



## ***'The Mindful Brain Is A Wonderful Thing'***

### **And Don't Forget It**

**Did you know that there are over 6,800 languages, dialects, and sub-dialects** spoken across the globe and that you are born with the mental scaffolding to make every sound in every one of these?

The brain is a wonderful thing and is indeed, much smarter than you think — Which in turn means, so are you!

And did you also know that there are more neurons and synaptic connections in your wonderful brain than stars in the Milky Way? Wow!

*Mindfulness* is now everywhere, from the government to primary schools, from big business to not-so-big business — which is not only pretty awesome but also extremely encouraging.

But how well understood is it?



### **Making the Complex not so Complex**

**My intention in anything I do, write, or talk about is first to seek to understand before I try to be understood.**

To make the complex less complex, the tough stuff not so tough and put the unreachable within reach of us all; particularly as I believe that *mindfulness* is within each and everyone of us to be uncovered.

Much that has been written about *mindfulness*, however, can seem rather academic or give the impression that it is some obscure, proto-religious thing that is rather difficult to do and requires a great degree of soul-searching. Of course, that is all quite ridiculous and only serves to get between the subject and the object — between each of us and our *Mindfulness*.

The tendency towards the academic can become even more pronounced when you start to look at all the Science and the stuff around *Mindfulness* and the Brain. So, I have first sought to understand all the Science and then write about it in a way that brings it into reach and readily understood.

## What Really Matters

I go into more detail about **Mindfulness and the Brain** in Chapter 3 of my Book '[Uncovering Mindfulness: In Search of a Life More Meaningful](#)', but here is what I think really matters and why the research is unequivocal on the efficacy of *Mindfulness*. I'd even go as far to say if I was a betting person that it would be worth a wager that all this will be conventional wisdom in 5 years time.

## The Case for Mindfulness

**Two things have happened** over the past few years that have turned everything on its head and boiler-plated the case for *Mindfulness*.

Firstly, a discovery that challenged what we once thought we believed and knew to be true — via conventional wisdom and the science to boot — and then secondly, a concomitant advance in technology that allowed us to see the real truth and develop a whole new understanding of what the Brain is and how it works.

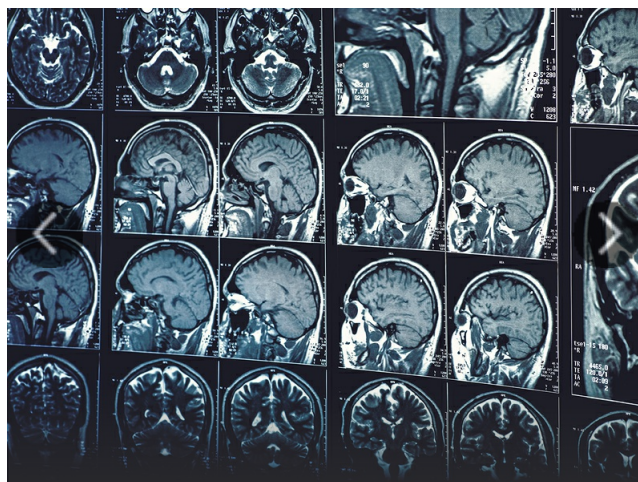
## The Brain is Neuroplastic

**This discovery has been described as the most important breakthrough** in the understanding of the Brain and its relationship with the Mind since the beginning of modern science.

Quite simply we now know that the brain is neuroplastic. It is not immutable, unchangeable, something that becomes fixed at a certain point in childhood — And all that rather kicks the old Jesuit saying into touch, which goes — *“Give me the child till their 7 and I'll give you the adult”*.

The brain is not un-regenerative — it can be rewired.

The relationship between the 500 billion neurons in your Brain can be re-energized and new neural pathways formed. It is possible to change the way we think and act and our genes, hormones, and upbringing do not seal our fate!



## We can now See Inside the Brain

**And because of the advances in technology** with EEGs, Chemical Neuroimaging, Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging and Positron Emission Tomography, we are now able to see deep inside the Brain and witness these changes as they happen, as well as measure their impact.

Functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging, for instance, can detect changes in the brain resulting from how mindful meditation impacts on Attention, &, as our minds are prone to wander around 47% of the time and we rarely, if ever, give anything our full Attention, this is rather good news!

## The Brain is a Wonderful Thing

**I think you'll now see why** I was at pains to point that out at the beginning of this eBook.

Without question, the brain is a wonderful thing.

It is, in fact, the most complex organization of matter we know of in the universe.

The oldest part, known as the Inner Brain Stem or Reptilian Brain, dates back over 400 million years, while the newer bit, the New Bark or Neocortex, is around 200 million years old. The brutal truth, however, is that the brain is being overstimulated by the Modern World — The demands of technology — The way we work — The way we live — How we conduct ourselves on a daily basis!

## As Goethe Said to Schiller...

**The German poet Goethe** purportedly said to the Philosopher Schiller, *"The more I know the less I understand"*.

Never a truer word was spoken perhaps, albeit said a couple of centuries ago. The simple fact is that in seeking to understand the world around us, we use information from multiple sources.

In reality, though, we are limited to processing only around nine pieces of the several million stimuli we are encountering at any one time. And couple this with the fact that on average we have between 12,000 & 50,000 thoughts every day, although admittedly about 95% of these are about the same thing, we are undoubtedly from the inside-out and the outside-in, enveloped in constant chatter, motion, and commotion.

## Do You Feel Unusually Tired Like Jamie?

**I was reading in one of the Sunday newspaper supplements** a wee while ago, that on reaching 40 the former 'Naked Chef' and now Global Brand, Jamie Oliver, had admitted to feeling unusually tired and decided to do something about it.

Jamie of course, is not alone and it's not necessarily an age thing. [One in five of us report feeling unusually tired](#), yet wired at the same time and wake up from our night's sleep wondering whether we've actually been to sleep at all. All because of the constant narrative buzz that's been running in their heads. Perhaps you recognize this? In a recent survey of 38,000 British employees, 15% said that they never felt refreshed by their sleep.

Whilst the Royal College of Psychologists estimates that actually, 20% of us will be feeling 'Unusually tired' at any one time.



## Mindfulness Calms the Mind

**What mindfulness does** is re-balance things.

It calms and refreshes the mind, bringing clarity and focus by improving sleeping patterns and helping us to achieve a slower and more relaxed Alpha State and ultimately a Theta or Dream State, that in turn helps build resilience, emotional intelligence, and mental stamina. And by stimulating areas of the brain such as the Prefrontal Cortex which is where we make our plans, decide things, and form opinions, it helps us to plan, decide and act with greater clarity and focus.

Which is no bad thing either when we find that 90% of mistakes in life are down to what is called *Solid Thinking* i.e. being unable to make good choices, or, indeed, change our Minds.

## Your Personality is not Fixed

**With the latest technology** enabling us to see deep inside the Brain, we can also see that just spending as little as five minutes a day over an eight week period practicing [Mindful breathing](#) can reduce the size of the Amygdala in our Brains, which controls our *'Fight & Flight'* response to things, making us less prone to over-react or lose our temper.

Only 10% of our personality is down to genetics — 90% comes from learned behavior, and the way we think and act is not set in stone from childhood. A leopard can change its spots! For myself that is certainly compelling stuff and we've clearly got everything to play for.

So, let's bring on the Mindful Revolution.

## A Mindful Revolution

**Here are five steps**, five simple things that you can do each and every day, in all areas of your life.

1. *Let's begin by changing the story one conversation at a time: to hear and seek out information that might cause the self to alter its behavior.*
2. *Let's give our humanity, our compassion, and our preparedness to collaborate, real weight and value.*
3. *Let's recognize and make mindfulness an integral part of maintaining wellness and promoting well-being and 'well doing'.*
4. *Let's ensure that day-to-day happiness is at the beating heart of each and every policy decision.*
5. *Let each of us proactively uncover our mindfulness and live it without words; just allowing it to be a conscious part of what we do and who we are.*

**And until the next time, take care and be mindful!**

**Paul Adam Mudd** is a Trusted Adviser, Leadership Provocateur, Savvy Thinker, International Keynote Speaker, Best Selling

