ALPHABETICAL BRAIN™ VOCABULARY
HUMANIST FAMILY BRAIN STUDY
BRAIN SCIENCE FACTS

DETAILS ABOUT YOUR MENTAL FORCE
May 9, 2016

WHAT IS YOUR MENTAL FORCE AND WHY IS IT SO IMPORTANT?

What is the purpose and function of your brain's mental force or brainpower?

The book outlined below contains the most comprehensive explanation of how your brain is the source of your mental force.

This excellent book describes how the modern scientific enlightenment of the 21st century is the basis of the growing secular humanism in cognitive psychology and evolutionary biology, which describes our need for self-actualization (self-acceptance) and self-transcendence (empathy).

The new brain research illustrates the truth of the humanistic motivational theory of Abraham Maslow who first developed the **Need-Hierarchy Pyramid** explanation of self-actualization and self-transcendence.

OUTLINE OF BOOK'S FACTS & IDEAS

MIND AND THE BRAIN:
Neuroplasticity and the
Power of Mental Force
by Jeffrey M. Schwartz and Sharon Begley.
Published by ReganBooks / Harper Collins,
2002, 2003 paperback edition
(i-xii, 420 pages)

AUTHOR NOTES, SUMMARY,
AND BOOK DESCRIPTION

AUTHOR NOTES =

[1] Jeffrey M. Schwartz M.D. is an internationally-recognized authority on Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder and is the author of the bestseller Brain Lock (1997), and the co-author of the book, A Return to Innocence (1998), and the co-author of the book, You Are Not Your Brain --- the 4-Step Solution for Changing Bad Habits, Ending Unhealthy Thinking, and Taking Control of Your Life (2012). He is a Research Professor of Psychiatry at the UCLA School of Medicine.

[2] Award-winning writer Sharon Begley is the science columnist for the Wall Street Journal; before that she was senior science writer for Newsweek. Also she is the author of two popular brain books: Train Your Mind, Change Your Brain: How a New Science Reveals Our Extraordinary Potential to Transform Ourselves (2007) and The Emotional Life of Your Brain: How Its Unique Patterns Affect the Way You Think, Feel, and Live--and How You Can Change Them (2012). She lives in Pelham New York.

SUMMARY = A groundbreaking work of science that confirms, for the first time, the independent existence of the mind. And it demonstrates the possibilities for the mind's human control over the workings of the brain.

BOOK DESCRIPTION = Conventional science has long held the position that "the mind" is merely an illusion, a side effect of electrochemical activity in the physical brain. Now in paperback, Jeffrey Schwartz and Sharon Begley's groundbreaking work, The Mind and the Brain, argues exactly the opposite: that the mind has a life of its own. Schwartz, a leading researcher in brain dysfunctions, and Wall Street Journal science columnist Sharon Begley demonstrate that the human mind is an independent entity that can shape and control the functioning of the physical brain. Their work has its basis in our emerging understanding of adult neuroplasticity --- the brain's ability to be rewired not just in childhood, but throughout life, a trait only recently established by neuroscientists.

Through decades of work treating patients with obsessive–compulsive disorder (OCD), Schwartz made an extraordinary finding: while following the therapy he developed, his patients were effecting significant and lasting changes in their

own neural pathways. It was a scientific first: by actively focusing their attention away from negative behaviors and toward more positive ones, Schwartz's patients were using their minds to reshape their brains–and discovering a thrilling new dimension to the concept of neuroplasticity.

The book follows Schwartz as he investigates this newly discovered power, which he calls self-directed neuroplasticity or, more simply, mental force. It describes his work with noted physicist Henry Stapp and connects the concept of "mental force" with the ancient practice of mindfulness in Buddhist tradition. And it points to potential new applications that could transform the treatment of almost every variety of neurological dysfunction, from dyslexia to stroke–and could lead to new strategies to help us harness our mental powers.

Yet as wondrous as these implications are, perhaps even more important is the philosophical dimension of Schwartz's work: For the existence of mental force offers convincing scientific evidence of human free will, and thus of man's inherent capacity for moral choice.
green separator

PROFESSIONAL BOOK REVIEWS

FROM PUBLISHERS WEEKLY = Schwartz (A Return to Innocence), a UCLA psychiatrist and expert on treating patients with obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD), teams up with Begley, a Wall Street Journal science columnist, to explore the mind/brain dichotomy and to discuss the science behind new treatments being developed for a host of brain dysfunctions. Building on the work presented in Schwartz's first book, Brain Lock, the authors begin by demonstrating that OCD patients are capable of rechanneling compulsive urges into more socially acceptable activities and that, by doing so, they actually alter their brains' neuronal circuitry.

By presenting a wide array of animal and human experiments, Schwartz and Begley show that similar neuroplasticity is possible in stroke victims, often leading to a return of function previously thought impossible. The medical results and treatments they summarize are exciting and deserve widespread attention. In a chapter entitled "Free Will and Free Won't," the authors turn to the philosophical, examining the implications neuroplasticity might

have on the differences between mind and brain; they also discourse on the existence of free will. Unfortunately, their integration of quantum mechanics and Buddhism into a search for a mechanism to explain the patterns scientists have been discovering is too superficial to fully engage readers. Nonetheless, a great deal in this book is sure to motivate discussion and more research.

BOOKLIST = Schwartz's undergraduate major was philosophy, and that interest as well as Buddhism has broadened his outlook and makes this book potentially attractive to more readers than those habitually interested in "brain science."

Psychiatrist Schwartz pioneered the use of positron-emission tomography in studying obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD). The behaviorists' therapeutic use of the often-harsh exposure and prevention method with OCD struck Schwartz as brutal and unproductive. Searching for a new approach, he gradually developed the four-step method that he and science writer Begley thoroughly describe here.

Employing the Buddhist idea of willful mindfulness, Schwartz and his colleagues enjoyed considerable research and clinical success. A long, informal collaboration with physicist Henry Stapp enabled Schwartz to overcome the problem of free will and moral action, and one of his major achievements was proving the neuroplasticity of the adult brain, thanks to which the formation of new transmission routes coincides with that of new neurons. Schwartz and Begley bring to life the thinking and work of many original investigators in a book that thoughtful readers will enjoy. William Beatty.

AMAZON READER REVIEW

"Fascinating . . . Schwartz and Begley excel at spreading enthusiasm for science by forging scintillating concepts out of difficult ideas."