

# THE NEUROSCIENCE of **CONSCIOUSNESS** (and why this matters to leaders)

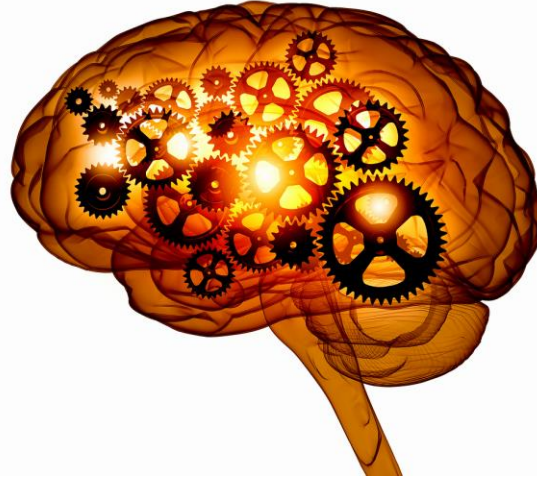


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## THE SEVEN LEVELS OF PERSONAL, GROUP AND ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS





# KEY TOPICS for CONSCIOUS LEADERSHIP

Neuroplasticity

The Impact of Stress

Integration

A microscopic image of neurons, likely from a brain, showing a dense network of red-stained cell bodies and axons, with green-stained cells interspersed throughout. The background is black, making the fluorescent colors stand out.

# Neuroplasticity

We have an unfathomable amount  
(100 trillion +) of potential neural  
connections in our brains. Every neuron can  
connect to multiple other neurons.

Our potential may well be  
unlimited.



# Neuroplasticity and Change

- Neurons that fire together, wire together
- The more often we do something, the stronger the neural pathway
- We have well-developed neural pathways designed to keep us safe
- We can intentionally create and strengthen new neural pathways (coaching is one way to do this)

**“Neuroplasticity is a 6-syllable word for hope.” ~Dr.  
Linda Page**





**Are you  
wired for  
change?**

# The Goldilocks of the Brain – Your Prefrontal Cortex

When we are in balance, we have access to high level functioning:

goal direction ~ delaying gratification ~ making and retrieving memories  
decision-making ~ understanding what others are thinking ~ abstract concepts

Just right =

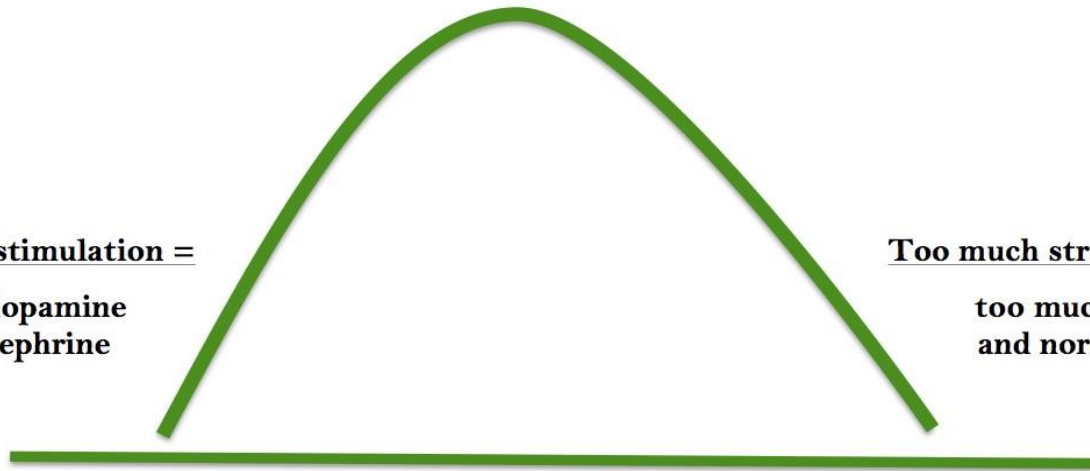
dopamine and norepinephrine in balance

Too little stress/stimulation =

not enough dopamine  
and norepinephrine

Too much stress/stimulation =

too much dopamine  
and norepinephrine



When we are under- or over-stressed, we have impaired functioning:

foggy thinking ~ poor impulse control ~ poor decision-making  
poor memory ~ lack of empathy ~ black and white thinking

# LEADING THROUGH STRESS

## NOT EFFECTIVE

#1. Tell them not to worry, not to think about it, not to feel stressed or upset.

#2. Ask them how they are, **REALLY**. And then listen.

#3. Give them a sense of being in control in any way you can. Share information, give them choices, etc.

#4. Help them connect to their personal values. And, if they are upset, find out what value needs honoring.

#5. Help them find an empowering way to look at the issue. (Note: they have to find for themselves, otherwise it's #1.)

#6. Support activities around mindfulness. Create meditation space, bring in lunchtime yoga, encourage breathing.



# **INTEGRATION**



**THREE KEY AREAS SCIENTIFICALLY CORROLATED  
to an INCREASE in CONSCIOUSNESS,  
EFFECTIVENESS and IMPROVED LEADERSHIP**

**Prefrontal Cortex ~ Limbic System**

**Right Hemisphere ~ Left Hemisphere**

**Task Positive Network ~ Default Mode Network**

# THE HEMISPHERES ABOVE and BELOW THE LINE

LEFT

RIGHT

STRUCTURE

FOCUS

DIRECTION

POSITIVITY

FREEDOM

ONENESS

MEANING

PRESENT MOMENT

RIGIDITY

ANGER

BLAME

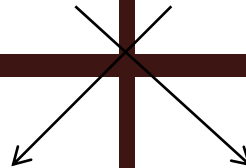
DENIAL

CHAOS

OVERWHELM

DEPRESSION

FEAR





# Task Positive Network

# Default Mode Network

## Default Mode Network

Dreaming  
Envisioning the future  
Long-term memory  
Gauging other's perspectives  
Theory of mind  
(understanding others)  
Introspection  
Self-referential thought

## Task Positive Network

Focus on task  
Actively paying attention  
(external)  
Goal-orientation  
Reacting to and working with  
sensory information  
Short-term (working)  
memory  
Planning  
Abstract reasoning

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