

MODULE 5: THOUGHTS, EMOTIONS AND BELIEFS

LESSON 3: THE SUBCONSCIOUS MIND

Although we are not yet clear on the neuro-biological mechanisms that cause this, we do know that the transformational breathing techniques are a doorway to the subconscious and thus can be used in very skillful ways to reprogramme outdated programmes and patterns that are limiting and often destructive emotionally, physically and mentally. It is also a means through which we can powerfully create new patterns that support our highest human qualities of creativity, intuition, compassion and vibrant health.

In every moment, our thinking, feeling, behaviour and choices are governed by two operating systems of the mind.

The conscious mind is what is at work when we are in our normal waking state. It is aware of time, is responsible for learning, reasoning and making conscious choices. It is the mental activity of which we are aware. The mental activity that occurs in the conscious mind, including emotional reactions can be seen and measured by modern imaging techniques. For instance, the prefrontal cortex lights up when a decision is being made, and a different part of the brain lights up when one is engaging in a creative activity.

The subconscious mind, on the other hand, is primal, instinctive and impressionable. It is where we store every memory, sight, sound, smell, and taste that we have ever experienced. It is through these experiences and through conditioning that all our beliefs are created. Although some beliefs are conscious, the subconscious mind is where many of these belief systems are housed. The subconscious mind is not just in the brain but resides in every single cell in our body. Our mind-body systems are programmable in the same way that computers are. Your mind is not your brain. The CPU chip is not the same as the memory in a computer. Your brain is a physical mass, the mind is an energy field that permeates and surrounds your whole body. Everything is energy. And every cell of

your body is a programmable computer chip - capable of input, output, and memory storage.

Most of the deep impressions that occur in the subconscious occur at a very young age - some of the imprinting or hard wiring occurs even before we are born and the effects of this imprinting influences our thoughts, behaviour, addictions and biology without us even being aware of what that imprinting might be. By the time we reach adulthood, most of this imprinting has occurred and the neural pathways set.

According to Bruce Lipton in *Biology of Belief*, the reason for this is quite interesting. Between birth and two years of age **Delta** waves in the brain predominate which facilitates the absorption of a huge amount of sensory imprinting and it is also when we are most impressionable. Between the ages of two and six, **Theta** waves start to dominate which also allows for deep imprinting and absorption of information. This is why children of this age are able to pick new languages so quickly! With breathwork, it's very easy to drop into the theta state and in fact, the first re-birthing centre was called Theta house! Hypnotherapists drop patients into delta and theta states.

Brainwave States

Beta State

- 13-100 cycles/sec
- associated with the waking state
- fear based and reactive
- very identified with thoughts/emotions
- driven by ego programming
- we interact with thoughts/feelings and emotions as real and consistent with the character with which we have identified

Gamma (subset of Beta)

- 40-70 cycles/sec
- associated with high IQ, empathy and compassion
- this state is important for learning, memory and information processing
- needed for senses for new input for memory imprinting
- increases in meditation
- can be experienced in REM phase

Alpha

- 8-12 cycles/sec
- from relaxed wakefulness to dreaming to REM
- brain activity slows down, thoughts are further apart
- associated with state of relaxation and ease
- children have higher alpha and theta activity to help them to assimilate information
- increase in serotonin production
- deep recovery loop
- ability to access the subconscious mind
- less alpha wave activity when awake in people with insomnia, restlessness and anxiety
- more activity in those who are more resilient and are in a state of equanimity

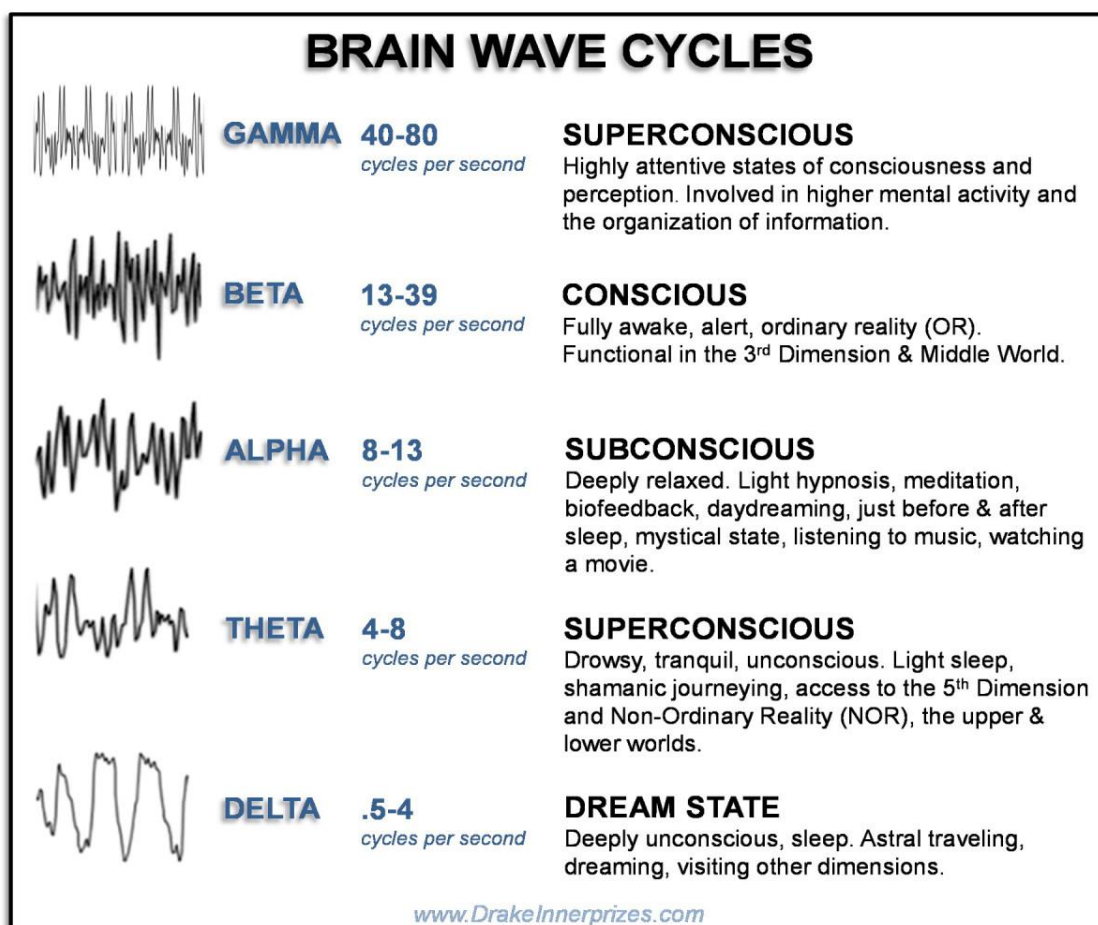
Theta

- 4-7 cycles/sec
- associated with deep sleep and deep meditation
- increases creativity
- high activity in artists, inventors and children
- creative solutions, inspirations and answers come through in this state
- able to access subconscious patterning and make changes in these behaviours
- activity increases from childhood to puberty
- important for learning

- poor sleep affects brain ability to consolidate learned memories
- entry into delta state preserves cognitive ability after trauma
- slow wave sleep after brain injury helps prevent axons injury
- associated with thickening of pre-frontal cortex
- emotional integration and completion if incomplete experiences

Delta

- 0.5-3.9 cycles/sec
- fluctuations of mind down to basic survival functions
- seen when in a coma or knocked unconscious
- most restorative state of body
- human growth hormone released
- reduces cortisol
- monks and meditators have more delta in waking state than usual
- associated with empathy, compassion, intuition and spirituality
- we need a certain amount delta brainwave sleep to wake up refreshed



Subconscious beliefs are often the reason that we experience challenges manifesting our conscious desires. Will power can temporarily override a subconscious program. When the program is not rewritten, little change will occur - the old pattern will most certainly return and win in the end.

As humans evolve the conscious mind sees itself as the master of instincts and desires. However, most of us are in fact, still asleep and the unaware servant to the subconscious.

The conscious mind is volitional. The subconscious mind is habitual and reactive. The conscious mind sets goals and judges results. The subconscious mind, below the

awareness - maintains a flowing connection to muscle movement, autonomic activities such as breathing, heart rate, digestion and production of hormones and chemicals of fight, flight, pleasure and pain. The conscious mind thinks abstractly. The subconscious mind reacts literally. The conscious mind is time bound - separating past and future. The subconscious mind is timeless, thoughtless and seamless - the past automatically triggering reactions in the present.

The conscious mind has limited processing capacity (about 2,000 bits per second). The subconscious mind has expanded processing capacity (about 4 billion bits per second). The conscious mind has very short-term memory (about 20 seconds). The subconscious mind has very long-term memory. It remembers every single thought, wish, attitude, belief, event, or experience.

The conscious mind usually holds 1-3 events in its awareness. The subconscious mind can process thousands of events at the same time. If your conscious mind desires a goal that is not aligned with the stored memories in the subconscious/body memory, guess which will win? The most effective and long-lasting changes are created when we bring the conscious and the subconscious/body-mind into alignment.

We have both conscious and subconscious beliefs. Conscious beliefs are affected by education, information, and persuasion. Subconscious beliefs are like hidden software programs and our day to day experiences are often automatic printouts of those programmed beliefs. For most of us, our subconscious programs determine that we spend most of our lives reacting to situations and circumstances, rather than responding to or creating them.

Most people are surprised to learn that almost all their behavioural and thought patterns are directed by their subconscious mind, not their conscious mind. Have you noticed that you can drive a car while daydreaming? It is estimated that as much as 99% of cognitive activity is non-conscious! - this is an example of unconscious competence.

In a way, our subconscious mind is more child-like than it is wise. We need to give it conscious instructions. We can't depend on it for advice or understanding. When looking for advice, direction or understanding we invoke our conscious mind. We can turn to something like our 'super-conscious' mind for instructions and advice, and to get confirmation about the wisdom of our conscious choices and decisions. Breathwork is the perfect tool for this.

If you have a conscious desire that you are not manifesting, then you may have a subconscious belief that is in opposition to it. If there is a conscious intention but there is difficulty in achieving it, then there may be a subconscious belief that conflicts with it. If your conscious and subconscious minds are not aligned, then fulfilling your heart's desire will be a constant challenge and living your dream will be next to impossible.

Habits of thinking, habits of feeling, emotional and behavioural habits...these things can either weaken or strengthen our creative and healing abilities. For example, constant anger can cause illnesses like arthritis, heart disease, and cancer. Anger is an immune suppressant. It has been said that generating anger is like drinking poison and waiting for someone else to die!

Health issues are often (if not always) associated with our subconscious beliefs. Symptoms are messengers. We shouldn't automatically try to kill them or eliminate them with drugs or surgery. Instead, we can learn what they are trying to teach us. We can download new potential beliefs, new software programs, for example, by using affirmations, prayers and breathwork!

There is no such thing as an 'incurable' disease. If you are going to doubt anything in life, doubt your own limitations! We are divine beings having a human experience. It's time to release yourself from the self-inflicted prison of your own thinking. It's time to clean up your subconscious mind!

You can communicate with your subconscious mind to rewrite outdated programs that no longer serve you and align them with your current desires and goals and the brain actually responds to that! Recent studies have been able to demonstrate the plastic nature of the brain - and the phenomenon that occurs when we break down old beliefs to create new beliefs, thought patterns and behaviour is called *neuroplasticity*.

In the practice of Breathwork we focus on changing the negative or limiting subconscious beliefs that lead to our suffering or limit our freedom and power. We clear the beliefs that block our awareness of the love, joy, peace, and pleasure in life. Breathwork involves rooting out self-sabotaging beliefs, and replacing them with self-supporting beliefs

It is important to realise that an old deep-seated program is no harder to change than a new shallow one. Energy is energy, whether it's been held in the mind for three minutes or three decades. Like a computer file: you can open it, edit it, or delete it in the same amount of time, whether it has been stored in your hard drive for ten minutes or ten years.

In breathwork, we consider difficulties as opportunities - opportunities to grow. As Breathworkers have learned, that very often, the pattern you want to get rid of may be the solution to a much bigger challenge. What may seem to be an inability to do one thing may be the ability to do (or to avoid) something else.

Breathwork acts as bridge between the subconscious and conscious mind, working to continuously shed a light on the limiting beliefs and patterns that reside within the psyche and is the tool to create new patterns and pathways in the body-mind systems.

The brainwave state that is created in a breathwork session is the state in which powerful intentions and affirmations can be worked with to reprogram the software of the subconscious mind.

Exercise:

This practice is a way to use conscious connected breathing to bring more awareness to the thoughts, ideas and inspirations that might arise from the subconscious mind.

Keep a journal or notebook next to you as you take yourself into a practice of doing 5 cycles of 20 connected breaths, with 15-30 second pauses between them and then relax completely but stay alert. After a few minutes of resting in this meditative state, do a practice of free writing of at least 2 pages with no agenda. Let go of any logical process or need to write about anything in particular, just write exactly everything that rises up to your awareness, even if it feels trivial or silly.

Do this practice for 5 days in a row.