

History of the mind
body connection
philosophy essay



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For some years now it has been a proven fact that a mind and a body are closely related to each other. It seems that some people are born with an ability to control their bodies through the mind, but for some that skill takes a great effort and a lot of discipline.

While scientist try to find tangible connections, it has grown to a common believe that a person's mind can generate a strong power over his or her body in order to relieve pain, control emotions and promote healing.

Throughout the years yet another amazing discovery was made. It appears that a person's body physical state can greatly affect person's abilities to perform mentally, emotionally and academically. As many researchers have found out, certain physical activities and breathing practices, combined with some mental exercises have shown a significant increase in person's learning abilities.

According to Ruth Weiss (2001), for many years neuroscientists, educators, nutritionists, psychiatrists, geneticists have examined the mind-body link to figure out how we learn everything in this world. To better understand this concept we first need to know what a person's mind is and how it works. For Helmut Schwab (Princeton, 2005), the word " mind" is commonly used to describe a set of higher brain functions such as reasoning, memory, intuition, will, feelings, and emotions. Still, the main question regarding the nature of a mind is its relation to a physical brain and a nervous system. It has been generally agreed that a mind is a main factor which enables human beings to have subjective awareness and intentionality toward their environment. It

also empowers them to perceive and to respond to stimulus with some kind of an organization and a perception, including thinking and feeling.

Dr. John Ratey (2001), professor of psychiatry at Harvard Medical School and an author of “ A User’s Guide to the Brain” notes that “... [brain] neurons that fire together-wire together. That is the basis of how we learn”.

Two natural brain chemicals, nerve growth factor (NGF) and brain-derived neurologic factor (BDNF) facilitate the growth of neuronal connections between brain cells. Ratey calls those substances “ Miracle Grow for the brain.” They are released when the brain’s cells are active, such as when we think or puzzle over something.

Our brains are the ultimate adaptation organs. In new situations our brain is hungry to learn to manage incoming information. An area where the entire new learning takes place is called “ the association matrix”. When we adapt-we make more growth factor, which continues to be produced as we learn new things.

“ If you affect one area [of the brain], many others are also affected,” says Ratey,

“ There is a continuous connection within us, where our thoughts are influenced by our bodies and vice versa”. Such a phenomena is a well known factor in human studies.

According to Dr. Brogaard, (2011), an imbalance in brain chemistry affects a physical state of people, and a physical imbalance affects their mental state.

Very often a people’s mind due to a stress or other factors can put
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limitations on their potentials in many areas of life. However, a lot of researchers have found it is possible to control a person's mind through a set of physical activities, including exercise and relaxation.

A physical state of a person's body can dramatically influence his or her mental and learning abilities. Through a hard work we can reach a mind-body balance that gives us a possibility to achieve almost any task. Athletes, martial artists, police officers, law enforcement professionals, soldiers in special units are all have been trained to use these techniques. Keith Vargo (2011, November) states: " Unity of mind and body is . . . the unity of action and thought for the purpose of keeping the practitioner alive. It makes him a better person, too. It balances him and control the stress. It fulfills the greatest hope, the highest ideal . . . it means knowing one's hidden self."

According to Elizabeth Scott (2011), general body stress is one of important factors that could limit our actions in order of attaining our goals. In fact, a high index of stress hormone cortizol can affect our mind and, subsequently, our body control. It weakens our physical energy, strength, endurance, and our body organs, and it makes our learning skills less efficient.

Cortizol creates a destruction of muscle tissue gluconeogenesis, which consists of the demolition of protein and glucose that represents the last resource of the brain to refurnish immediate energy in physically and mentally challenging situations.

There is a solution for that problem, thought. It has been proven, that an application of physical activity and sport in general can transform every moment of life into positive energy usable by stimulating the body through a <https://assignbuster.com/history-of-the-mind-body-connection-philosophy-essay/>

more positive mental approach to perceive new challenges, physical and mental, and produce good feelings. Generally speaking, better physical movements and exercise can dramatically enhance one's optimal learning state.

Eric Jensen (2005) explains that there is strong evidence that supports the connection between movement and learning. Evidence from imaging sources, anatomical studies, and clinical data shows that moderate exercise enhances cognitive processing. It also increases the number of brain cells. Our minds and bodies work together to help us to pay attention, to solve problems, and to remember solutions.

Our physical states support our mental efforts. Moving our bodies, however, isn't enough. Professional trainer and physical guru Jillian Michaels (2012), affirms that “ learning and practicing visualization techniques can help you achieve your goals by guiding you to make more of a mind-body connection to those goals. Having and keeping a vision of the future affects your behavior and actions now”.

Ruth Weiss (2001), state that a variety of mental exercises such as doing crossword puzzles, learning a new skill or a new language, playing chess or backgammon can strengthen and renew neural connections thereby keeping a brain flexible and resilient. Even the simple task of brushing one's teeth with one's no dominant hand can increase connections between our axons (nerve fiber) and dendrites (branched projections of a neuron). The best news is that studies show our brains remain resilient and capable of making new connections throughout our lives. If we continue to challenge our brains,

they will remain fit just like our muscles, hearts, and lungs. Challenging ourselves mentally keeps our synaptic pathways (junction between two neurons) alive. Meditation and prayer, practiced throughout the world for tens of thousands of years, can also induce a state of relaxation, which proves mentally and physically beneficial.

Dr. Herbert Benson (2010) of Harvard medical school believes that a regular practice of the relaxation leads to a sense that emotions—and the physiological reactions that go with them—can be brought under control.

If someone deeply understands his potential by mastering all of his senses, it becomes possible to make the most out of the energy to actively support all the capabilities of his mind and body to react to any event. It empowers that person to easily go into any situation where he has to surpass and overcome every physical and mental challenge.

By treating their physical bodies, intellect, and spirit well, people can take advantage of the brain's great plasticity and their own power to reconfigure it. A perfect balance between someone's mind and body would be a crucial factor for a performance in all daily activities as well as in processing any kind of new information and learning new skills.