

Memories and Your Behavior

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by PatrickGlancy

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There is a definite connection between what our memories have stored and how we generally feel. If there is very strong emotion associated with a memory, a person may tend to feel that emotion in some way, constantly, below the surface.

This can cause psychiatric disorders such as post-traumatic stress and depression. It can also cause more basic disruption in your life like fears, phobias and high stress.

While medication is commonly used for these issues, it only attempts to dampen the symptoms rather than treat the cause. The issue rarely goes away with this type of treatment.

The key to long term help with these issues would appear to be the emotional association with the memory. What would happen if that association could be erased, reduced or even changed?

There is research using a medication called propranolol that can be used as an "amnesia drug". The purpose is to directly disrupt the connection between our memories and the emotions they are associated with.

This study, in the Journal of Psychiatric Research, talks about psychiatrists at McGill University and Harvard University using the amnesia drug to disrupt the memories of trauma victims. The drug reduces the emotional part of the memory while leaving the conscious part of the memory.

With this process, people still have the memory, but the emotion is reduced or detached. The potential problems with this process, such as permanence or side effects, are not known.

There are also ways to reduce and change the emotions associated with memories. These processes are well established and have no side-effects.

In particular, hypnosis. Hypnosis seems better suited for this process since, when in hypnosis, you are using the emotional part of your mind. This is very evident when working with traumatic memories from childhood. When re-experiencing memories from childhood a person often 'feels' younger than their current age. You tend to experience memories with the same age of mind that you originally experienced the situation.

Before a hypnotist uses modern hypnosis methods with traumatic memories, they must be properly trained. With the proper training, this process is safe, rapid and reliable. Clients often notice a difference after one session.

Addressing issues in this is about gaining real, inner perspective on your past. When this is done, it creates a sense of distance from the memory. A memory that no longer influences how you feel.

About the Author:

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