

How the Mind Works

The mind is often likened to a computer because it records and processes information but no computer has the creative ability of our mind.

It is well accepted that our mind can be divided into the conscious and the subconscious and that part of the subconscious forms the creative level of mind. Sigmund Freud once likened the mind to an iceberg saying it floats with only 17% of its bulk above water. This iceberg metaphor represents the various parts of the mind with the tip of the iceberg representing our conscious mind (our awareness) and the largest part of the iceberg which is below the waterline, representing our subconscious mind. The waterline itself is often used to represent the creative part of our mind. Although each part works independently of the other they do liaise and co-operate when necessary.

The conscious mind generates thoughts and ideas and is associated with our waking, thinking state. It gathers knowledge, judges, remembers and compares, evaluates and analyses what it perceives as reality through the five senses, observing labelling and experiencing the present moment. The conscious mind has a wonderful gift called choice, but it is limited in its wisdom and can make mistakes. People who are aware of how the mind works realise their judgements may sometimes be hindered because they know they perceive the world through filters of perception with their own preconceived ideas, beliefs and prejudices colouring their decisions. They recognise it is necessary to listen to the opinions of others which may be just as valid as their own.

The subconscious mind (sometimes called the unconscious mind) is vastly larger than the conscious mind and far more powerful. It is a reservoir of extraordinary intelligence, responsible for everything we do; controlling the way we live by creating everything in our lives according to the instructions we give it. It is the centre of our feelings, intuition and perceptions and it is the storehouse for all our memories as well as processing our beliefs.

The subconscious carries out our wishes and acts on our beliefs, prejudices and perceptions without our being aware of it because it operates below the level of our conscious recognition. It never analyses, judges or rationalises; it simply acts in response to suggestions given it by our conscious mind and works to bring about the exact conditions we believe in. The messages we send to our subconscious from our conscious mind are our thoughts, beliefs and actions. If we send positive messages of success to our subconscious mind it will produce success. If we send negative messages it will produce failure. For example, if we constantly worry and speak about lack in our household, there will always be lack because our subconscious mind will receive that message and set about creating the situation based on our message. However, if we send a positive message that we believe we can accomplish the goals we have set for ourselves the subconscious mind will set about connecting us with the people and events that will help create the positive environment to attain those goals. Everything we do, say and believe is picked up by our subconscious mind not just our thoughts. The works of many

authors confirm that whatever we focus on constantly will be created in the physical world; that whatever we desire (good or bad, meant or not meant) will come into our lives and will change our reality. We must, therefore, focus on the positive so that we can move in the direction we want.

Most people remain unaware of how to use their subconscious mind. Instead they concentrate their mental efforts in the area of the conscious – the intellectual, rational part of the mind. They analyse ideas and interpret those ideas in line with their own preconceptions. It is through these preconceptions (or belief systems) that we all develop a view of the world which supports our existing point of view. It keeps us secure.

To use our usually hidden subconscious to full advantage we need to expand our conscious mind beyond the intellect and become aware of our intuitive side. It is that innate, instinctive part of our being that knows something without having to think about it or without it being consciously perceived. It is often our intuition that draws our attention to concepts and ideas that are foreign to our conscious thinking and contrary to our usual beliefs. The female mind seems to be naturally more intuitive than the male mind but it can be used to advantage by both sexes.

“What you say is what you get” is a well-known adage and very true. Countless people limit their happiness and success in life because they don’t realise the importance of their words. The mouth speaks what is in the heart, i.e. our subconscious – our belief system. Our attitude makes our life and we will always get exactly what we say and expect – good or bad. It is important, therefore, that we understand that nothing happens by chance – there is no such thing as coincidence. That is why our subconscious is the most powerful part of our mind.