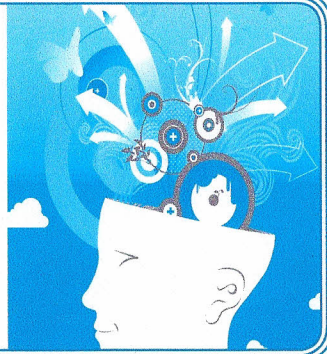


THE STATE OF THE MIND ADDRESS

By Dr. Duncan Bowen, Ph.D.

When it comes to the state of our minds, we are not in very good shape. We have become numb, anesthetized and entranced by our environment, food and behaviors.



As they age, the majority of people appear to be going downhill. The news isn't all bad, however. of our minds is not in very good shape. We have become numb, anesthetized, and entranced by our environment, food and behaviors.

Back in 1958, scientists believed that our brain would deteriorate throughout our lifetime and there was nothing we could do about it. New research indicates something quite different. True, the brain does go downhill as we get older, but the statement that we can do nothing about it is untrue! If we move out of the helplessness model and into the proactive model, we can enhance our lives.

Did you notice we began this article talking about the mind and then mentioned the brain? I

view them as two different entities. The brain is the structure of gray matter that sits within our skull. I view the mind as sitting within the brain. Your brain is the computer and the mind is the software you installed in it.

As the brain grows and develops from infancy, we are consciously and unconsciously programming our mind. It's being done by our parents, teachers, friends, TV, government, etc. Much of the programming was beyond our control in our younger years. As adults, we can be active and proactive in choosing where we focus our attention, making good choices about our state of mind and brain functioning.

Research studies how our brain responds to enriched environments, as opposed to

standard and impoverished environments. It was found that the cortex, the gray matter of our brain, grows and becomes thicker when we are in an enriched environment. Children will show changes in their brains in just four months if they are placed in an enriched environment. An elderly person also shows increases in cortical thickness, although it may take a little longer. So, how do we enrich our environment?

Think of your brain as a road map. Are you going down the same streets, doing the same routines, and engaging in the

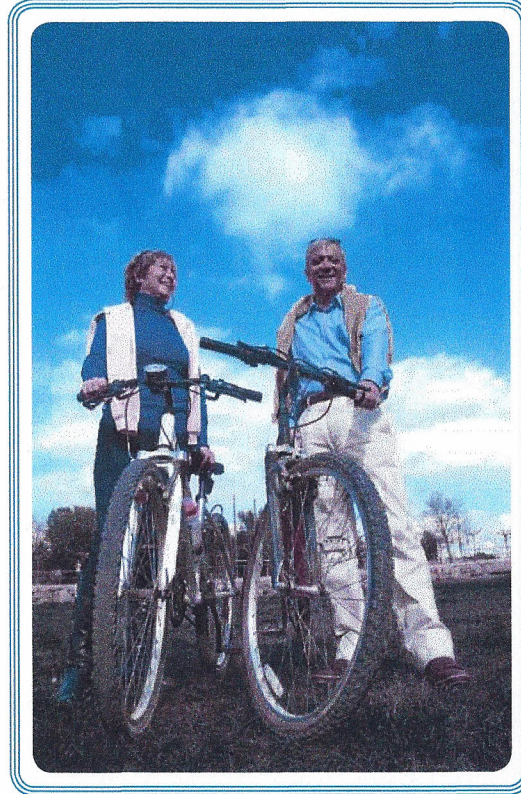
Learn More!

Learn More! Read "Boost Your Brain Health" online at www.NationalHealthReview.net

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same behaviors every day? We all get dressed the same way every day, groom ourselves the same every day and generally eat the same menu each week. Change your routine! Get your programmed mind off autopilot!

Take on a problem solving project. Learning to play a musical instrument actually opens up a new area in your brain. Reduce stress on all levels and resolve emotional conflicts. Stress and conflict will deplete vital chemicals and hormones. Tackle mental health issues such as sadness and depression. Women and men over 45 should have their hormone



levels checked. Start an exercise program. Seek the assistance of a counselor if you feel your relationships need improvement.

Your brain's potential is unlimited! Give it a workout! ●

Dr. Duncan Bowen is a mental health therapist with more than 25 years of experience in treating addictions, sexual health, mind/body issues and maximizing potential. For more information, call The Adult & Child Counseling & Psychiatric Center in Satellite Beach visit www.duncanbowenphd.com. or call (321) 779-9838

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