

The Mind and the Brain: Neuroplasticity and the Power of Mental Force

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A groundbreaking work of science that confirms, for the first time, the independent existence of the mind and demonstrates the possibilities for human control over the workings of the brain.

Conventional science has long held the position that 'the mind' is merely an illusion, a side effect of electrochemical activity in the physical brain. Now in paperback, Dr Jeffrey Schwartz and Sharon Begley's groundbreaking work, *The Mind and the Brain*, argues exactly the opposite: that the mind has a life of its own. Dr Schwartz, a leading researcher in brain dysfunctions, and Wall Street Journal science columnist Sharon Begley demonstrate that the human mind is an independent entity that can shape and control the functioning of the physical brain. Their work has its basis in our emerging understanding of adult neuroplasticity—the brain's ability to be rewired not just in childhood, but throughout life, a trait only recently established by neuroscientists.

Through decades of work treating patients with obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), Schwartz made an extraordinary finding: while following the therapy he developed, his patients were effecting significant and lasting changes in their own neural pathways. It was a scientific first: by actively focusing their attention away from negative behaviors and toward more positive ones, Schwartz's patients were using their minds to reshape their brains and discovering a thrilling new dimension to the concept of neuroplasticity.

The Mind and the Brain follows Schwartz as he investigates this newly discovered power

Jeffrey M. Schwartz M.D. is an internationally-recognized authority on Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder and is the author of the bestseller *Brain Lock*. He is a Research Professor of Psychiatry at the UCLA School of Medicine.

Award-winning writer Sharon Begley is the science columnist for the Wall Street Journal; before that she was senior science writer for Newsweek. She lives in Pelham New York. Schwartz (A Return to Innocence), a UCLA psychiatrist and expert on treating patients with obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), teams up with Begley, a Wall Street Journal science columnist, to explore the mind/brain dichotomy and to discuss the science behind new treatments being developed for a host of brain dysfunctions. Building on the work presented in Schwartz's first book, *Brain Lock*, the authors begin by demonstrating that OCD patients are capable of rechanneling compulsive urges into more socially acceptable activities and that, by doing so, they actually alter their brains' neuronal circuitry. By presenting a wide array of animal and human experiments, Schwartz and Begley show that similar neuroplasticity is possible in stroke victims, often leading to a return of function previously thought impossible. The medical results and treatments they summarize are exciting and deserve widespread attention. In a chapter entitled "Free Will and Free Won't," the authors turn to the philosophical, examining the implications neuroplasticity might have on the differences between mind and brain; they also discourse on the existence of free will. Unfortunately, their integration of quantum mechanics and Buddhism into a search for a mechanism to explain the patterns scientists have been discovering is too superficial to

fully engage readers. Nonetheless, a great deal in this book is sure to motivate discussion and more research.

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Other Books

The Shallows: What the Internet Is Doing to Our Brains, New York Times bestseller · Finalist for the Pulitzer Prize "This is a book to shake up the world." –Ann Patchett
Nicholas Carr's bestseller The Shallows has become a foundational book in one of the most important debates of our time: As we enjoy the internet's bounties, are we sacrificing our ability to read and think deeply? This 10th-anniversary edition includes a new afterword that brings the story up to date, with a deep examination of the cognitive and behavioral effects of smartphones and social media.

See Norman Doidge, The Brain That Changes Itself : Stories of Personal Triumph from the Frontiers of Brain Science (New York: Penguin, 2007), 223. 8. Quoted in Jeffrey M. Schwartz and Sharon Begley, The Mind and the Brain: ..."