



Creating a Culture of Valued People



Serotonin, Master of Your Mood

Serotonin the master modulator

Serotonin is a chemical that the brain produces under conditions when it senses being valued by others. Serotonin is in the super class of chemicals called neuromodulators. In fact neuroscientists like Pamla Heart call it the master modulator. In a *Lord of the Rings* metaphor it is the one ring that controls them all. It interacts with GPCR that has long term rather than instant effects on neurons, that literally change the expression of the DNA inside the cells of the body. Serotonin moves the brain and body by extension into thrive mode. It up-regulates stimulation into manageable realms. It regulates the forces of dopamine, fear, pain and satisfaction to optimal states so that we function at our highest potential as human beings.

Modulating dopamine

Dopamine is serotonin's dangerous twin. Dopamine when unregulated can drive us into the addictive pursuit of stuff, goals or substances. It is at the heart of addictions and vices. It is also at the heart of the drive towards creating things, companies and products. Dopamine has been the focus of leaders in organizations. However, dopamine has this built in fail-safe, it down-regulates. It does this to release our brains from the unhealthy pursuit of stuff, and goals. It releases us from what would become an obsessive pursuit of unhealthy goals. Dopamine out of control ultimately destroys individuals and cultures that run after it with abandon. Dopamine down-regulation will so drive the pleasure of pursuit away that people are left feeling more pain, more depressed than when they first started pursuing their excessive dopamine-driven goals.

However, when dopamine is regulated by the more powerful modulator serotonin, dopamine can safely and optimally function. When safe, valuing cultures contain the drive of dopamine both function optimally moving us first toward the value of people and second to goals that serve people and do not make us slaves to our desires and pursuits.

Exercise for Group

Have you ever pursued something only to find it rather unfulfilling once you obtained it?

What in your life gives you a sense of strength or contentment?

What time in your life did you feel the most at peace with yourself? Were you surrounded by good people at that time?

Summarize this lesson in your own words or sketch.

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Habit exercise for this week.

This is a thought habit.

Notice throughout the week when you feel if you are valuing people more or stuff more. Circle the one that dominated. Then notice how you felt overall that day.

- TUE value people or stuff. feeling
- WED value people or stuff. feeling
- THU value people or stuff. feeling
- FRI value people or stuff. feeling

