

Lesson 4:

THOUGHTS: Seeds of Creation

Introduction:

Story about Chris McCandless. He left college to live in the Alaskan Wilderness and wanted to survive living off the land. He found plenty of roots, seeds, and berries to survive, but one berry he consumed was actually toxic. That berry prevented his stomach from being able to absorb the nutrients from all the other food he was eating and he ended up starving to death even though he was eating enough calories. We can spend hours reading the scriptures, going to the temple, praying, serving, attending church meetings, but toxic thoughts can prevent our spirit from being able to absorb the nutrition and we can die of spiritual starvation even when we are trying to do everything right.

Principle 1:

What Are Thoughts? Where Do Thoughts Come From?

*Thoughts are energy pulses or electric signals carried across neurons by chemicals.
Thoughts are, quite simply, an electric-chemical reaction.*

SOURCES OF THOUGHTS:

1. INTELLIGENCE: D&C 93:29 - 38 *"Intelligence, or the light of truth, was not created or made, neither indeed can be. All truth is independent in that sphere in which God has placed it, to act for itself, as all intelligence also. . . The glory of God is intelligence, or, in other words, light and truth."*

Our intelligence existed BEFORE we received a physical brain. In the Council in Heaven we were able to listen to Jesus and Lucifer present their plans, think about the different options, and VOTE for the plan we thought was best. And we did all this analyzing without a BRAIN. So we are capable of thought and intelligence outside of the brain.

2. WORLD: input from 5 SENSES (sight, sound, smell, taste, & touch). Everything we have seen, heard, read, experienced since we were in the womb has been recorded by the brain. This includes your education, everything your mother ever said, every TV commercial, magazine photo, gossip, and Pinterest post.

3. LIGHT: Thoughts, inspiration, and enlightenment can come from the Holy Spirit and also from Angels of Light. Also, every person is giving the the light of Christ.

4. DARKNESS: Satan and his accomplices are able to "whisper thoughts into the hearts of men."

5. BRAIN: Can the brain create thoughts? Actually the brain doesn't create thoughts, it is a processor of thoughts. Do you have a Photo Screen Saver program that sorts through your family photo library and randomly selects which photos to flash up on the screen? The brain is similar. The brain selects which thoughts to pull from its massive stores of files to put up on the screen of your mind.

The brain is a cauliflower-shaped organ made from 100 billion nerves which communicates over spaces called synapses.



BRAIN JOBS:

1. **SURVIVAL:** The brain's number one job is to keep the body alive. It maintains body functions like heart beat, breathing, digestion, sleep cycles, etc. Naturally the brain has a negative bias because it is programmed to scan for danger, expect the worse case scenario, avoid pain, seek pleasure, conserve energy and find the easiest path.

2. **PROCESSOR/MEMORY:** The brain is responsible for receiving, analyzing and storing ALL data received from the 5 senses. It is responsible for logistics, learning, adaption, and language.

3. **FEELINGS/EMOTIONS:** Based on sensory input, the brain release chemical recipes which create "feelings" such as warmth, heat, hunger, comfort, pain, etc or "emotions" such as anger, fear, joy, surprise, love, worry, peace, etc.

BRAIN PROGRAMS:

The brain receives thousands of bit of data each second. The brain uses programs to simplify its job.

1. **LAWS, MORAL GUIDELINES, BELIEFS, TRADITIONS, CULTURE:** The brain relies on laws, rules, and beliefs to simply its workflow. For example, if you live by the 10 Commandments, then the brain doesn't have to exhaust efforts trying to decide whether to murder, steal, cheat, etc. Laws and Beliefs further simply the brain's work. It knows to stop at red lights, to pick one's own litter, and to be careful with matches.

2. **FALSE BELIEFS:** The brain can adopt many ideas as TRUTH, even though they may be only a tradition, a good suggestion, or even a false belief.

For example, in the 1900s, a "righteous woman" would always wear a dress and would never show her ankles. In 2019, we are here in a church building wearing knee-length yoga pants. Truth or tradition? Growing up, we wore our Church clothes all day on Sunday. Now I change into sweats as soon as I get home. Truth or Tradition?

It is useful to question whether the things we do are based on ETERNAL TRUTH or merely our culture, tradition, family beliefs, or habits.

BRAIN FUNCTION: How the Brain Communicates with the Body

NERVES & SYNAPSES: The brain functions by sending electric pulses along nerve pathways. (Think of the electric lines that carry electricity from pole to pole from the transmitter station to your house.) The brain neurons are separated by spaces called synapses. In order for the electric signal to jump from one neuron to the next neuron, chemicals called neurotransmitters are needed to carry the signal across the space.

NEUROTRANSMITTERS: Serotonin, Endorphin, GABA, Glutamate, Norepinephrine, and Dopamine. These hormones (chemicals) are essential for brain communication. For example, if the brain has a deficient level of Serotonin, then Depression occurs.



SOURCES OF THOUGHTS:

1. MENTAL ILLNESS should really be called Brain Illness because the brain is an organ just like the kidneys, lungs, or heart. The brain can malfunction or become diseased just like any other organ. Mental Illness is really a malfunction of brain communication. Something has gone wrong with the neural wiring or with the neurotransmitters.

2. DEPRESSION is caused by a low level of neurotransmitters (usually Serotin) OR a malfunction where the neuron endings are unable to absorb the Serotin. Think of a high speed chase and a car trying to jump over a river with a broken bridge. With enough lift, the car will get to the other side. Without enough lift, the car will crash into the water. Thoughts or brain messages are the same. Sometimes there isn't enough "lift" to get across the gap from one neuron to the next. Negative or depressed thoughts have lower energy and are more easily transmitted than high-energy thoughts. This is why a depressed brain has more negative or gloomy thoughts.

3. BRAIN HEALTH: Good diet, sleep, exercise and positive relationships help keep maintain a healthy level of brain neurotransmitters. Many factors can effect the level of brain chemicals such as genetics, hormone fluctuations, pregnancy, tragic life events to name a few.

4. THOUGHTS → EMOTIONS → ACTIONS → HABITS → REALITY

5. ANTs: Automatic Negative Thoughts. The brain can become a broken record repeating the same thoughts over and over again. Observe you thoughts. Pay extra attention to "chronic negative thoughts."

HOMEWORK: THOUGHT OBSERVATION

1. OBSERVE your thoughts. Pay extra attention to ANTs or "chronic negative thoughts." These are the thoughts that are constantly repetitive and negative.

2. EXTRA CREDIT: Write down your thoughts. Try and identify which source that thought came from. Was it a dark thought? And automatic negative brain thought? A light thought or inspiration? A thought from the real inner voice of your intelligence. Experiment and have fun capturing your thoughts on paper.

3. WARNING: Your brain will resist. Your brain might say, "This is silly. You don't have time. It won't work. It won't make a difference." BRAIN HEALTH: Good diet, sleep, exercise and positive relationships help keep maintain a healthy level of brain neurotransmitters. Many factors can effect the level of brain chemicals such as genetics, hormone fluctuations, pregnancy, tragic life events