



**Scientists Show How Gratitude
Literally Alters The Human Heart
And Molecular Structure Of The Brain**
Part 2

Continuation...

The brain part is very interesting. The researchers at Berkeley used an fMRI scanner to measure brain activity while people from each group did a “pay it forward” task. During the task, the participants were given money by a “nice person.” This person’s only request was that they pass on the money to someone if they felt grateful.

They did this because they wanted to distinguish between actions motivated by gratitude and actions driven by other motivations like obligation, guilt, or what other people think. This is important because you can’t fake gratitude, you actually have to feel it. If you don’t feel grateful or practice trying to feel grateful by taking the necessary steps like keeping a gratitude journal, you may not experience as much joy and happiness.

In a world where emotions aren’t really taught in school and the importance is put on striving for high grades, it’s not abnormal to have difficulty feeling grateful.

Participants were asked to rate how grateful they felt toward the person giving them the money and how much they wanted to pay it forward to a charitable cause as well as how guilty they thought they would feel if they didn’t help. They were also given questionnaires to measure how grateful they felt in general. It was found that when people who are generally more grateful gave more money to a cause, they showed greater neural sensitivity in the medial prefrontal cortex, a brain area associated with learning and decision making. This suggests that people who are more grateful are also more attentive to how they express gratitude.

Most interestingly, when those who wrote the gratitude letters were compared with those who didn’t, the gratitude letter writers showed greater activation in the medial prefrontal cortex when they experienced gratitude in the fMRI scanner. This is striking as this effect was found three months after the letter writing began. This indicates that simply expressing gratitude may have lasting effects on the brain and this could contribute to improved mental health over time.

What About The Heart?

Researchers are now discovering that the heart also responds and that it might actually be the heart that’s responsible for sending these signals to the brain. A group of leaders at the Institute of HeartMath has proven that when a person is feeling really positive emotions like gratitude, love, or appreciation, the heart beats out a different message, which determines what kind of signals are sent to the brain. Not only that, but because the heart beats out the largest electromagnetic field produced in the body, the Institute has been able to gather a significant amount of data. By learning to shift our emotions, we are changing the information coded into the magnetic fields that are radiated by the heart, and that can impact those around us. We are fundamentally and deeply connected with each other and the planet itself.

“One important way the heart can speak to and influence the brain is when the heart is coherent and the body, including the brain, begins to experience greater mental clarity and ability, including better decision making.” As we practice heart coherence and radiate love and compassion, our heart generates a coherent electromagnetic wave that facilitates social coherence and builds an energetic field that makes it easier for others to connect with their heart. So, that enough people building individual and social coherence could contribute to an unfolding global coherence. – McCraty

To be continued

Farming Secrets says: Gratitude and Positive Feelings Can Change The World

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