

## Central Nervous System Space – Lucas Derks

The central nervous system is a 3-D spatial structure that connects the brain with the body its organs and senses. Over the last 40 years, neurological research revealed great populations of neurons around the gut (Gershon, 1998) and the heart (Waytz, 2010). Some have suggested that these cells are similar to those found in the brain.

This gave way to speculations about the so-called second- and third brains, and intelligent processes taking place in and around these organs. In the natural language there are countless examples in which the gut and the heart are portrayed as important centers of experience and cognition, all readers will be familiar with these. Until recently, most scientists have taken these expressions as metaphorical: as a manner of speech that described processes that in reality were brain based. Now the idea of intelligence housed around the major organs is more accepted (Waytz, 2010).

“mBIT” is a therapeutic approach that stands for Multiple Brain Integration Techniques: the multiple brains are that of heart, head and gut. “mBit” is building on the classic NLP-skills (Oka & Soosalu, 2012). The developers also make use of a breathing method when it comes to accessing the information from the Cephalic Brain (head), the Cardiac Brain (heart) and the Enteric Brain (gut) separately (McCraty 2003).

The gut-brain is said to deal with identity, self-preservation and mobilization (Oka & Soosalu, 2012). That also means that courage is something that stems from the gut, which matches popular expressions. Logically the gut intelligence might be an extension of digestion of which other experts say is a highly intelligent neuro-biochemical process. Thus if so, then “liking” and “disliking” might as well be its major output (Gigerenzer, 2008).

The heart is said to rule over compassion, relations and values. And beside that we hear spectacular reports of people who received some personality traits of the donor along with their transplanted hearts. When we believe popular and ancient wisdom, then the heart is especially connected to love and passion and by that gives directions that people better may follow in their lives.

In the natural language we hear that the gut and the heart seem to express themselves over the kinesthetic channel, in the shape of heart- or gut feelings. In the therapeutic practice these feelings are a recurring phenomenon: recently some psychotherapist started to take the intuitions that the central nervous system signaled over its main organs more serious.

Psychotherapeutic interventions that aim exclusively at the heart can be found under the name Heart Coherence (McCraty, 2003; see also HeartMath

Research Center). In this method breathing is used to regulate the heart rate and its pumping quality. The client pays attention to this organ while inhaling and exhaling in a prescribed manner. Also biofeedback tools are used to improve the clients' influence over his autonomic nervous system. Also Heart Coherence is used as a "something completely different" on its own.

The connection between higher cognitive activity and the heart and the gut is best known from decision making. In NLP (Jacobson, 1986) the idea is used, that congruent decisions must involve an agreement between all parts of the person: at least, such parts may be symbolized by brain, heart and gut (Durlinger, 2009).

### **Crucial experiment 2: Head, heart and gut.**

- 1) Think of a dilemma about something that must be decided. Like buying a new item, choosing a holiday destination or quitting ones job or partner.
- 2) Create relaxation over your breathing rate and quality.
- 3) Now formulate only one side of the dilemma as a clear positive statement: "I will do X".
- 4) Now put your dominant hand on your heart and repeat the statement while sensing your heart feelings about it. Is your heart in full agreement or is there some doubt? Scale the measure of doubt on a 5 points scale. 0 = fully disagree.... 2, 3, 4, 5 = fully agree.
- 5) Now put your dominant hand on your forehead and repeat the statement while sensing your head about it. Is your head in full agreement or is there doubt? Again use a 5 points scale.
- 6) Now put your dominant hand on your belly and repeat statement while sensing your gut feelings about it. Is your gut in full agreement or is there doubt? Again use a 5 point scale.
- 7) Now explore the content of the doubt of either center.

### **Conclusion:**

Whether this experiment shows the value of the spatially sorting of personality parts as "something completely different" in the case of a dilemma, or whether his is the real manner to mobilize the wisdom of the organs is difficult to say. That it offers a useful alternative approach to dilemmas is without any doubt.

A great advantage of this approach is that it fits to divisions in the mind (head, heart, gut) that people spontaneously make use of. Thus in such cases it can be easily used. When there are inner conflicts within the head, heart or gut, this approach is harder to apply: then the conflict must be addressed separately.

## **Twirling emotions in the nervous system**

As stated in the beginning of this part, most forms of psychotherapy can be divided into two parts: 1) bring the client in contact with the emotions and thought-patterns that are central in his or her problem state, and next 2) let him or her do “something completely different”.

In NLP one uses the term “pattern interruption” for interventions that withhold the client from repeating habitual behaviors. From the Martian anthropologists perspective, all “something’s completely different” can be called pattern interruptions.

Setting a goal, as this is a standard procedure in NLP (1979) and Outcome Focused Therapy (De Shazer, 1989), has proven to be a very fruitful form of “something completely different”. It interrupts the client in his habit of complaining about what and why things are wrong with him or her. Goal setting forces the client to create a fresh and motivating perspective that also gives a preview of a possible solution. The images that belong to the goal will be projected somewhere in mental space (in awareness space, on the future timeline). But oracle reading, tapping on the face and body, and various “energy procedures” may just as well interrupt the habits and help in an indirect manner to create similar guiding images. All manners of pattern interruptions may heighten the chances of the client finding some fresh inner resources that contribute to his or her healing.

When it comes to the central nervous system as a 3-D spatial structure, we also need to mention the recent wave of so called “emotional spinning” techniques. It seems they were initiated by Richard Bandler (1999; 2008) but elaborated on by many other NLP-trainers. Tim and Chris Hallbom created “Dynamic Spin Release” and also Steve Andreas was experimenting with conversing the direction in which emotions spin through the body. In these techniques we can see 3 different types of spinning in use:

- 1) The small spin. The emotion is regarded as a circular channel that has funneling walls. Like a twister of emotion in the body (Bandler, 2006). The direction of the spinning in the walls of the tube is the focus of the technique.
- 2) The large Spin. The emotion is regarded as a circular stream moving in a certain spinning direction through the body. It is more like the gulfstream in the oceans.
- 3) The external spin (Hallbom and Hallbom, 2008). The emotion is taken outside of the body to spin at a location in mental space. The emotion spins like a moon at a distance from its mother planet, the body.

Bandler (on Youtube) explains the spinning quality of emotions as a result of how the central nervous system weaves through all tissue. Emotions keep on going because the nerve cells feed forward over their synaptic links onto themselves in a circular manner. When this is the right explanation, it is extremely interesting how the direction of that neurological spin can be turned into its opposite direction by means of a verbal suggestion.

Just like all other kinds of “something completely different” the redirection of spiraling emotions must have helped clients in many instances with serious issues, to let it survive on the market of psychotherapeutic interventions. However, whether this is a result of the nature of the spiraling-characteristics of the central nervous system or an easy pattern interruption for suggestible clients is still an unanswered question.