

Book review

Buddha's Brain

The practical neuroscience of happiness, love & wisdom

Category: Book Reviews / Self-help

Author: Rick Hanson, Richard Mendius

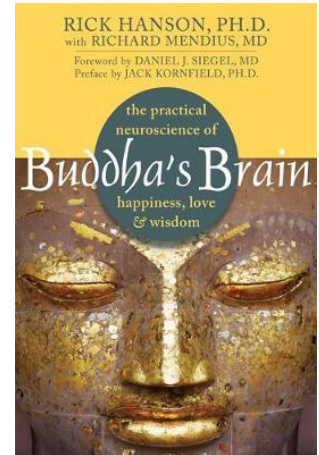
Year: 2012

Publisher: New Harbinger Publications, US

ISBN: 9781572246959

Audience: Supporting Myself

Summary: An explanation of neuroscience and the path to change your brain



“When your mind changes, your brain changes, too.” This might seem like a strange sentence, but while you wiggle your thoughts around its meaning, you realise that that is the whole point of this book. *Buddha's Brain* is a wonderful combination of Buddhist concepts with the added explanations and reasoning of neuroscience, to enhance your life and relationships with others.

Neuroscience has recently discovered that the human brain is not fixed. A person's brain doesn't stop developing and changing after a young age, instead it continues to shift and create new aspects to itself throughout your life. This means that your mind and your thoughts are able to create change in the ways in which your brain works. This is fantastic! But how do you change your mind, to then change your brain? This is what *Buddha's Brain* is all about.

Changing your mind to change your brain

Author Richard Hanson suggests focussing on and understanding two main questions: What brain states underline the mental states of happiness, love and wisdom? And how can you use your mind to stimulate and strengthen these positive brain states?

To guide you through the answers, the book follows along the path of awakening – to reduce any distress or dysfunction, increase wellbeing, and support spiritual practice. The book is divided in the traditional Buddhist teachings: understand suffering, then happiness, love and lastly wisdom.

Continues over page...

Buddha's Brain is a great book, focusing on Buddhist teachings while providing personal narratives from Hanson to explain concepts emotionally, and also providing the neurological reasoning and explanations behind what your brain is doing. This book provides a rounded description for all readers to comprehend and with meditation practices you can begin on your own.

Hanson organises the book amazingly and creates a wonderful manual for anyone wishing to change their thoughts and create a kinder understanding of yourself and your surroundings.

Reviewed by Kate Cherven, Fundraising and Communications Intern at the Mental Health Foundation

The Mental Health Foundation's Resource and Information Service brings you book reviews fortnightly. To view more go to www.mentalhealth.org.nz/books

