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Who switched off my brain? Controlling toxic thoughts and emotions

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Author: Dr. Caroline Leaf

Dr Leaf received her training in Communication Pathology at the University Of Cape Town, South Africa. She also holds a Masters Degree and PhD in Communication Pathology from the University of Pretoria, South Africa. Since 1981, Caroline has researched the human brain with particular emphasis on unlocking its vast, untapped potential Caroline has been enthusiastically received all over the world by a variety of audiences, due to her unique ability to link the scientific principles of the brain to intellectual and emotional issues in simple and practical ways.

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Toxic thoughts

I was amazed at the depth of information that Caroline Leaf shared. She has been a brain scientist for around 25 years, yet she presents the information in such an easy to understand way. Dr. Leaf went into depth in chapter 2 of who switched off my brain? Controlling toxic thoughts and

emotions, to define what toxic thoughts are. [ CITATION Lea09 \l 1033 ]. (As cited by Dr. Leaf, 2009, p. 19). There are 12 areas of toxic thinking also called the dirty dozen. The author refers to the dirty dozen as the motley crew who is always up to no good and can cause serious damage.[ CITATION Lea09 \l 1033 ] P. 19.

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## Stress and the dirty dozen

The first part of the book teaches us about the dirty dozen and how harmful stress is. Dr. Leaf defines toxic thoughts. This book has helped me to understand how our thoughts can be holding us back from good health and better relationships. The main idea you get from this is that negative thoughts actually destroy areas of your brain whilst positive thoughts build new pathways and increase the capacity of the brain.

To me, this is a ground breaking book that scientifically explains the mind-body connection. And also I feel that Science is finally catching up with what God has been telling us in His Word for thousands of years! There are so many enlightening scientific facts matching bible and God's Word .This proves with science what Scripture has been saying for thousands of years. For as he thinks in his heart, so is he. ~ Proverbs 23:7. This book

brings out the truth that Doctors ought to be informing patients on how their thoughts affect their bodies and their health.

“Who Switched Off My Brain?” was really a really good book, and very fascinating in the medical sense. I loved how Dr. Leaf used her Christianity beliefs in companion with her scientific knowledge. The good news is she pointed out that we are able to transform our way of thinking and live more positive, fruitful lives. This book contains yet another clear explanation of how science continues to prove that the mind-body connection is real.

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All behavior starts with a thought. Thought stimulates emotion, which drives our actions. She describes it as a symphony of electrochemical reactions in the body, which affect the way we think and feel. Therefore, toxic thoughts produce toxic emotions, which lead to toxic attitudes, resulting in toxic behavior. Dr. Leaf called this the toxic pathway.

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Science of thought

Dr. Leaf says in chapter 4 that “As we think, the brain has the ability to change itself for better or for worse. The recognition of this is a gigantic and significant leap in the history of mankind.[ CITATION Lea09 \l 1033 ] p. 48. I

feel like Dr. Leaf offers a lot of solid ideas for learning how to change thoughts and control unhealthy emotions. I learned that we are wired for love and there are two emotions “fear” and “love”. She stated and emphasized that emotions are involved in every thought.[ CITATION Lea09 \l 1033 ] p. She also said our thoughts are measurable and occupy mental: real estate”. Thoughts are active; they grow and change. The author said and I quote: Thoughts influence every decision, word, action and physical reaction we make. [ CITATION Lea09 \l 1033 ] p. 13. I learned a lot from Dr. Leaf. I was left with the knowledge that our thought life is very important. We all think in a unique way and we are thinking all the time. True gift is how uniquely you think. Dr Leaf explains in part 3 of the book what happens when our thoughts create a forest of green trees or black ones.[ CITATION Lea09 \l 1033 ].



She made it clear that our thoughts are manifested in our body. Negative thoughts and chemical imbalance in the brain can make our bodies sick.

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## Toxic pathway

Dr. Leaf has a unique way of showing us the toxic pathway. But have no fear, in part 4 she breaks down how we get into this toxic pathway, and

then gives us a how to breakdown of how to get off that path. What we have to do is cast all our cares upon the Lord for he cares for us. I learned from this book that by renewing our mind with positive faith and praise thoughts, we can renew our minds. I just love it when Dr. Leaf referred to passages in the Bible that are true and fits right into her scientific explanation of things about renewing the mind.

Biblical references

The author also speaks to faith in saying: “talk to the mountain”, activate the chemicals in the brain, melting down the fear. It was so interesting on how she told the story of Jericho to show we can wipe out strongholds. We can do this if we obey the commands of the word of God and discipline ourselves and be consistent with it, we can bring down the strongholds and get rid of fear and replace it with love. Because we are wired for love, we can find a new you. Good thoughts bring a good attitude.

This is a great book and it is life-changing. Dr. Leaf explains in easy-to-understand language how we are our thoughts. Dr. Caroline Leaf explains the fascinating brain science behind why

and how our thoughts affect every area of our physical bodies down to the cellular level. She has an amazing talent for teaching both the scientific and spiritual aspects of the brain with

Incredible clarity. And we are the ones who determine how healthy our brain is by what we think.

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Renewing your mind

Not only does she show us why our brain is the way it is but she shows us how to change our brain, which in turn will change our physical health. In part three, she tells us there is a brain sequence, we learn how to detoxify our thought life, and we must take a toxic thought back through this sequence to rebuild it. Dr. Leaf takes us an amazing journey starting with part 3[ CITATION Lea09 \l 1033 ] of the book on through to the end by taking each sequence mentioned and telling us what to do and how to go back and rebuild a thought.

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Brain sweep

Dr. Leaf's "Brain Sweep" exercises at the end of the later chapters are very challenging but well worth the effort! It's incredible what toxic thoughts, emotions, and words, etc. that we

have lurking in the dark recesses of our conscience and sub-conscience. These harmful toxins need to be removed so that we can be restored to optimal mental and emotional health.

This book does a great leading us out of distress, Dr. Leaf reveals “The Dirty Dozen” 12 specific areas of toxic thinking in our lives: Toxic Thoughts, Toxic Emotions, Toxic Words ,Toxic Choices ,Toxic Dreams, Toxic Seeds, Toxic Faith, Toxic Love, Toxic Touch, Toxic Seriousness, Toxic Health, and Toxic Schedules.

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## Toxic emotions

“Who Switched Off My Brain?” is interesting, educational, enlightening, entertaining, spiritually relevant, a step by step process that leads to physical and emotional healing! I highly recommend “‘who Switched Off My Brain?” by Dr Caroline Leaf. For more than 25 years Dr. Carolyn Leaf has been researching the human brain, with particular emphasis on unlocking its vast untapped potential. Her passion is to help us achieve much more of that potential by cleansing our thought-life of toxins. We're living in an epidemic of toxic emotions. Research shows that as much as 87% to 95% of mental

and physical illnesses are a direct result of toxic thinking proof that our thoughts affect us physically and emotionally.



Detox manual

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This book can be seen as a “detox” manual that describes the anatomy of a thought and the influence it has over emotions and attitudes. She even points out that having fun will detoxify your thought life, improve your health and make you clever to boot.[ CITATION Lea09 \l 1033 ] p. 133.  When we understand more about how it all works, we can learn how to control and change our thoughts, which will result in changed emotions and changed behaviors.

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Conclusion:

Dr. Leaf reports that studies link most chronic (lifestyle) diseases to an epidemic of toxic emotions in our culture. These toxic emotions can cause migraines, hypertension, strokes, cancer, skin problems, diabetes, infections and allergies, to name just a few.  And despite all the marvels of modern high-tech medicine, these illnesses are increasing worldwide. The verdict is

in. The mind and body are totally integrated, which means that not just your brain, but every cell in your body has memory.

If your thought-life is toxic then you have toxic memories physically built into the neuronal connections of your mind, and the chemicals that accompany those toxic thoughts are coursing through your body in a series of feedback loops. The long-term effects may take years, but along the way you will suffer nagging illnesses, aches and pains. And all this time you will be deaf to the signals your brain is screaming at you, trying to get you to wake up and take notice



before it’s too late. But the good news is that your brain can start to recover from years of accumulation of toxic waste in less than four days.

Having recognized our toxic thought patterns we learn how to sweep our brains, step by step detoxing each area of our thoughts. By gathering, reflecting, journaling, revisiting, and reaching,

We reprogram our minds to build a secure foundation for the change, health and wholeness we desire. Emotions that regularly release a torrent of destructive chemicals that are the most damaging over time are:

un-forgiveness, anger, rage, resentment, depression, worry, anxiety, frustration, fear, excessive grief and guilt.

Scientific research shows that around 87 percent of illnesses can be attributed to our thought-life, while only 13% are caused by diet, genetics and environment. This book helps us to develop an attitude of gratitude. Be thankful for what you have now so that you can more easily reach your goals and dreams. Focus on happy memories of good times and consciously anticipate special events that are coming up. Associate with uplifting people. Spend time with those who bring you joy and happiness, not people who drag you down or irritate you. Hug your children often. Showing love is the greatest de-stressor there is.

Research shows that loving touch automatically causes the release of natural healing chemicals in the body. Also, I like how the book shows us how to find something to redirect your thoughts to, something you really want to do or something that makes you feel really happy when you think about it. This activates beneficial feel-good hormones and chemicals



Which literally flood your cells, raising your mood and your attitude? Then you begin to act out of those uplifting emotions rather than the old fearful ones.

There are additional suggestions which are beneficial, but basically this book is about changing your thoughts, which will change your emotions, which will change your life[ CITATION Lea09 \l 1033 ]. It's sometimes hard to see what's happening because you're right in the middle of it, but

It all starts with being aware of your thoughts, and understanding how they are controlling your mental, physical, emotional and spiritual life. Dr. Leaf understands that toxic thoughts and the chemicals created by them do destroy brain cells, she made it very clear in her book and that's why her book is named who switched Off My Brain?  Only you can control your thoughts.

References:

Leaf, Caroline (2009).Who switched off my brain? Controlling toxic thoughts and emotions.  Southlake TX: Thomas Nelson Publishers