

altered my brain chemistry meaning

Altered My Brain Chemistry Meaning: Understanding the Changes Within

altered my brain chemistry meaning is a phrase that you might have come across in conversations about mental health, drug use, or even personal growth. But what does it truly mean when someone says their brain chemistry has been altered? At its core, this expression refers to changes in the balance or functioning of chemicals in the brain—neurotransmitters and hormones—that influence mood, cognition, behavior, and overall mental state. These changes can be temporary or long-lasting, intentional or accidental, beneficial or harmful, depending on the context.

If you've ever wondered what it means to have your brain chemistry altered, how it happens, and why it matters, this article aims to explore those questions in depth. We'll break down the science behind brain chemistry, discuss common causes of alterations, and shed light on the implications for mental health and daily life.

What Does Altered Brain Chemistry Actually Mean?

When people talk about altered brain chemistry, they're generally referring to changes in the levels or activity of neurotransmitters—chemical messengers like serotonin, dopamine, GABA, and norepinephrine—that regulate how neurons communicate. These chemicals play a critical role in controlling mood, motivation, attention, sleep, appetite, and many other functions.

An alteration in brain chemistry means that the usual balance of these neurotransmitters has shifted. This can happen due to external substances, internal biological changes, or environmental factors. For example, taking certain medications or drugs can increase or decrease neurotransmitter levels, leading to changes in how a person feels or thinks.

Neurotransmitters: The Brain's Chemical Messengers

To better grasp the concept of altered brain chemistry, it helps to understand what neurotransmitters do:

- **Serotonin:** Often called the “feel-good” neurotransmitter, it regulates mood, anxiety, and happiness.
- **Dopamine:** Involved in reward, motivation, and pleasure.
- **GABA (Gamma-Aminobutyric Acid):** Acts as an inhibitory neurotransmitter, calming brain activity and reducing anxiety.
- **Norepinephrine:** Influences alertness and stress responses.

When the balance of these chemicals changes, it can lead to shifts in emotional and cognitive states. For instance, low serotonin levels are linked with depression, while an

excess of dopamine in certain brain areas can be associated with psychosis.

Common Causes of Altered Brain Chemistry

Many factors can influence brain chemistry, ranging from lifestyle choices to medical conditions. Understanding these causes can provide insight into why someone might say, “I altered my brain chemistry,” or why they feel different mentally or emotionally.

Medications and Psychiatric Drugs

One of the most common reasons for altered brain chemistry is the use of pharmaceutical drugs. Antidepressants, antipsychotics, mood stabilizers, and anxiolytics are designed specifically to adjust neurotransmitter levels and improve mental health symptoms.

For example:

- **Selective Serotonin Reuptake Inhibitors (SSRIs):** Increase serotonin availability to help alleviate depression.
- **Benzodiazepines:** Enhance GABA activity to reduce anxiety.

While these medications aim to restore balance, they inherently change brain chemistry, which is why people often talk about their brain chemistry being altered.

Substance Use and Abuse

Drugs like alcohol, cannabis, cocaine, and psychedelics alter brain chemistry by interacting with neurotransmitter systems. For instance, cocaine increases dopamine levels, producing intense feelings of euphoria but also risking long-term changes that can lead to addiction.

Psychedelics such as LSD and psilocybin influence serotonin receptors, leading to altered perception and consciousness. Although these substances alter the brain’s chemistry temporarily, repeated or heavy use may cause lasting effects.

Stress and Trauma

Chronic stress or traumatic experiences can significantly impact brain chemistry. Stress hormones like cortisol influence neurotransmitter systems, often reducing serotonin and dopamine levels, which can contribute to anxiety, depression, and cognitive difficulties.

Interestingly, altering brain chemistry through stress is usually involuntary and can produce negative emotional and physical outcomes if not addressed.

Lifestyle Factors

Even everyday habits can cause subtle changes in brain chemistry. Factors such as diet, exercise, sleep quality, and social interaction play a role in maintaining neurotransmitter balance.

- **Exercise:** Boosts endorphins and dopamine, often improving mood.
- **Poor sleep:** Disrupts serotonin and cortisol levels, leading to irritability or impaired cognition.
- **Nutrition:** Nutrient deficiencies (like B vitamins or omega-3 fatty acids) can affect neurotransmitter synthesis.

These lifestyle elements illustrate how brain chemistry is dynamic and responsive to our environment and choices.

The Impact of Altered Brain Chemistry on Mental Health

When brain chemistry changes, it often manifests as shifts in mood, thought patterns, and behavior. Understanding this connection is key to recognizing the role brain chemistry plays in mental health conditions.

Depression and Anxiety

Altered brain chemistry is closely linked to mood disorders. For example, low serotonin and norepinephrine activity are commonly associated with depression, while imbalances in GABA and glutamate systems can contribute to anxiety disorders.

This is why treatments for these conditions frequently involve medications that modify neurotransmitter levels, alongside therapy and lifestyle changes.

Addiction and Dependence

Substance-induced alterations in brain chemistry can lead to addiction, where the brain's reward system becomes hijacked, often through excessive dopamine release. This makes resisting drug use challenging and can cause long-term changes in brain function, affecting decision-making and impulse control.

Cognitive and Behavioral Changes

Altered brain chemistry doesn't just influence mood; it can also impact memory, attention, motivation, and sleep. For instance, changes in acetylcholine levels affect learning and

memory, while disruptions in dopamine signaling can impair focus and motivation.

Is Altering Brain Chemistry Always Negative?

The phrase “altered my brain chemistry” might sound alarming, but it isn’t always a bad thing. In fact, many therapeutic interventions intentionally alter brain chemistry to promote healing and well-being.

Therapeutic Interventions

Medications used in psychiatry are designed to correct chemical imbalances to alleviate symptoms. This intentional alteration can lead to improved mood, reduced anxiety, better sleep, and enhanced functioning.

Similarly, practices like meditation and mindfulness have been shown to influence brain chemistry positively by increasing serotonin and GABA levels, promoting relaxation and emotional balance.

Natural Brain Chemistry Adjustments

Our brains naturally adjust their chemistry in response to experiences and learning. For example, engaging in rewarding activities or forming new habits can increase dopamine release, reinforcing positive behaviors.

Even simple actions like spending time outdoors, socializing, or listening to music can subtly shift neurotransmitter dynamics, improving mood and mental clarity.

How to Support Healthy Brain Chemistry

Since brain chemistry plays a vital role in mental and emotional health, supporting it through healthy habits can make a big difference in how we feel and function daily.

- **Maintain a balanced diet:** Nutrient-rich foods provide the building blocks for neurotransmitter production.
- **Exercise regularly:** Physical activity boosts endorphins and dopamine, enhancing mood and energy.
- **Prioritize quality sleep:** Sleep is essential for neurotransmitter regulation and brain repair.
- **Manage stress:** Techniques like meditation, yoga, or deep breathing can reduce

cortisol levels and restore balance.

- **Avoid substance abuse:** Limiting alcohol and drug use helps maintain stable brain chemistry.
- **Seek professional help when needed:** Therapy and medications can be critical tools for managing significant chemical imbalances.

Monitoring and Awareness

Being aware of how your mood and mental state fluctuate can provide clues about your brain chemistry. If you notice persistent changes in mood, motivation, or cognition, it's worth consulting a healthcare provider. They can evaluate whether altered brain chemistry is a factor and recommend appropriate interventions.

Ultimately, understanding the altered my brain chemistry meaning empowers you to make informed decisions about your mental health and well-being.

Exploring the concept of altered brain chemistry reveals the intricate dance of chemicals that shape our thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. Whether through medications, lifestyle changes, or life experiences, these shifts remind us of the brain's remarkable plasticity and the importance of nurturing it with care and knowledge.

Frequently Asked Questions

What does it mean to say something has altered my brain chemistry?

Altering brain chemistry means that a substance, behavior, or experience has changed the balance or function of neurotransmitters and chemicals in the brain, potentially affecting mood, cognition, or behavior.

Can medications alter my brain chemistry?

Yes, many medications, especially psychiatric drugs like antidepressants or antipsychotics, work by altering brain chemistry to help manage symptoms of mental health conditions.

Is altering brain chemistry always harmful?

Not necessarily. While some changes can be harmful, others, such as those induced by therapy or medication, can be beneficial and help restore healthy brain function.

How does drug use alter brain chemistry?

Drugs can alter brain chemistry by increasing or decreasing levels of neurotransmitters like dopamine or serotonin, which can lead to changes in mood, perception, and behavior, sometimes causing addiction.

Can stress alter my brain chemistry?

Yes, chronic stress can alter brain chemistry by affecting neurotransmitter levels and hormone release, which may impact mood, memory, and overall brain function.

Does diet have an effect on brain chemistry?

Diet influences brain chemistry by providing essential nutrients needed for neurotransmitter production and brain cell health, thereby affecting mood and cognitive function.

Are the effects of altered brain chemistry permanent?

It depends; some changes are temporary and reversible, while prolonged exposure to certain substances or conditions can cause long-lasting or permanent alterations.

How can therapy alter brain chemistry?

Therapies like cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT) can indirectly alter brain chemistry by changing thought patterns and behaviors, which can lead to changes in neurotransmitter activity.

What are common signs that my brain chemistry has been altered?

Signs may include changes in mood, energy levels, sleep patterns, cognition, or behavior, such as increased anxiety, depression, or difficulty concentrating.

Can exercise alter my brain chemistry?

Yes, regular exercise can positively alter brain chemistry by increasing the release of endorphins, serotonin, and other neurotransmitters that improve mood and cognitive function.

Additional Resources

Altered My Brain Chemistry Meaning: Understanding the Implications and Mechanisms

altered my brain chemistry meaning is a phrase that often emerges in conversations about mental health, neurology, and the effects of various substances or experiences on the human mind. At its core, this expression refers to changes in the balance or function of

neurotransmitters, receptors, or neural pathways that influence how the brain operates. Such alterations can have profound effects on mood, cognition, behavior, and overall mental well-being.

In contemporary discourse, the phrase is frequently encountered in contexts ranging from the impact of psychiatric medications and recreational drug use to the effects of trauma or chronic stress. However, understanding what it truly means to have one's brain chemistry altered requires a nuanced examination of the biological processes underpinning neural function and the diverse factors capable of inducing change.

Decoding Brain Chemistry: What Does It Entail?

Brain chemistry refers to the complex network of chemicals—primarily neurotransmitters—that facilitate communication between neurons. These chemical messengers, such as serotonin, dopamine, gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), and norepinephrine, regulate everything from mood and anxiety levels to motivation and reward processing. When someone says they have “altered my brain chemistry,” they are indicating that these biochemical balances or signaling pathways have shifted, either temporarily or permanently.

Alterations can be endogenous, stemming from genetic predispositions or physiological changes, or exogenous, triggered by external factors like drug intake or environmental stressors. The brain's plasticity allows it to adapt, sometimes beneficially, but in other cases, such changes may lead to disorders such as depression, anxiety, or psychosis.

Neurotransmitters and Their Role in Brain Chemistry

The brain's chemical milieu is dominated by several key neurotransmitters:

- **Serotonin:** Often linked to mood regulation, sleep, and appetite.
- **Dopamine:** Central to reward, motivation, and motor control.
- **GABA:** The primary inhibitory neurotransmitter, which helps reduce neuronal excitability.
- **Norepinephrine:** Influences alertness, arousal, and stress responses.

Disruptions in the levels or receptor sensitivities of these neurotransmitters can cause shifts in emotional and cognitive states. For instance, decreased serotonin levels are commonly associated with depression, while altered dopamine pathways have been implicated in schizophrenia and addiction.

Factors That Can Alter Brain Chemistry

Understanding what causes changes in brain chemistry is essential for grasping the meaning behind the phrase “altered my brain chemistry.” Several factors contribute to these changes, each with distinct mechanisms and outcomes.

Pharmacological Agents

Medications, particularly psychotropic drugs, intentionally modify brain chemistry to alleviate symptoms of mental health disorders. Antidepressants like selective serotonin reuptake inhibitors (SSRIs) increase serotonin availability in synapses, while antipsychotics modulate dopamine receptors.

Conversely, recreational drugs such as cocaine, methamphetamine, and hallucinogens can cause rapid and sometimes harmful alterations in neurotransmitter systems. For example, stimulants increase dopamine release, resulting in heightened euphoria but potentially leading to neurotoxicity and addiction.

Psychological Stress and Trauma

Chronic stress and traumatic events can induce neurochemical changes that alter brain function. Elevated cortisol levels during stress affect neurotransmitter balance and neural connectivity, potentially leading to anxiety and depressive symptoms. Post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) is often characterized by such neurochemical dysregulation.

Diet, Exercise, and Lifestyle

Lifestyle choices also influence brain chemistry. Nutritional deficits can impair neurotransmitter synthesis, while regular physical activity has been shown to increase endorphin and serotonin levels, promoting mental well-being. Sleep patterns further modulate neurochemical balance, with sleep deprivation leading to altered dopamine and adenosine signaling.

Implications of Altered Brain Chemistry

Altering brain chemistry can have a spectrum of consequences, ranging from therapeutic benefits to adverse effects. It is crucial to consider these implications in clinical, social, and personal contexts.

Therapeutic Benefits and Risks

Psychiatric medications that alter brain chemistry have revolutionized the treatment of mental illnesses. By restoring neurotransmitter balance, they can reduce symptoms and improve quality of life. However, these interventions may also lead to side effects such as emotional blunting, dependency, or withdrawal syndromes, underscoring the importance of careful management.

Substance Use and Brain Chemistry Alterations

Recreational drugs can dramatically change brain chemistry, leading to altered perceptions, mood swings, and behavior. While some substances may have therapeutic potential (e.g., psilocybin in controlled settings), uncontrolled use often results in long-term neurochemical imbalances, addiction, and cognitive deficits.

Neuroplasticity and Adaptation

The brain's ability to adapt—neuroplasticity—means that altered brain chemistry is not always permanent. Positive lifestyle changes, psychotherapy, and rehabilitation can help restore balance. Nevertheless, some alterations, especially those arising from injury or prolonged substance abuse, may be more resistant to reversal.

Measuring and Assessing Changes in Brain Chemistry

Direct measurement of brain chemistry in humans is challenging due to the complexity and inaccessibility of the brain. However, several methods provide indirect or localized insights.

Neuroimaging Techniques

Advanced imaging technologies such as positron emission tomography (PET) and magnetic resonance spectroscopy (MRS) allow researchers to observe neurotransmitter activity and receptor density in specific brain regions. These tools have been pivotal in understanding disorders like depression and schizophrenia.

Biochemical Markers and Cerebrospinal Fluid Analysis

Analyzing neurotransmitter metabolites in cerebrospinal fluid (CSF) offers additional data on brain chemistry alterations. Though invasive, this method can complement imaging

findings to provide a more comprehensive picture.

Behavioral and Psychological Assessments

Changes in brain chemistry often manifest through behavioral symptoms. Psychological scales and cognitive testing remain essential for assessing the functional outcomes of neurochemical alterations.

The Broader Context: Societal and Ethical Considerations

The phrase “altered my brain chemistry” also touches on broader debates regarding identity, autonomy, and the medicalization of mental states.

Perception and Stigma

Acknowledging brain chemistry changes can validate experiences of mental illness but may also contribute to stigma by implying a fixed biological defect. Balancing biological explanations with psychosocial factors remains a challenge in public discourse.

Pharmaceutical Influence and Ethics

The widespread use of medications that alter brain chemistry raises questions about overprescription, informed consent, and long-term impacts. Ethical prescribing demands transparency about potential benefits and risks.

Emerging Technologies and Future Directions

Novel interventions such as deep brain stimulation and gene therapy aim to modulate brain chemistry with precision, offering hope for treatment-resistant conditions. However, these advances necessitate rigorous ethical scrutiny.

Alterations in brain chemistry represent a complex interplay of biology, environment, and behavior. The phrase “altered my brain chemistry meaning” encapsulates a multifaceted phenomenon that is central to understanding mental health, addiction, and neurological function. As research continues to unravel the intricate mechanisms at play, a more informed and compassionate perspective on brain chemistry changes will hopefully emerge, guiding both clinical practice and societal attitudes.

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altered my brain chemistry meaning: My Search for Meaning Viola M. Jaynes, 2011-06 My Search for Meaning is an intimate collection of memories of a child growing up first in an orphanage in Germany, then in Middle America. Abandoned by her mother - who escaped East Germany just as the Berlin Wall was being erected - the child finds herself alone in a hard-to-understand world that is itself undergoing great change. Against a pervasive backdrop of loneliness, institutional life and brutal betrayals, there is still the innocence and wonder of childhood and sudden, inexplicable joys. A sensitive child in life without a protector learns to go on instinct. What informs instinct in this memoir is a seedling faith in the overall goodness of life, a belief that things will, with time and effort, work together for good. What begins as a search for answers becomes a journey of understanding. As the mystery unfolds a young woman emerges, forged from all she has endured but also from mercy and compassion and a deeply held conviction that each of us, at any moment, can transform our lives.

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altered my brain chemistry meaning: A Theory of Thrills, Sublime and Epiphany in Literature Nigel Fabb, 2022-07-05 This book offers a psychological account of thrills (goosebumps and tears),

of the epiphanic experience of seeing ordinary things in a profoundly new way, and of the experience of the sublime. The unifying characteristic of these 'strong experiences' is that they all begin with surprise. They are important in literature: literature is about these experiences, and literature can cause these experiences. This book offers an overview of theories of these kinds of experience, and of what might cause them to happen. In the final chapter, various literary strategies are explored as possible causes. The book draws on psychological accounts of surprise, and of emotion, and cognitive approaches to what knowledge is, why it is possible to have feelings of profound knowledge, and why what we know can sometimes not be put into words.

altered my brain chemistry meaning: Picturing Personhood Joseph Dumit, 2004 Based on interviews, media analysis, and participant observation at research labs and conferences, then author analyzes how assumptions designed into and read out of the experimental process reinforce specific notions about human nature. Such assumptions can enter the process at any turn, from selecting subjects and mathematical models to deciding which images to publish and how to color them. Once they leave the laboratory, PET scans shape social debates, influence courtroom outcomes, and have positive and negative consequences for people suffering mental illness. The author follows this complex story, demonstrating how brain scans, as scientific objects, contribute to our increasing social dependence on scientific authority.--BOOKJACKET.

altered my brain chemistry meaning: Contemporary Literary Criticism Sharon R. Gunton, 1973 Approximately sixty-five entries include critical commentary about the work of a variety of novelists, poets, playwrights, and other creative writers in the young adult genre.

altered my brain chemistry meaning: Persons and their Minds Svend Brinkmann, 2017-07-06 Today's approaches to the study of the human mind are divided into seemingly opposed camps. On one side we find the neurosciences, with their more or less reductionist research programs, and on the other side we find the cultural and discursive approaches, with their frequent neglect of the material sides of human life. *Persons and their Minds* seeks to develop an integrative theory of the mind with room for both brain and culture. Brinkmann's remarkable and thought-provoking work is one of the first books to integrate brain research with phenomenology, social practice studies and actor-network theory, all of which are held together by the concept of the person. Brinkmann's new and informative approach to the person, the mind and mental disorder give this book a wide scope. The author uses Rom Harré's hybrid psychology as a meta-theoretical starting point and expands this significantly by including four sources of mediators: the brain, the body, social practices and technological artefacts. The author draws on findings from cultural psychology and argues that the mind is normative in the sense that mental processes do not simply happen, but can be done more or less well, and thus are subject to normative appraisal. In addition to informative theoretical discussions, this book includes a number of detailed case studies, including a study of ADHD from the integrated perspective. Consequently, the book will be of great interest to academics and researchers in the fields of psychology, philosophy, sociology and psychiatry.

altered my brain chemistry meaning: When Water Runs Uphill Mary Linda Landauer, 2007-06-27 A spiritual fiction about one woman's powerful transformation of consciousness. Her unusual altered experiences fail to accommodate and assimilate into her present worldview. She must make a choice; face a trauma of possible madness or transform and transcend into a higher and deeper structure within herself. A new worldview must arise that will allow her mind and heart more flexibility; a safe place for her soul and its powerful, subtle energy to emerge, and become a stable force for transmitting greater peace and harmony into the world.

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give perceptive insights into the complex fields of drug abuse, addiction, treatment, recovery & prevention. An interactive website with testing abilities, links to other sites, articles from the Journal of Psychoactive Drugs & case studies has been developed specifically for use with this edition (visit cnsproductions.com).

altered my brain chemistry meaning: Brain and Art Idan Segev, Luis M. Martinez, Robert J. Zatorre, 2014-12-18 Could we understand, in biological terms, the unique and fantastic capabilities of the human brain to both create and enjoy art? In the past decade neuroscience has made a huge leap in developing experimental techniques as well as theoretical frameworks for studying emergent properties following the activity of large neuronal networks. These methods, including MEG, fMRI, sophisticated data analysis approaches and behavioral methods, are increasingly being used in many labs worldwide, with the goal to explore brain mechanisms corresponding to the artistic experience. The 37 articles composing this unique Frontiers Research Topic bring together experimental and theoretical research, linking state-of-the-art knowledge about the brain with the phenomena of Art. It covers a broad scope of topics, contributed by world-renowned experts in vision, audition, somato-sensation, movement, and cinema. Importantly, as we felt that a dialog among artists and scientists is essential and fruitful, we invited a few artists to contribute their insights, as well as their art. Joan Miró said that “art is the search for the alphabet of the mind.” This volume reflects the state of the art search to understand neurobiological alphabet of the Arts. We hope that the wide range of articles in this volume will be highly attractive to brain researchers, artists and the community at large.

altered my brain chemistry meaning: **Mad Studies Reader** Bradley Lewis, Alisha Ali, Jazmine Russell, 2024-09-30 The last few years have brought increased writings from activists, artists, scholars, and concerned clinicians that cast a critical and constructive eye on psychiatry, mental health care, and the cultural relations of mental difference. With particular focus on accounts of lived experience and readings that cover issues of epistemic and social injustice in mental health discourse, the Mad Studies Reader brings together voices that advance anti-sanist approaches to scholarship, practice, art, and activism in this realm. Beyond offering a theoretical and historical overview of mad studies, this Reader draws on the perspectives, voices, and experiences of artists, mad pride activists, humanities and social science scholars, and critical clinicians to explore the complexity of mental life and mental difference. Voices from these groups confront and challenge standard approaches to mental difference. They advance new structures of meaning and practice that are inclusive of those who have been systematically subjugated and promote anti-sanist approaches to counter inequalities, prejudices, and discrimination. Confronting modes of psychological oppression and the power of a few to interpret and define difference for so many, the Mad Studies Reader asks the critical question of how these approaches may be reconsidered, resisted, and reclaimed. This collection will be of interest to mental health clinicians; students and scholars of the arts, humanities and social sciences; and anyone who has been affected by mental difference, directly or indirectly, who is curious to explore new perspectives.

altered my brain chemistry meaning: *Thinking Beyond the Brain* David Lorimer, 2001 Consciousness is the hot topic in scientific circles--its precise nature holding huge implications for the future of science as a viable discipline. And with so many recent advances in brain studies, questions of mind and consciousness have become critically important for both theorists and hard scientists. Are we nothing but a pack of neurons that will in due course reveal their secrets in the laboratory? Or do our conscious mind and self-awareness stem from some dimension beyond material investigation? How, too, are we to account for parapsychological phenomena in which consciousness seems to defy space and time boundaries? These latest contributions to the debate--selected from the annual Beyond the Brain conferences--show that it is time for radical rethinking of our theories and methods in investigating phenomena of the human mind.

altered my brain chemistry meaning: *The Ravenous Brain* Daniel Bor, 2012-08-28 Consciousness is our gateway to experience: it enables us to recognize Van Gogh's starry skies, be enraptured by Beethoven's Fifth, and stand in awe of a snowcapped mountain. Yet consciousness is

subjective, personal, and famously difficult to examine: philosophers have for centuries declared this mental entity so mysterious as to be impenetrable to science. In *The Ravenous Brain*, neuroscientist Daniel Bor departs sharply from this historical view, and builds on the latest research to propose a new model for how consciousness works. Bor argues that this brain-based faculty evolved as an accelerated knowledge gathering tool. Consciousness is effectively an idea factory -- that choice mental space dedicated to innovation, a key component of which is the discovery of deep structures within the contents of our awareness. This model explains our brains; ravenous appetite for information -- and in particular, its constant search for patterns. Why, for instance, after all our physical needs have been met, do we recreationally solve crossword or Sudoku puzzles? Such behavior may appear biologically wasteful, but, according to Bor, this search for structure can yield immense evolutionary benefits -- it led our ancestors to discover fire and farming, pushed modern society to forge ahead in science and technology, and guides each one of us to understand and control the world around us. But the sheer innovative power of human consciousness carries with it the heavy cost of mental fragility. Bor discusses the medical implications of his theory of consciousness, and what it means for the origins and treatment of psychiatric ailments, including attention-deficit disorder, schizophrenia, manic depression, and autism. All mental illnesses, he argues, can be reformulated as disorders of consciousness -- a perspective that opens up new avenues of treatment for alleviating mental suffering. A controversial view of consciousness, *The Ravenous Brain* links cognition to creativity in an ingenious solution to one of science's biggest mysteries.

altered my brain chemistry meaning: *Symmetry 2* I. Hargittai, 2016-02-25 *Symmetry 2* aims to present an overview of the contemporary status of symmetry studies, particularly in the arts and sciences, emphasizing both its role and importance. Symmetry is not only one of the fundamental concepts in science, but is also possibly the best unifying concept between various branches of science, the arts and other human activities. Whereas symmetry has been considered important for centuries primarily for its aesthetic appeal, this century has witnessed a dramatic enhancement of its status as a cornerstone in the sciences. In addition to traditionally symmetry-oriented fields such as crystallography and spectroscopy, the concept has made headway in fields as varied as reaction chemistry, nuclear physics, and the study of the origin of the universe. The book was initiated in response to the success of the first volume, which not only received good reviews, but received the award for The Best Single Issue of a Journal by the Association of American Publishers for 1986. The second volume extends the application of symmetry to new fields, such as medical sciences and economics, as well as investigating further certain topics introduced in *Symmetry*. The book is extensively illustrated and with over 64 contributions from 16 countries presents an international overview of the nature and diversity of symmetry studies today.

altered my brain chemistry meaning: *The Psilocybin Solution* Simon G. Powell, 2011-06-23 How psilocybin mushrooms facilitate a direct link to the wisdom of Nature and the meaning of life • Examines the neurochemistry underlying the visionary psilocybin experience • Explains how sacred mushrooms help restore our connection to the natural intelligence of Nature • Reviews the research on psilocybin's ability to dispel anxiety in the terminally ill and its helpful effects on obsessive-compulsive disorder It has been more than 50 years since sacred mushrooms were plucked from the shamanic backwaters of Mexico and presented to the modern world by R. Gordon Wasson. After sparking the psychedelic era of the 1960s, however, the divine mushroom returned underground from whence it mysteriously originated. Yet today, the mushroom's extraordinary influence is once again being felt by large numbers of people, due to the discovery of hundreds of wild psilocybin species growing across the globe. In *The Psilocybin Solution*, Simon G. Powell traces the history of the sacred psilocybin mushroom and discusses the shamanic visionary effects it can induce. Detailing how psilocybin acts as a profound enhancer of consciousness and reviewing the research performed by the Multidisciplinary Association for Psychedelic Studies (MAPS), Johns Hopkins University, and the Heffter Research Institute on psilocybin's ability to dispel anxiety in the terminally ill and its helpful effects on obsessive-compulsive disorder, he examines the

neurochemistry, psychology, and spirituality underlying the visionary psilocybin experience, revealing the interface where physical brain and conscious mind meet. Showing that the existence of life and the functioning of mind are the result of a naturally intelligent, self-organizing Universe, he explains how sacred mushrooms provide a direct link to the wisdom of Nature and the meaning of life.

altered my brain chemistry meaning: This Close to Happy Daphne Merkin, 2017-02-07 “A cleareyed, insightful account of how she felt during her nosedives into despair . . . shot through with a self-awareness that helps readers cheer her on.”—The New York Times A New York Times Book Review Favorite Read of the Year “Despair is always described as dull,” writes Daphne Merkin, “when the truth is that despair has a light all its own, a lunar glow, the color of mottled silver.” This Close to Happy—Merkin’s rare, vividly personal account of what it feels like to suffer from clinical depression—captures this strange light. Merkin has been hospitalized three times: first, in grade school, for childhood depression; years later, after her daughter was born, for severe postpartum depression; and later still, after her mother died, for obsessive suicidal thinking. Recounting this series of hospitalizations, as well as her visits to myriad therapists and psychopharmacologists, Merkin portrays the lifelong arc of her affliction, beginning in a childhood largely bereft of love and stretching into the present, where she lives a high-functioning life and her depression is manageable, if not “cured.” The opposite of depression, she writes with characteristic insight, is not a state of unimaginable happiness, but a state of relative all-right-ness. In this dark yet vital memoir, Merkin describes not only the harrowing sorrow that she has known all her life, but also her early, redemptive love of reading and gradual emergence as a writer. Written with an acute understanding of the ways in which her condition has evolved as well as affected those around her, This Close to Happy is an utterly candid coming-to-terms with an illness that is still often stigmatized and shrouded in misunderstanding. “[A] mesmerizing memoir.” —Booklist (starred review) “Brings a stunningly perceptive voice to the forefront of the conversation about depression, one that is both reassuring and revelatory.” —Carol Gilligan, author of *In a Different Voice*

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altered my brain chemistry meaning: Recovering the Self Andrew D. Gibson, 2010-01-31 Recovering the Self: A Journal of Hope and Healing (Vol. III, No. 1) January 2011 Recovering The Self is a quarterly journal which explores the themes of recovery and healing through the lenses of poetry, memoir, opinion, essays, fiction, humor, art, media reviews and psychoeducation. Contributors to RTS Journal come from around the globe to deliver unique perspectives you won't find anywhere else! The theme of Volume III, Number 1 is New Beginnings. Inside, we explore this and several other areas of concern including: Diet Health & Chronic Illness Fitness Parenting Disaster Recovery Child Abuse Survivors Relationships Substance Abuse Recovery Grieving Incarceration Journaling ...and much more! This issue's contributors include: Barbara Sinor, Chandru Bhojwani, David Roberts, Sam Vaknin, Niall McLaren, Allison Ballard, Claire Luna-Pinsker, Holli Kenley, Kat Fasano-Nicotera, Bronnie Ware, Jim Kelly, Andrew D. Gibson, Larry

Hayes, George W. Doherty, Bonnie Spence, Sweta Srivastava Vikram, Michaela Sefler, RD Armstrong, Devon Tomasulo, Patricia Wellingham-Jones, Sue Sheff, Gail Straub Daniel Tomasulo, and Diane Wing. I highly recommend a subscription to this journal, *Recovering the Self*, for professionals who are in the counseling profession or who deal with crisis situations. Readers involved with the healing process will also really enjoy this journal and feel inspired to continue on. The topics covered in the first journal alone, will motivate you to continue reading books on the subject matter presented. Guaranteed. --Paige Lovitt for Reader Views Visit us online at www.RecoveringSelf.com Published by Loving Healing Press www.LovingHealing.com Periodicals: Literary - Journal Self-Help: Personal Growth - Happiness

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