



Brain Hacks to Help You Feel Better

Today, I want to talk a bit more about brain science. We've been talking about how to optimize our brains to work for us instead of against us. As I've said many many times in these videos, the brain's two priorities are to keep you safe and to conserve energy. I want to read you a passage from an article in Inc. and written by Quora, and this is what Quora has to say about brain hacks.

"Generally speaking, the feelings of craving, gloom, anxiety, impulse, and other similar bad feelings are due to unbalanced activity in our brain. Therefore, a rule of thumb is to elicit the activities of other brain areas, such as the rationale center cortex, such that the overactive region can reset to normal." So here's some practical brain hacks that Quora recommends: "Count numbers or practice some mental arithmetic. It is simple but challenging enough for the rationale region to get activated such that the signals from other regions become subdued and easier to handle. So when you're having overwhelming emotions you can do some arithmetic. Another thing is you can find a target to focus on and try to figure out details. For example, if you're jogging and want to hang on for another mile, find some targets in the distance like a tree or a white cloud and try to tell yourself some details about it. Again, focus on the quantitative features that are more likely to activate the cortex. Then the last mile becomes easier. And finally, use other sensors like smell or touch or body movements like pacing etc to trick the brain. All those activities provide feedback signals to different areas of the brain that are usually under stimulated so they will be particularly helpful in balancing the over activated regions."

I really appreciate this article because so much of it is about mindfulness, so much of it is about self awareness. When you can interrupt something that your brain is focused on, then it lights up other areas of your brain that can help you balance. You see, your psychological system is always seeking equilibrium just like your physical system is. Your brain is always seeking equilibrium. And if we don't dwell too much in one particular direction, then we can interrupt. We can interrupt that through our attention and bring ourselves a little more ease and flow. This is why science shows research shows that mindfulness is such an important practice. Self awareness and mindfulness together can actually bring your system back to equilibrium more quickly. So notice where your attention is. We talked about this in the in the last video. If you dwell on your bad feelings, if you move in there, if you take up residence there, you're going to feel more of those emotions. So the idea is to shift your attention, shift or focus somewhere else.

I have some old childhood trauma stuff that sometimes gets activated. When that stuff gets activated, I just sort of revert into the reptilian part of my brain and I get really, really triggered.



What happens in those moments is that I begin to feel overwhelmed. I become very emotional. My eyes begin to sort of fog over and I begin to check out. I'm checking way out. The minute I can wake up to that, the minute I can notice that, the minute I can bring awareness to that and see what's happening, then I'm able to look around for things in my immediate environment that I can focus on. Maybe I focus on the tree I'm walking past. The leaves on the tree, the bark, the texture. Or maybe I allow myself to smell the salt on the air or I pay attention to how the breeze feels on my skin and through my hair. When I do that, honestly, it's almost miraculous because what that does is it brings me right back into the present moment rather than into some memory of the past or some emotion of the past.

It's amazing how just bringing my attention to what I can sense through my five senses brings me back into the present moment, brings me back into my body where I'm like, Oh, I'm safe. I'm fine. Everything is fine in this moment.

I offer this practice to you today. when you are caught up in difficult, difficult emotions, that's your alarm clock, your wake up call, to shift your focus, to shift your attention, and to bring your attention back to your five senses and what you can sense with those right here, right now, in your immediate field in this present moment.

I hope this has been helpful I I'd really love for you to experiment with this for yourself. Don't take my word for it. I want you to experiment with it and see if, if you can find a bit of relief for yourself.