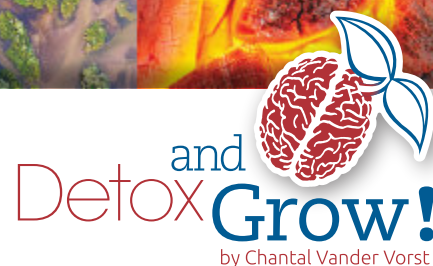


Our newsletter

Making change happen

A newsletter for coaching and well-being practitioners



Freeing our neurons



By Chantal Vander Vorst, speaker, coach, trainer, consultant. Pioneer of the international dissemination of the NeuroCognitive and Behavioral Approach

1. No burn-out in animals

It seems that our animal sisters and brothers do not know burn-out. Would they have more effective protection mechanisms than ours? Would they listen to their instincts better than we humans do? Would they use their brains more wisely?

But what do we mean by “animal”? The Internet offers the following definition:

“As opposed to plant, an organized living being, generally capable of movement and having neither chlorophyll nor cellulosic cell walls. As opposed to man, an animate being, lacking articulate language: Wild, domestic animal. Animals for slaughter”.

Still on the Internet, we find the following definition under “human being”:

“A human being is a living member of the human species. It differs from other species in the

way it moves around – on two legs – and with their articulate language, prehensile hands and developed intelligence.”

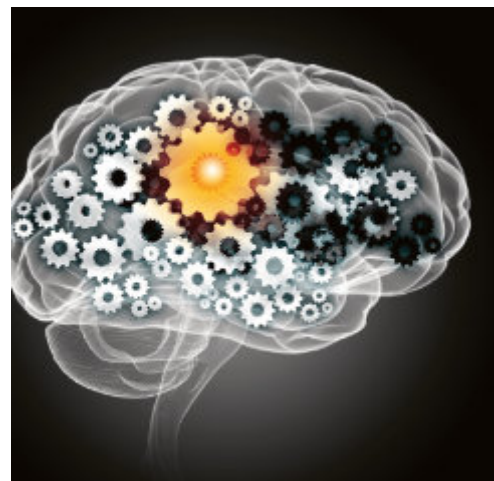
In terms of protecting the species, however, animals seem to be more intelligent than humans. But what’s going on? So let’s go back to the basics, the functioning of our brain.

2. A journey to the heart of the human being

This journey to the heart of the human being will allow us to understand our brain function, and if necessary... to rewire ourselves correctly!

According to the NeuroCognitive and Behavioural Approach developed by the Institute of Environmental Medicine in Paris, we all have two ways of understanding situations, these two ways being underpinned by different brain structures:

■ **One Automatic** way, adapted to simple and known routine situ-



ations, such as: getting dressed, washing, performing a routine task, ...

■ **Another Adaptive or Pre-frontal** way, good for dealing with difficult, complex and unfamiliar situations in an optimal way, such as: managing a new project, facing a change, having a global view of a problem, ...

3. Brain governance and corporate governance

There are many resources in these mental modes, and we all have **4 control modes** within us. They all have their purpose, function and limitations. The main idea is that each control manages what it is meant to manage, and nothing else. A bit like competence management in a company.

The main idea is to make our business processes consistent

心
核
体

Shin Gi Tai
Unification of
mind, technique
and body

"Stress is an instinctive mechanism created to protect us from danger."

We believe that the Automatic Mental Mode often, too often, takes over because it is faster and "louder" than the Adaptive Mental Mode.

In concrete terms, this means that we tend to cling first to what we know, to what is familiar to us, to our library of experiences. We could imagine it this way: we have two chairs in our brain, in principle, one is for the Automatic Mental Mode, and the other for the Adaptive Mental Mode. But ... The Automatic Mental Mode tends to sit on both chairs, to refer immediately to known and simple norms, patterns. When the Automatic Mental Mode overflows, it triggers an internal alarm.

We all know about it, it's called stress. Stress is an instinctive mechanism created to protect us from harm.

- control 1 - Instinctive governance

FUNCTION

- Ensuring individual survival.
- Alert us in case of danger. Generate a feeling, stress, that allows us to react.

LIMITS

- No memory.
- Not designed to handle complex situations.

- control 2 - Gregarious governance

FUNCTION

- Ensure collective survival.
- To alert us in case of danger that challenges the instinctive status in the group.

LIMITS

- Limited memory.
- Can create a power-based dynamic.
- Powerful automatic behaviors.
- Resistant to change when the instinctive status is questioned or shaken.

- control 3 - Emotional governance

FUNCTION

- Learn family and social codes.
- Is at the heart of the motivation system.

LIMITS

- Conditioning that prevents us from stepping out of the box.
- Powerful automatisms
- Resistant to change when values and norms are challenged.

- control 4 - Adaptive governance

FUNCTION

- To get out of our automatic behaviours, to help us to think and act differently, to innovate.
- Great change specialist.

LIMITS

- Little memory.
- Slower brain part.

FLIGHT

fear, anxiety, agitation: a state designed to enable us to escape from real or perceived danger

FIGHT

anger, irritation, annoyance: a state aimed at defending ourselves from real or perceived danger

This stress manifests itself in 3 ways

INHIBITION / FREEZE

sadness, dejection, discouragement: a state designed to hide in the face of real or perceived

with decision-making, and for each governance to make the decisions that fall under its mandate. The animals have understood this, and they do not mix the types of governance, ... which protects them in the long term. Companies are the way they are because we are as we are. The state of a company is like a mirror that reflects us, that shows us our

conscious and unconscious patterns, and also, the way forward.

4. Stimulation of the use of adaptive or prefrontal intelligence

Also called ability to innovate and change, adaptive intelligence is a form of creativity that is used in unexpected situations. In an increasingly complex world and

in the face of unfamiliar situations, it is this “in-adaptive intelligence”, which perceives the inadequacy of habitual or automatic ways of thinking and processes. It helps us to step back and think outside the box, to invent solutions and to anticipate. It is an essential element in decision-making, just like experience, competence and emotional intelligence. Adaptive intelligence is primarily housed in the pre-frontal neocortex. Brain imaging has shown that this intelligence acts as a conductor, in charge of difficulties or unforeseen circumstances..

Its operational mode can be broken down into six postures:

■ **Curiosity, exploration:** develop the skill of being curious, the desire to explore in all circumstances

■ **Flexibility, fluidity:** the ability to accept reality and change strategies, to go with the flow while remaining oneself

■ **Nuance:** contribute to the catalogue of known solutions and force ourselves to be more subtle and refined

■ **Relativity, stepping back:** explore other truths, take a step back, put yourself in the position of an observer

■ **Rationality, reflection:** thinking differently, in an innovative way

■ **Individualization, empathy:** to be fully oneself and to encourage this state of mind in all of us

The challenge is to switch or help switch from an automatic to an adaptive mode of operation.

5. The bio-compatible company

All the resources are within us, and we all have the possibility to create, with few means, companies compatible with our biological functioning, linking well-being and performance.

“The state of a business is like a mirror that reflects us, that shows us our conscious and unconscious patterns, and also, the way forward.”

A company or team with a high level of stress indicates that it is urgent to “get back on track” in terms of brain governance. This means that instinctive governance is screaming and that it will be very useful, even necessary, to listen and decode it. In decoding it, we can discover many possible causes, such as:

- The team’s fatigue level is too high, and our instinctive part signals it
- The gregarious governance is in charge and the team or the company functions in the form of power relations
- The level of motivation may no longer be sufficient
- The company has become too structured, or not structured enough
- There is a mismatch between responsibilities and levels of power
- Core functions are too fuzzy
- The company no longer learns enough
- Etc. etc.

We all know about it, it’s called **stress**. Stress is an instinctive mechanism created to protect us from harm.

References

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- (3) Jacques Fradin, Frédéric Lemoullec, *Manager selon les personnalités*, Eyrolles, 2012
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Whatever the root cause, a high level of stress will sooner or later have an impact on the company’s turnover and performance. So, wouldn’t it be better to anticipate?

