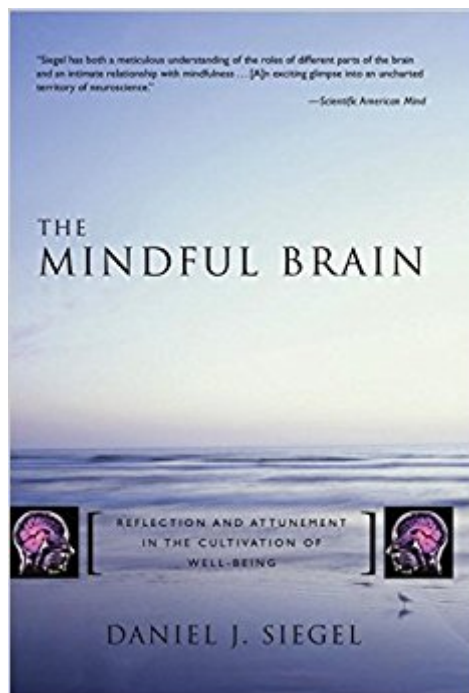




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# The Mindful Brain: Reflection And Attunement In The Cultivation Of Well-Being



## Synopsis

A new framework for maintaining mental health and well-being. From the author of the internationally-acclaimed best-selling text *The Developing Mind*, and esteemed leader and educator in the field of mental health, comes the first book ever to integrate neuroscience research with the ancient art of mindfulness. The result is a groundbreaking approach to not simply mental health, but life in general, which shows readers how personal awareness and attunement can actually stimulate emotional circuits in the brain, leading to a host of physiological benefits, including greater well-being, resilience, emotional balance, and improved cardiac and immune function. For clinicians and laypeople alike, Siegel's illuminating discussions of the power of the focused mind provide a wealth of ideas that can transform our lives and deepen our connections with others, and with ourselves.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

Siegel, co-director of the UCLA Mindful Awareness Center, blends personal experience with scientific research, attempting to capture the spiritual as well as the physiological phenomenon of "mindfulness"-or, in Siegel's acronym-speak, COAL: the state of simultaneous Curiosity, Openness, Acceptance and Love. Siegel's endeavor is timely and well-intentioned, but his is an elusive subject, and his text is peppered with confusing, semi-technical descriptions of mind-states (like meditation) and processes (like egocentric and allocentric circuitry) that frequently frustrate. Despite this, Siegel does introduce persuasive scientific evidence that meditation and the mindful state not only produce

improvement in well-being, but also detectable physical changes in the brain, such as a thickening of the middle prefrontal lobes. He also introduces exotic new vocabulary, such as "ipseity," "the core sense of self beneath the usual personal identity." If the result of Siegel's marriage of medicine and mysticism is something of a muddle, he is to be commended for the effort, and his attitude toward science is unique in a medical doctor (tellingly, Siegel took a sabbatical from med school after being reprimanded for empathizing with his patients, rather than objectifying them, and used the time to pursue drawing and dancing). Though uneven and weighed down with too many acronyms, this is a notable science title that smartly combines the personal, the clinical and the spiritual. Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

In-depth as well as life changing. . . .The ideas will enrich one's own mindfulness practice and enhance one's therapeutic skills. (The American Journal of Psychiatry)

This is an excellent book in need of some editing. I have the sense it is one of Siegel's earlier books, as his later MINDSIGHT seems more polished. The pros: The book offers an incredible amount of information and understanding about the relationships between the functions and attributes of consciousness and the structures of the brain. It is really a "brain-mind" primer. The author is clearly of the opinion that mind is not merely an epiphenomenon of the brain, but an equal creator of it. If the brain is hardware, then the mind is the experiential aspect of using a computer--one step up from software, in fact. The number of areas the text touches upon is staggering: from child development to parenting, education, meditation, psychotherapy, you name it. Siegel is one of the leaders in this field, and the book offers an extensive bibliography of books and articles consulted in the writing. If someone has the time, a second reading is definitely warranted as the information can be overwhelming. Cons: This is part of the problem with the text and why I'm not giving it five stars. It is at times repetitive, stating the same things over and over in different ways. This can make it feel poorly organized. Sometimes the discussion of brain structures is on the rather dry and technical side, and this can seem a little irrelevant at times, especially for non-specialists. This was another issue: I had the sense the author was unable to target a specific audience. Was he writing for neuroscientists or laypersons? Sometimes it seemed like the former, sometimes the latter. The text was as a result alternately overly technical and at other times just right (for me, at least). Often the figures and diagrams were not where they should have been and the writing seemed awkward--clear indications that an editor (or two) was asleep on the job. Overall, this is a very good book--not entirely introductory--and this author clearly has much to offer. I am

starting in now on MINDSIGHT, which, as noted, appears a more polished, more focused work. The science here is exciting and this book is just scratching the surface, a start and going in the right direction, it seems to me.

I've always been a fan of this author, he is a scholar, excellent writer and based on his writing a wise individual. What makes this book especially good from my perspective is the balancing of subjective information from the world's wisdom traditions and his own interior experience with their physical correlates i.e. rigorous science without reducing either to the other. This is extremely refreshing and this carefully researched book adopts an attitude of openness, curiosity and wonder. In addition, THE MINDFUL BRAIN is NOT written solely for academically minded individuals or psychologists. It is very readable by any intelligent layperson and extremely engaging. It is theoretical, but also compellingly practical in the spirit of *Parenting From the Inside Out*, which I highly recommend as well. I also *The Developing Mind: How Relationships and the Brain Interact to Shape Who We Are* is an incredible book. However, this is much less accessible to the average person than this volume and the one in the preceding paragraph. More concisely, what Daniel Siegel has done is brought together what we know from the various contemplative traditions, mind-body medicine and neuroscience together in a compelling argument for the value of mindfulness to everyday life, happiness and health. I would think this would be something everyone would be interested in. While it's a wonderful adaptation to be able to think ahead, plan, etc. This often carries one out of the HERE and NOW moment and keeps us on a treadmill of postponing our fulfillment. This book is about balancing our ability to look forward while remaining anchored in the present... the only place where love, happiness and peace could be found. I work in this area and have graduate education in biology, biochemistry and psychology. This is my life's passion and I own many books on this topic and present workshops. This is in many ways the book I wish I had written although humbly I must admit Daniel Siegel would be an extremely difficult person to top. Hopefully, however, someday I will be able to add value by complimenting his and other people's good work.

Very dense read but excellent information. Will take me, a non-practitioner, to get through.

Absolutely brilliant for both professional and non professionals . I have used this book and some others, but principally this one along with others by Dan Siegel to inform my medical lectures on the neuroscience of mindfulness for both clients and other professionals who need to know how to talk

about mindfulness and its base in neuroscience so as to interest clients to actually engage in mindfulness practice and so as to interest professionals to be interested enough to teach it simply to their clients.

Fantastic. Siegel points us in a tried and true direction, which many practices have pointed to for hundreds or thousands of years, but with new insight. If everyone followed his advice on developing and maintaining a healthy brain, humanity would fundamentally change for the better.

This is a detailed thoughtful book about mindfulness. I work in the field of neurology so I appreciate the scientific theories of how our minds are impacted by mindfulness practice. It is beautifully read by the author who has a soothing, honest, relaxed way of speaking.

AAAAA++++++

This is a really well written book that everyone can understand. It is worth the time to read it and a great book to read over again. Awareness is a gift and this shows us how important this gift is in our lives.

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