

Changing Your Mind to Thrive in Times of Change - A Neuroscience Approach

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Summary

This paper maps out how you can embrace change by “losing your mind” to change your brain, and tackle challenge and change as if it were the best thing that ever happened to you. You can lose your old mind, and use your mind, to move your focus away from problems and towards possibility, to literally recreate your reality.

The oil industry has seen a lot of change in the past many years. Change is not something most of us humans prefer or seek out. Most of us prefer life to be secure, comfortable, and predictable. We look for stability and, where possible, serenity. But change is the perfect catalyst for growth and changing your mind.

This presentation will teach neuroscience-backed mindset methodologies as an effective training with tools to move through transition and change. These methods teach how to adapt to change, be our best selves, and perform at our optimal in any upheaval.

Background

The oil and gas industry has been going through a step-change after being in distress since the price crash of 2014. Then, just when we thought that things were looking up, pipelines were cancelled. Then, with governments trying to help on pipelines, those hopes were foiled. Then, just when we thought we were finally through the downturn, 2020 brought the pandemic. That brought our industry another blow that caused a tragedy of many lost livelihoods, more profound than ever and paling to the crash of 1986. The hope-disappointment cycle has been going on for decades for oil and gas professionals but this time, for so many, it has been harder and more protracted than ever.

The good news is we can overcome these changes - you can literally change your mind in the midst of these challenges. “What we think we become.” You do not need to stay stuck. You just need to lose your mind first. Your old mind, that is.

We have been downloading other people’s beliefs from the day we were born, and your thoughts may be outdated or not even your thoughts. Good news, you can “break the habit of being yourself” as Dr. Dispenza says. That means you can stop worrying about the things you always worry about, you can break through your old thinking, you can use change to your advantage, and create new neuropathways in your mind. Instead of focusing on the problem, you can transform it into possibility. You can even welcome change as the best opportunity you have ever had in your life.

Your mind is comprised of your hardware (your brain) and your software (your mindset). Your hardware is like any hardware – it is there, waiting for your instruction. It has the old software from when you were young, plus any new software that has been installed by you or your life experiences.

Your software – your mindset – can be updated and instructed. Your early software was installed by your parents and others close to you. Some of the software installed was robust...good long-term software that has supported you on this life journey. But there might be some software installations that are faulty. Likely these are the programs that get you sidetracked and in distress. Your software can be updated! Neuroscience has proven this.

Theory / Method / Workflow

So how does a person navigate unwanted change? Especially the kind of change that involves a threat or change to your job, livelihood, and pay cheque? When everything appears to be at stake. The key word is “appears”. What if we changed our perception?

Neuroscience-backed mindset methodologies can help us through unwanted change, and can cause lasting desired change, by using the concepts from neuroplasticity to change the thinking that cause us to get stuck. “Stuck”...a technical term for being in lethargy, disarray, distress, challenge, confusion, frustration, and possibly crisis. Stuck brings a stress response. The methodologies are solid approaches for, not only dealing with change, but embracing change.

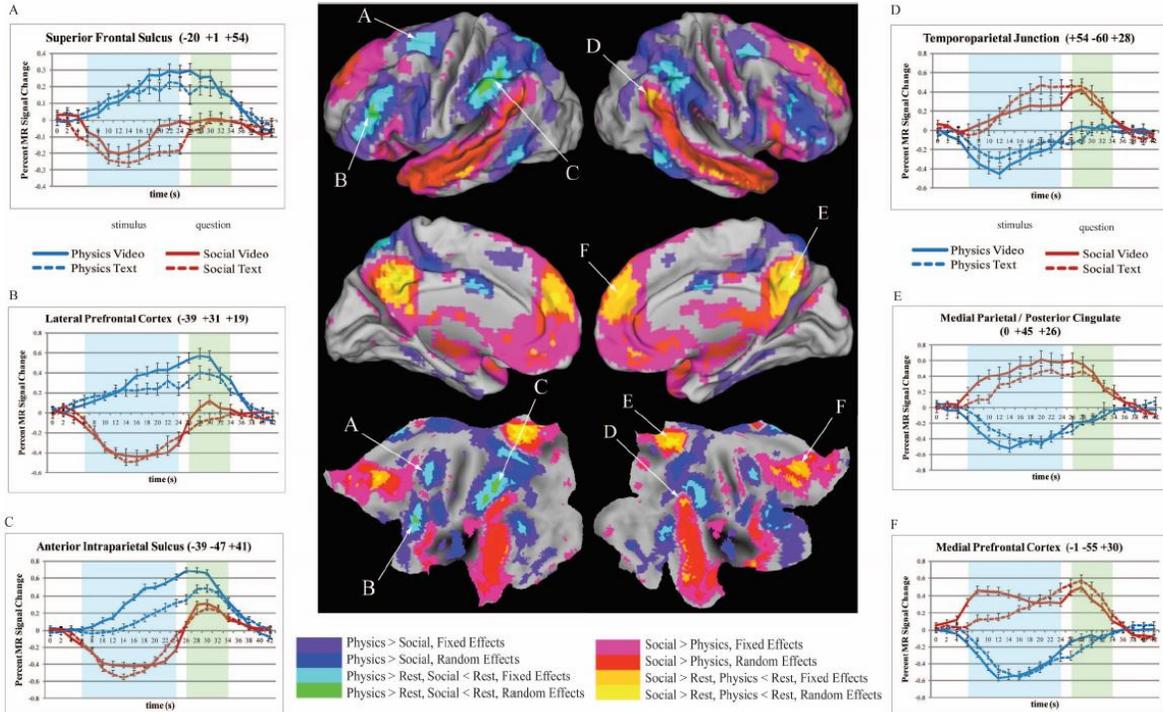
Managing change starts with changing your lens of perception - your mindset. Change can feel unwelcome and disruptive but embracing change can transform your life if you learn how to use your neuroplasticity to train your brain to help you succeed in an environment of change and uncertainty. Change provides opportunities - some of which we might never have conceived without a forced change.

Results, Observations, Conclusions

If you are in fear of, or in resistance to, change, your brain is in a problem-focused feedback loop and cannot create new possibilities. If you are always thinking that nothing will work out, then your brain will not imagine a better future. Your thinking creates your entire life experience.

To have sustained desired change we must start in a “positive” thinking state. If you are in a “stress” (challenged/distressed) state you activate the body’s stress hormones and you immediately become cognitively, perceptually, and emotionally impaired. An MRI study proved this.

The research has shown, both psychologically and neurologically, that negative emotions are stronger than (and override) positive, so to have some semblance of a balance in our neurological, hormonal, and affective/psychological state, we have to intentionally oversample the positive.



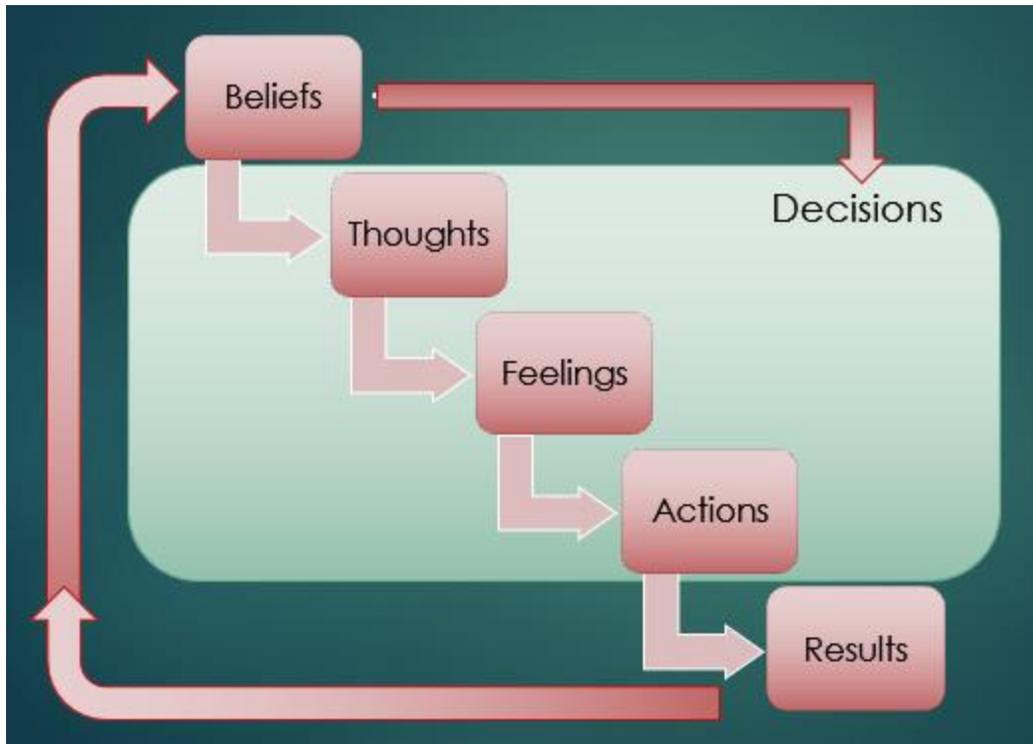
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As soon as you go into stress mode, you start to close down and then solutions are hard to access. Your problem-solving brain is just that – focused on problems.

In another study this was shown very clearly with two situations: 1) they gave a subject the hormone oxytocin, which stimulates the renewal/parasympathetic (“positive”) response and 2) gave the subject epinephrine, which stimulates the “stress” hormones. They showed that people’s peripheral vision changed. It narrowed from about 180 degrees when in a “positive” state versus 40 degrees (tunnel vision) when in a “stress” state. So focusing on problems literally inhibits our ability to see.

Thus, we must over-sample the positive. The study showed that we need to have at least a 2:1 ratio, preferably 3:1, of good thoughts vs bad thoughts. In marriages that ratio goes up to 4 or 5 to 1. This does not mean you ignore the problem; you do not allow it to inform the entire context of the situation.



It all begins with your beliefs which dictate your thinking. Your beliefs attract thoughts and feelings and emotions, which dictate your actions, thus creating what happens in your life – your results. Your results then support, give evidence for, your beliefs. This natural cycle can cause us to get stuck. A never-ending feedback loop – unless you break it. Your limiting beliefs will sabotage you, your attitude to change, your future, and those around you until you do something to stop it. Limiting beliefs put us in a stress state – a state that does not feel good such as anxiety, overwhelm, frustration, and overwhelm.

We can choose to live in a positive state – one of possibility, joy, and gratitude. You can actively reprogram your beliefs to be your own, new, empowering beliefs that serve the future you desire. The theory of neuroplasticity has proven this to be true. We can bring in thoughts and ideas that are in perfect alignment with the life we dream to live. This powerful approach, especially when disciplined repetition is practiced, can change our thinking, thus our results, on anything in life. Therefore, when in transition or a changing environment, you do not need to suffer...you can thrive.

Quotes

“We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them.”
- Albert Einstein

“Nothing is impossible to those who decide upon possibility...”

The framework of your preconceived notions is your only limitation.
These are subject to change ...when you have arrived at a new DECISION.”
– William Walker Atkinson

“Churchill, Gandhi, Edison, Ford, Einstein, Buddha, Thoreau, Aristotle, Jesus, Carnegie, Rockefeller, . . . the greatest leaders, thinkers, authors, teachers, scientists and businessmen in history, though they shared few similar viewpoints, all agreed on just one thing. The mind is everything, what you think you become.”
- David Bayer

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