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Psychoneuroimmunology (PNI) is a fascinating and amazing science, that in so many ways explains the obvious. It has helped us to illuminate that what we think in our minds has a biochemical impact on our brains which in turn affects our bodies' systems. It is only latterly that the developed world has begun to accept what the eastern part of the globe has accepted for centuries.

The mind-body connection, a deep subtle relationship, is the primary relationship that we have with the physical world. It is so deep, subtle and relevant to the quality of our lives, and is the reason that a holistic approach to therapy is pivotal to the process of self-improvement. Once we understand that what we think has consequences on our physical anatomy, then we are more likely to be inspired to change our thought patterns. If we realise that we are, to a large extent, able to carve out our own destinies and that this process starts in our minds, we are more likely to pursue that course of action.

The brain produces many hormones, neurotransmitters and other substances and via a series of chemical and electrical impulses, all functions of the body are carried out or stimulated by the brain. These chemical and electrical impulses carry enormous numbers of messages during the course of any one day, through the pathways of the body, ensuring all the vital organs are able to perform their many functions i.e., digestion, detoxification, repair, thermostatic control, sight, hearing, etc. Many of these functions have what could be called an 'optimal state', where the organism performs the necessary actions to maintain its own survival in the most efficient way. In fact, the body always performs actions, which offer us the best opportunity of survival. It knows no other way. All the organs and the functions of the body can be and are influenced by our thought processes. This is what PNI has enabled us to clearly see and so the concept of psychosomatic illness is no longer just a theory because there is now substantial evidence to support it. Our thoughts can distort any function in the body and the huge topic of stress is a first-class example because we can all see the consequences of stress in ourselves and in our society.

It is not only stress that affects our bodies and the way our vital organs work but mood also has a significant impact: happiness, contentment, peace of mind, depression, anger, impatience, just to name a few. In fact, every thought and every emotion has a biochemical consequence. The messengers in our bodies, more commonly known as hormones, actually correspond to the particular emotion we are feeling. So, for example, a positive, euphoric state is connected to substances such as dopamine, endorphins and enkephalins. Emotions such as depression, anger or other self-limiting states cause the body to produce a variety of toxic chemicals such as adrenochrome (which is a conversion from the hormone adrenalin). In fact, all the hormones we produce in a positive, euphoric state can be converted, by our negative moods, into substances, which depress the central nervous system and the immune system. So, it is vital for us to understand that the thoughts, feelings and moods we experience have a direct consequence on the brain, and in turn on the body. This, then, impacts our overall health.

We simply can't afford negative thoughts and feelings. The price we pay for them is far too great. It is not just the psychological and emotional problems they cause, but the plethora of physiological difficulties as well. Whatever afflicts us, one thing is for sure, the most powerful antidote we have is our thoughts.