, if there is anyone who can speak to the matter of the emotions in our time it is the very person who not only discovered the opiate receptor but who experienced a significant change in the circumstances of her own personal life. So, as to not spoil it for anyone who may be inclined to read this book I will not discuss her own personal journey of self-discovery but I will concentrate on the science that provoked her journey.

Candace discovered that these tiny little receptors attach themselves to certain cells and those receptors affect the kind of experiences we will have because they maintain memory and they communicate with other receptors on other cells. The notion of like attracting like even exists at the smallest, microscopic, level of substance where invisible forces actually attract one molecule to another. These molecules cohere into a definable substance. Scientists are able to isolate these receptors and determine their molecular weight and even crack open their chemical structure.

So as to not lose anyone in the scientific technicalities I will keep this explanation as simplified as possible without losing its essence. These receptors function as sensing molecules much like a scanner but on a molecular level. Receptors bind to the cells by a chemical 'key' called a ligand. When the receptor binds to a cell it clicks into place and information then enters into the cell. Candace states that these receptors are the first components of the molecules of emotions and ligands are the second component. Thus it is the ligand through the binding process that actually transfers messages to the

receptor. This next description is a very important one because this is how the emotional stage is set.

The receptor receives the message from the ligand and transmits it deep into the cell interior so much so that the state of the cell can be dramatically changed. At this point a lot of biological processes kick into action which I will not get into except to say that such minute activities on and within the cells can translate into significant changes in behavior, physical activity and guess what – moods! Every receptor has specificity as to which ligand it accepts or receives and from what group. For example an endorphin receptor will only accept an endorphin-like peptide. The ligands are even smaller in size than the receptor molecules but in spite of their size they serve very specific purposes. Ligands are comprised of three chemical types, one of which is called neurotransmitters that are identified by specific names one of which you may recognize as serotonin. Serotonin, like the other neurotransmitters, is a molecule that is made in the brain which carries information between one neuron and another via what is called a synapse. Picture if you will many roots, dendrites, that are disconnected one from the other but information is still received one to the other by an electrical charge that jumps between the dendrites via a synapse.

Now that I have laid out a simple foundation I will jump ahead to how our emotions play a very big role in this biological process. Darwin first emphasized the importance of the emotions as being the primary necessity to the survival of the fittest. The existence of a species and its ability to adapt to its environment relies on every aspect of its emotional states of being. Imagine not having the ability to express yourself outside of your emotions. You would have no way to gauge your feelings, your desires or your needs even so much as to know if you are hungry, thirsty or in danger.

So what I would like to do know is to outline some very important attributes of the emotions biologically speaking. The effects of our emotions are not just limited to the brain but actually extend out into the whole of our bodies. What I mean is that there is something called the psychosomatic network that involves the receptors between nerves and bundles of cell bodies called ganglia. The ganglia are distributed in and around the spinal cord (aka the base or root chakra) and extend outward along pathways to the internal organs and even the surface of our skin. Memory is encoded or stored at the receptor level which means that our memories are processed through our emotions unconsciously. This biological process is in keeping with traditional Hindu descriptions of the functions of each of the chakras even to their exact locations.

Of course there is a lot of psychology involved in the matter of the emotions but then again this is a mystery that is far more easily assimilated when we understand the role our emotions play from a physiological basis otherwise what good does it do to try to untangle the effects of our emotions purely from a psychological basis if we don't

understand the psychosomatics first. Something called neuropeptides shape our memories as we are forming them thus making it possible to experience that same frame of mind each time we retrieve our emotional memories. So it stands to reason then that when we are in a good mood, more serotonin and endorphins are produced, hence that equates to the recollection of good memories and of course the opposite is true. When we are feeling 'down' on our emotional 'feeling' scale we are far more prone to recalling unpleasant memories – less serotonin and endorphins are produced.

If the reader gets nothing else from this lesson it is imperative that the reader get this next bit of information. What we experience as an emotion expressed by a feeling activates a neuronal circuitry simultaneously throughout the brain and the body which generates a behavior involving the whole of ourselves that bears its fruit in the manifestation of all the physiological behavior changes necessary to express that emotion. I cannot emphasize this enough. Your emotions are not a fly-by-night condition! They are not here today and gone tomorrow but that they are, in fact, ingrained in your biological and physiological make up. The good news is that the program can be rewritten via all new data. If that was not the case we would all be emotional basket cases (not that some of us are not!) but this is not a permanent condition.

The neurotransmitters can send a whole new set of instructions to the cells in the brain and into the body but can only do so by the action of your intended thoughts in conjunction with the beliefs you hold fast too and the perceptions you cling too. In this respect you are truly the author, the artist, the creator of your own psychosomatic canvas by choice - yours.

I hope that this seemingly lengthy lesson, yet brief in its biological scope serve to raise your conscious awareness of the role your emotions play on the physiological level. I hope that it will entice you to dig a little further to understand the depths of the role our emotions play on a much broader scale which involves matters of global coherence not to mention how the emotions interact on the physical and non-physical planes of reality. Given that this was a fairly extensive and comprehensive topic of discussion I truly hope my readers will see fit to share their own thoughts as it pertains to the contents of this lesson.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to serve in the capacity of how we can all understand the nature of our personal realities.

Linda

Resources:

Pert, Candace. 1997. *Molecules of Emotion*. New York: Scribner.

Hicks, Ester and Jerry (The teachings of Abraham). 2004. *Ask and It Is Given*. Hay House, Inc.

The Complete Works of Lao Tzu. Tao Teh Ching & Hua Hu Ching. Translation and Elucidation by Hua-Ching Ni. 1997 & 1995. Seventh Star Communications, www.seventhstarcom.com.

The Emerald Tablets

The Emotional Guidance System:

1. Joy/Knowledge/Empowerment/Freedom/Love/Appreciation
2. Passion
3. Enthusiasm/Eagerness/Happiness
4. Positive Expectation/Belief
5. Optimism
6. Hopefulness
7. Contentment
8. Boredom
9. Pessimism
10. Frustration/Irritation/Impatience
11. "Overwhelmed"
12. Disappointment
13. Doubt
14. Worry
15. Blame
16. Discouragement
17. Anger
18. Revenge
19. Hatred/Rage
20. Jealousy
21. Insecurity/Guilt/Unworthiness
22. Fear/Grief/Depression/Despair/Powerlessness