

LEVERAGING YOUR BRAIN'S NATURAL LEAD

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Breakthroughs in brain research in the past 10 years have shocked neuroscientists. Learning to live an energy efficient lifestyle has taken on a new meaning, as the neurological foundations of human thinking are better understood. Just as we find ourselves selecting more energy efficient cars, cars which cost less to run and pollute less; so too, we are learning that by selecting jobs and activities which use our brain's most fuel-efficient component (i.e. functionally specialized area), we can naturally increase our own inner well-being and balance, as well as our own mental, physical and emotional health.

Here's what we've learned. Our brain is made of four highly specialized areas which are responsible for performing very different tasks. Their specialized capabilities make us think they are the physiological bases for Jung's four functions: thinking, sensing, feeling and intuition.

CORTICAL REGION	FUNCTIONALLY SPECIALIZED ABILITIES	JUNG'S FUNCTION OR TYPE
Left Frontal	Logical Analysis, Decision Making	Thinking
Left Posterior Convexity Left Basal	Sequencing, Performing Routines	Sensing
Right Posterior Convexity Right Basal	Harmonizing, Connecting	Feeling
Right Frontal	Pattern Analysis, Inventing	Intuition

The two discoveries that have surprised scientists are:

1. that we are each born with one efficient and three inefficient areas; and
2. that the one efficient area is so tremendously efficient, it naturally uses only one one-hundredth the energy second per second.

Moreover, although we can and do develop competencies in all four areas, as we study different subjects and master different types of tasks, the relative efficiency of the one mode is never altered. We continue, throughout our life, when learning or using a skill managed by our brain's preferred area to enjoy more efficiency, a faster learning curve and a tendency to make fewer errors.

These discoveries have surprised neuro-researchers and educators alike. Both had assumed that those who appear to be more intelligent on IQ tests could learn and do just about anything well, given a good teacher, proper training and practice; and those who performed less well on such

tests would do virtually everything less well. The breakthrough discoveries say in no uncertain terms: everyone is gifted – in one area of their brain. Everyone can be smart – concentrate easily, learn rapidly, feel energized, be highly effective. The trick is to make the choice to use and leverage skills managed by area of our brain that is naturally highly efficient.

And that's not all. It turns out the context in which we do something matters, as well. Additional research has established that each of us has a stable level of inner wakefulness (e.g. how awake we are inside when we wake up). About 15% of the us are very awake. About 15% of us are barely awake. And about 70% of us fall along a continuum between these two very different inner realities. Why does this matter? Because, those of us who are in the first group, who are barely awake, need lots of external stimulation (noise, activity, competition, crowds, a crisis, literal or metaphoric fire-fighting) to wake us up so that we can perceive and think clearly. And, unfortunately, the very stimulation which makes it possible for women in this first group to achieve peak performance, creates discomfort and anxiety in the second group, causing them to shut down or leave. In other words, what facilitates the first group improve performance actually hinders the performance of those in the second group. A quick example: A woman in the first group, who needs the additional stimulation, will elect to read in a noisy office or kitchen or cafeteria, where the noise around her keeps her awake so she can read. Put in the same environment, a woman in the second group would find reading very difficult, if not impossible.

As such, it is easy to understand how and why a woman gets out of balance when she goes to work.

1) She gets out of balance, because she is regularly using mental skills which are not managed by her natural lead function – a life and work habit which demands and consumes one hundred times the oxygen second per second – leading to: irritability, headaches, fatigue and a wide range of other problems (e.g. digestive disorders, inability to sleep, anxiety, and depression) from overworking her brain in a way that robs the rest of her body of the oxygen it needs to operate properly.

And or,

2) She gets out of balance because she is pushing herself to compete, close deals and or function in noisy, crowded environments, more than is suited to her natural level of introversion-extraversion, generating inside her a chronic low grade anxiety, as well as forcing her to need significant downtime after work to re-balance.

To achieve balance in the first instance, she needs to identify, develop and leverage skills in her natural lead function so that her work is naturally energizing and meaningful, rather than exhausting, and meaningless. Indeed, when her brain is being so very efficient she finds her work easy, even fun.

When we invest our minds in activities and tasks that our brain can manage from its area of superior efficiency, we receive an abundance of energy, mental alertness and inner balance. It is the wisest investment we can make. And, in choosing to make it, we are honoring and empowering ourselves. The result is that we live and work in balance. We do not need to do anything else to achieve or reclaim our balance, because we no longer lose it.

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In other words, living a balanced inner life is the natural pay back or ROI we get for choosing to invest our time, energy and attention in activities which use our natural lead function in the environment or context which suits our arousal needs.

