

Body and Mind

The mind and the body – both have an influence on each other and are inseparably connected. "Sound of body, sound of mind."

- The mind and the body affect each other continuously, such as when we are walking and breathing.
- Thoughts, memories and feelings can bring about internal changes in the body, our heart rate for example may become faster or our appetite might change.
- Our body is involved in everything we experience and feel: joy and enthusiasm for instance, may be sensed as a bubbling sensation in the abdomen, anger may cause wrinkles on the forehead, fear may cause the heart to beat quickly, and sorrow may be felt as a lump in the throat.
- We also with our body send out messages to others. If we see a friend with her shoulders hunched, we may decide that she is worried about something, even if she doesn't say anything about what is on her mind.
- The body and the mind interact in several ways: when we have a headache for example, we will more easily feel down or irritated.
- Often we have worries on our mind and tension in our body. When our body relaxes, so does our mind. Conversely, when our mind relaxes, so does our body.

Somatic memory and our bodily reactions

- In our somatic memory there are stored many learned skills: for example, how to drive a car, how to write, or the skills required to work with our hands.
- The body also remembers unpleasant events which otherwise we would like to forget. Any small thing (an image, a word, a smell or a sound) may resemble difficult past life events and cause the body to react suddenly: for example, our heart begins to beat faster, breathing becomes more difficult or we feel faint.
- Difficult life experiences can also cause the body to be constantly on alert, as if ready to flee or to fight. Due to this constant state of vigilance it can be difficult to sleep or concentrate and we may sense different kinds of pains in our body.
- Body sensations can be frightening if you are unsure about what causes them. You might be afraid that they are a sign of a serious illness. It is wise to talk to your doctor or other caring professional about such sensations.

- Sometimes a doctor cannot find any physical illness to explain our bodily symptoms. This may be because the symptoms are the result of the body's reaction to difficult life experiences and stress. Our somatic memories will be activated when something in the present resembles them. This does not mean that such symptoms are imaginary but that the body is remembering past suffering. In such situations you can soothe yourself by saying: "Although my body is remembering difficult events from my past, they are not happening now, and I will cope with them and I am safe."
- It is worthwhile becoming more aware of your body so you can better understand it. Even if your body has endured much suffering, with its help, you can also take care of yourself and affect positively your mood.

What helps?

- The body also remembers pleasant and satisfying events in our lives. By thinking about happy memories and your hopes for the future, you can calm both your breathing and your body.
- Exercise, positively affects the body and the mind. Even a short walk during the day will help you sleep better at night and reduce your state of alertness. Strengthening your muscles can also increase your sense of control and safety.
- When the mind is tired, work the body. When the body is tired, rest.
- You can learn how to relax through the help of relaxation exercises. By relaxing your body and mind both will feel better. Exercises Online: goo.gl/1VXLdr
- You can also seek help from a psychologist, a doctor or a nurse.