

Consciousness, Awareness, and the Neuroscience of Mind the Brain and the Mind are Synonymous

Mauritz Fensham*

Self Employed, Hong Kong Island, Hong Kong

***Corresponding Author:** Mauritz Fensham, Self Employed, Hong Kong Island, Hong Kong.

Received: April 18, 2019; **Published:** May 03, 2019

For if the brain is damaged, so too is the mind. The brain and associated mental activity are functionally lateralized and hierarchically organized, such that specific cognitive and emotional functions may be localized to specific regions of the brain. There are phylogenetically older, sensory-motor non-emotional mental systems associated with the brainstem, and a highly complex emotional and memory system associated with the limbic system. Whereas the brainstem is incapable of conscious or cognitive activity and instead mediates reflexive motor acts, including breathing, heart rate and arousal, it is the limbic system which mediates the ability to feel love or sorrow or to determine if something is good to eat. Indeed, it is the limbic system which enables humans to form memories of the long ago, as well as to recall these memories in order to dream of the future, as specific limbic nuclei become active not only when learning and remembering, but when dreaming. In fact, the limbic system provides humans (and perhaps non-humans) with the capacity to experience the most profound of emotions, from love to spiritual ecstasy and religious awe, serving, at its most profound, as perhaps even a transmitter to god. By contrast, the more recently evolved neocortex of the right hemisphere is the domain of a highly evolved social-emotional, visual-pictorial, spatial, body centered awareness and employs emotional and melodic sounds for expression. The right half of the brain is responsible for discerning distance, depth and movement, and recognizing environmental and animal sounds such as a chirping bird, a buzzing bee, a babbling brook, or a thunderstorm, as well as the capacity to sing, dance, chase or throw something with accuracy, and run without falling or bumping into things. Whereas the left hemisphere is concerned with logic and grammatical rules of organization and expression, including the analysis of details, sequential units, and parts, it is the right hemisphere which is able to perceive events or stimuli as a whole and which can see the forest as well as the trees. Whereas right hemispheric activity is associated with the production of the visual, emotional, hallucinatory, hypnogogic aspects of dreaming, the left hemisphere tends to immediately forget the dream upon waking. Hence, in the right hemisphere we deal with a non-verbal form of awareness that accompanies in parallel the temporal-sequential, language dependent stream of consciousness associated with the functional integrity of the left cerebrum. In fact, and as has been repeatedly demonstrated, the right and left cerebral hemisphere are each capable of self-awareness, can plan for the future, have goals and aspirations, likes and dislikes, social and political awareness, and can independently and purposefully initiate behavior, guide responses choices and emotional reactions, as well as recall and act upon certain desires, impulses situations or environmental events --sometimes without the aid, knowledge or active (reflective) participation of the other half of the brain. Thus, in summary, the right and left hemisphere sub serve almost wholly different mental systems--a function of evolutionary metamorphosis and the evolution of language and tool making capabilities-- whereas the limbic system is synonymous with the most archaic regions of the emotional, sexual, unconscious mind. However, because the brain and mind are hierarchically organized and lateralized, and as the limbic system retains the capacity to completely overthrow and hijack the neocortically equipped "rational" and emotionally intelligent mind, conscious-awareness, as well as the brain, are subject to fracture, with each isolated segment acting on its own wishes and desires, independent of and sometimes conflicting with those mental systems that may remain intact such as those associated with the language-dependent conscious mind.

Volume 8 Issue 5 May 2019

© All rights reserved by Mauritz Fensham.