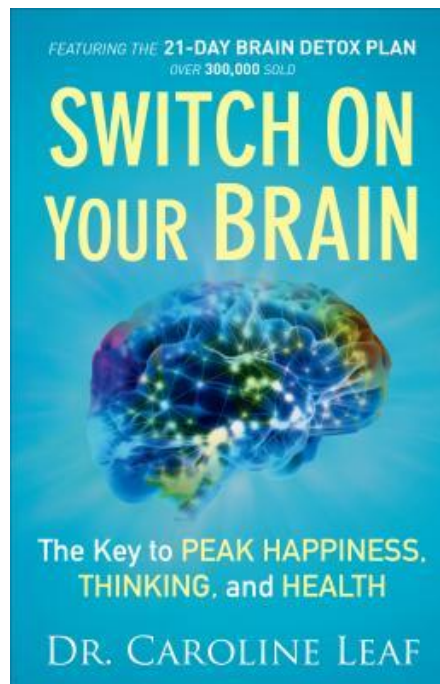




Switch on Your Brain: The Key to Peak Happiness, Thinking, and Health

Caroline Leaf

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According to researchers, the vast majority--a whopping 75-98 percent--of the illnesses that plague us today are a direct result of our thought life. What we think about truly affects us both physically and emotionally. In fact, fear alone triggers more than 1,400 known physical and chemical responses in our bodies, activating more than thirty different hormones! Today our culture is undergoing an epidemic of toxic thoughts that, left unchecked, create ideal conditions for illnesses.

Supported by current scientific and medical research, Dr. Caroline Leaf gives readers a prescription for better health and wholeness through correct thinking patterns, declaring that we are not victims of our biology. She shares with readers the "switch" in our brains that enables us to live happier, healthier, more enjoyable lives where we achieve our goals, maintain our weight, and even become more intelligent. She shows us how to choose life, get our minds under control, and reap the benefits of a detoxed thought life.

Switch on Your Brain: The Key to Peak Happiness, Thinking, and Health Details

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From Reader Review Switch on Your Brain: The Key to Peak Happiness, Thinking, and Health for online ebook

Laura says

I love neuroscience. I also love the Holy Scriptures. So what a surprise when Dr. Caroline Leaf, a communication pathologist in the field of cognitive neuroscience, summarizes in this book a large part of her research in recent years to link scientific principles to Scripture. Oh my word, I LOVED this book! It blends two of my favorite subjects.

I always trusted and believed God's Word to contain wisdom and accurate statements about human behaviour and psychology. Finally, a scientist who recognizes this! Dr. Leaf states: Science is catching up with the Bible daily. How true, because God is THE greatest scientist. He created the heavens, the earth and us in it, including all the laws that govern nature, such as the law of gravity and quantum physics.

Dr. Leaf had devoted her life work, since the 1990s, in helping people see that they can renew their minds in a tangible way by learning to control their thoughts and emotions. She says that by doing this through conscious effort, we can actually change the programming and chemistry of our brain, even in the most challenging neurological situations. In other words, we are not victims of our biology or circumstances. How empowering! How hopeful and enlightening. How totally fascinating! The concept of neuroplasticity was always supported by God as stated in Romans 12:2. I knew this because of my studying the Bible for years now, but having a scientist explain the science behind Biblical principles is so gratifying. It makes me appreciate my Creator all the more.

What I also appreciated about this book is that it's easy to read. Dr. Leaf explains neuroscience in simple terms and her use of repetition of the concepts only served to make me appreciate their value. The more I dug into this book, with highlighter and pen, jotting down notes, looking up Scriptures, the more I realized that my Bible studies have made me wiser and more intelligent because of the time I spent in deep study and meditation. In the last few years, however, because of my busy schedule I have not had the same kind of contemplative studies, and I have seen the difference in how I handle stress.

In the first part of the book, Dr. Leaf explains the science of thought and what it means to switch on your brain. In part two, Dr. Leaf has developed a 21-Day Brain Detox Plan, a practical and detailed plan that helps an individual get rid of toxic thoughts. This non-traditional therapeutic approach has helped her patients who suffered a TBI (traumatic brain injury) make remarkable progress. I've read through the program, and I figure it won't be easy to implement, but I plan to use it because I know I could use help getting rid of some toxic thoughts that trigger my depression and mood swings.

I have to say that if you are an individual who does not read the Bible, this book may be a little overwhelming, especially those who believe that the Bible and science don't mix. I knew all the Scriptures she mentions in her book so I was super comfortable with her applications. Also, Dr. Leaf includes in the back of the book 10 full pages of notes and references, as well as 19 full pages of recommended reading of books and scientific articles. This is perfect for me! I highly recommend this book to anyone who calls themselves a Christian (or appreciates the Bible) and wants to explore the potential of their minds to change their lives for the better.

maggie says

My takeaway: the brain is amazing, we can control a lot of what goes on. The Scripture-Science links are amazing. But what a lot of verbiage I waded through. Phew - I made it to the DIY section; but Oh No! More amagdyla and hippocampus speak. Drowning in neuroscience I made it to the final page with absolutely no desire to brain detox for 21 bloomin' days. My frontal lobes will have to wither.

André Bueno says

I read this book twice. Wasn't a fan the first time (given the heavy biblical references) though besides those items the second time made a ton of sense. Would recommend reading.

-- NOTES --

Neurogenesis is how the brain regenerates itself

Ch01

- The mind controls the body
- We can control our reactions and choices
- Our DNA can change shapes bases on our thoughts

Ch02/03

- Pay attention to your thoughts
- You have the power to change
- Epigenetics: your choices affect your life situation
- Whatever you think about the most will grow
- Change your perception, change your life

Ch04/05

- Be mindful of your thoughts
- 5-16 minutes of daily meditation changes lives
- Meditation helps improve our life and our health
- Toxic thinking creates maladaptive cells

Ch06/07

- Multitasking is a myth
- Not multitasking can improve and discipline our thoughts
- Quantum physics is a way of making sense of how energy and our bodies work

21 day brain detox 8 keys

- Mind controls matter
- Choice and your multiple perspective advantage
- Your choices change your brain
- Catch those thoughts
- Enter into directed rest
- Stop multitasking
- Thinking, God, and the quantum physics brain
- The science of thought

Ch09

- Takes about 5-7mins
- It's a deliberate action
- Takes 21 days for the memory to form
- Automozation occurs after 3 full 21 day cycles

Ch11

- Gather awareness
- Sensory information flows into the unconscious via the five senses
- External environment
- Your memories

Ch12

- Focused reflection (Mindfulness Meditation)
- Deep intellectual thinking and a sense of self
- Meditate on knowledge
- Think, understand, and apply the wisdom
- Sight, sound, smell, touch, and taste are the five senses you want to engage if you want to learn something using different brain signals and lanes (Basel ganglia)
- Attitude influences what you say and do
- Hypothalamus responds to your thoughts and emotions. It releases chemicals and hormones via the pituitary gland

Focused reflection (Mindfulness Meditation)

- Watch your thoughts and how they are connected with each other
- It is a directed and disciplined way of thinking
- Huge activity happens when you redesign your brain via neuroplasticity
- Rehearsing your goals every day is a way to mentally rehearse how you will achieve your goals. It will integrate your thoughts to other things via protein synthesis

Writing helps you sort out your conscious and subconscious thoughts

- How to write down your thoughts
- Use a thought journal
- Be playful
- Use word associations/pics/colors/texture
- Metacog: group patterns create branches, then go down the branch as far as possible in detail. Think about the bigger picture and the details. See and evaluate your thoughts patterns.

Redesign your thoughts

You are not a victim of your biology

This step evaluates where you are going and where you are looking to get to

Workout the way forward

Visualize the end result at the end of the 21 days

This is a self reflective side of the process

It is constructive and to think deeply

This is a 21 day process and you should work through the details really deep

Action Reaches

The doing of the action reach is what makes it all happen

Make the lifestyle change

Do it at least 7x a day

Move through the sequence and believe

Summary

Focus on eliminating one toxic thought

Takes 5-7min

Active reach goes out through out the day

One brain detox cycle is 21 days

You breaking down a healthy thought

Breaking down the toxic thought takes 7-10min

Gather: 1-2 min Bring the thoughts into consciousness

Focus reflections 1-2 mins ch12

Writing 1-2 mins ch13

Active reach 1-2 mins

Revisit chapter 14

Building up the better thoughts

Gather and think of the replacement thought

Meditate on the positive

Write about the positive along the negative (ch13)

Firm in the bonds (ch14)

Active reach (ch15)

Artem says

That is a pice of rare delirium.

I assume that most of those who scored this book 5 star are religious people.

For anybody else - this book will be boring, badly written and extreamly annoying with religious citations and God mentioning on every page.

When i open the book and sow 70% reviews from some church people i was surprised.

When i read this lady , so called doctor and scientists believes in God so hard and backs up all the findings and conclusion with bible - the book lost all of its illusive trustworthy.

So by now i have scanned 30% of the book and did not see any appopriate point that one expects to see in a book with such title and description. I will scan to the end in hope to find at least single usefull tip thought here. The book is not too long so i can do that.

Anyway, i do not reccomend to read this to anybody, unless you are looking into some @scientific@ proof for God existance.

P. S. If you really want to read some good stuff on the topic, refer to -

1. The Self Illusion: How the Social Brain Creates Identity

by Bruce M. Hood

2. The Brain's Way of Healing: Remarkable Discoveries and Recoveries from the Frontiers of Neuroplasticity

Christopher Pitt says

Ever tried to put on your old jeans and realised just how much your body has changed since the last time you put them on? Sure, if you tried hard enough, you could get them on, but they would be tight, restrictive and just plain uncomfortable. In this book, Dr Leaf has taken a whole body of new scientific information on thoughts and stress, and tried to writhe and wriggle them into her old theories that she's hung onto from several decades ago.

Dr Leaf presents a number of theories of hers about thinking, mental illness, attention, epigenetics and quantum theory. She claims that 75 to 98% of our health problems are related to thought life, that our minds control our brain, that we can change matter with our minds, that thoughts move faster than light, that stress is a killer, that the choices we make are photocopied into our DNA and passed onto our children and grandchildren, and that depression and other mental health are simply the result of poor choices we make.

Unfortunately, such claims lay in stark contrast to the basics of the medical and physical sciences. Our minds are a product of our brain, not the other way around. We certainly can not use our minds to change matter. Our thoughts don't change our DNA. Her claims are pseudoscience.

A case in point is her claim that 75 to 98% of our health problems are thought related. The sources of information that supposedly validate her statements are biased, out of date, misquoted, or just out-and-out contradictory. Yet this claim is a key tenet in her argument of the importance of thoughts.

My recommendation: Read the book if you want, but do so with an open mind. Look for alternative sources of information. Don't take Dr Leaf's opinion at face value.

Neil R. Coulter says

I found *Switch on Your Brain* to be a frustrating (but mercifully quick) read. Caroline Leaf's main point is that we can alter our lives for the better by changing our habitual thought patterns. According to Leaf, we can change not only our thought life, but even our DNA by the conscious redirection of negative thinking into positive thinking. Leaf repeatedly claims to be a scientist (which, ironically, always makes me wonder how true it is) and loads the chapters with a lot of surface-skimming of scientific neurological research. She is also a Christian, and she returns to the Bible more often than she turns to science to explain why certain assertions must be true.

I can't say how valid her scientific references are, though from what little I've read about neuroscience I think much of what she says is fine. But I'm more familiar with biblical scholarship, and her use of the Bible was very unimpressive. She picks out verses that seem to affirm the scientific point she's making, but with absolutely no regard for the full context of the verse or the cultural contexts of the original audiences of the Bible's writings. The Bible is much more complex and much more interesting than how Leaf presents it. Her engagement with scripture is not surprising, given the roster of television-star Christians who endorse the book. Her positive-thinking approach reminded me of Joyce Meyer (who endorses the book) and Joel Osteen (notably absent from the endorsers). The afterword is written by TBN's Matt Crouch, who manages in 3 pages to name-drop Barry Sanders, Tom Hanks, and his own network and travels. (Who is this book about again?)

The point of *Switch on Your Brain* is to explain the foundation of Leaf's thought-changing and healing, and then present a 5-step "21-day brain detox plan." The explanation of this plan takes only the final third of the book, and it is surprisingly vague. I've read the whole book and I have very little idea what I'm supposed to

do each day of the plan. Essentially, if you're already doing a daily devotional or prayer or meditation time, you're probably doing what Leaf advocates. It's also a misnomer to call it a "21-day plan," since Leaf says that "It can take anywhere from three to four 21-day cycles to automatize the new healthy thought pattern and to make sure the toxic thought doesn't grow back" (153-154). That's convenient: Didn't work? Try another 21-day cycle!

The book is frustrating because it is unbelievably repetitive, even repeatedly printing pointless diagrams (check out p. 21 and p. 188, or pp. 44, 159, 178, and 194). Not only are the chapters repetitive, but each chapter includes a summary of the main points, which could easily take the place of reading the whole book.

My favorite part? This quote:

Research also shows that there is a negative side to positive self-statements and affirmations, showing that individuals with low self-esteem felt worse after repeating positive self-statements. Don't become part of that statistic. (66)

Hey, wait! I think that's me she's talking about, but that's all the advice she has for me: "Don't become part of that statistic"? It was hard to keep reading after that paragraph.

Dawnita Fogleman says

This book and the help of the woman who suggested it has been a life changer for me. The past few years struggle with CPTSD has been very real and hard for me. God has brought me a long way. For the first time in my life, I truly understand I am brilliant and beautiful. I can't be anything else. I'm created in HIS image and I'm walking HIS path, following HIM and HIS word. This is awesome! I have begun rewiring my brain through the 21 Day Brain Detox and will continue until either HE calls me home or comes to get me. Buy this book. Read it. Use it. Give it as gifts. People need this information!

Darius Murretti says

Finished !

I really enjoyed Bruce Lipton's books and have just bought this one by Carol Leaf .

Our cells HAVE BEEN SHOWN in peer reviewed experiments to alter the way they reproduce according the extra cellular environment (chemical/hormonal). These scientific observations shows that is NOT the genes we are born with as much as the hormonal environment we immerse them in that determines the characteristics (healthy of unhealthy) subsequent generations of cells in our bodies .

"The Plastic Brain --That changes itself"(neuroplasticity) also observes changes in our brain cells and how they connect with each other based on how we use our cells and the hormonal environment we immerse them in . These scientific observances show that keeping our thoughts pure and focused on positive goals definitely cumulates in increasing our capacity to do good and feel good

Now Im 20% into the book and I want to say :

1) So Far Dr Leaf has pointed it that the thoughts we choose to think whether happy or sad , loving or hateful, virtuous or vicious, positive or negative, pure or impure , high or low , Godly or Satanic shape what we are much more than our genes and that we have free will to think HIGHER rather than LOWER thoughts.

(GREAT STUFF!) But the point she has NOT touched on it that their is a MUCH MORE EFFICACIOUS way to clean our mind from toxic dysfunctional thoughts and transform it into a shiny mirror that reflects God's Love , Capability and Wisdom in all we do , think and feel and that MUCH MORE EFFICACIOUS way is to eliminate ALL THOUGHTS (good or evil) from the mind and fill the mind with God's Love , Power and wisdom by listening to the RINGING RADIANCE of the Holy Spirit which is audible in every human being as a sweet unending sound . If we cease all thinking and listen attentively to this inner non physical sound we will absorb its virtues and energy . This is the most rapid way to transform a human mind from a beastly destructive entity into a divine constructive one. It is as if we were tapping into God's consciousness and downloading it into our mind - while simultaneously - deleting all negative toxic thinking . (for more info on Surat Shabd Yoga see <http://www.bahaistudies.net/asma/path...>)

Dr Leaf emphasizes that our mind is above our brain but fails to grasp that the SPIRIT OF GOD is above our mind nor that it can be consciously contacted via surat shabd yoga.

Still I love her stand on shaping what we are via our thinking since we cant listen to the shabd all 24 hours . Also, by thinking Godly thoughts can attune our mind to to hear the "shabd" better at the time of our meditation (but while meditating on the spirit of God -all thought should cease and one should be 100% attentive to the divine music which is cleansing one.)

2) Dr Leaf speaks of free will or no free will as if there is no in between. Obviously what we have done in the past CONDITIONS our free will so it is no longer entirely free . It does behoove us however to think and act in a Godly way so that our future conditioning is in a Godly direction.

(NOTE : our food also conditions our mind . It can be sattvic(tranquility producing) ,rajastic (resteness producing) or tamasic (sleep producing) .

In the philosophy of Yoga, all matter in the universe arises from the fundamental substrate called Prakriti. From this ethereal Prakriti the three primary gunas (qualities) emerge creating the essential aspects of all nature—energy, matter and consciousness. These three gunas are tamas (darkness), rajas (activity), and sattva (beingness). All three gunas are always present in all beings and objects surrounding us but vary in their relative amounts. We humans have the unique ability to consciously alter the levels of the gunas in our bodies and minds. The gunas cannot be separated or removed in oneself, but can be consciously acted upon to encourage their increase or decrease. A guna can be increased or decreased through the interaction and influence of external objects, lifestyle practices and thoughts.

Tamas is a state of darkness, inertia, inactivity and materiality. Tamas manifests from ignorance and deludes all beings from their spiritual truths. To reduce tamas avoid tamasic foods, over sleeping, over eating, inactivity, passivity and fearful situations. Tamasic foods include heavy meats, and foods that are spoiled, chemically treated, processed or refined.

Rajas is a state of energy, action, change and movement. The nature of rajas is of attraction, longing and attachment and rajas strongly binds us to the fruits of our work. To reduce rajas avoid rajasic foods, over exercising, over work, loud music, excessive thinking and consuming excessive material goods. Rajasic foods include fried foods, spicy foods, and stimulants.

Sattva is a state of harmony, balance, joy and intelligence. Sattva is the guna that yogi/nis achive towards as it reduces rajas and tamas and thus makes liberation possible. To increase sattva reduce both rajas and tamas, eat sattvic foods and enjoy activities and environments that produce joy and positive thoughts. Sattvic foods include whole grains and legumes and fresh fruits and vegetables. All of the yogic practices were developed to create sattva in the mind and body. Thus, practicing yoga and leading a yogic lifestyle strongly cultivates sattva.

The mind's psychological qualities are highly unstable and can quickly fluctuate between the different gunas. The predominate guna of the mind acts as a lens that effects our perceptions and perspective of the world around us. Thus, if the mind is in rajas it will experience world events as chaotic, confusing and demanding and it will react to these events in a rajasic way.

All gunas create attachment and thus bind one's self to the ego. "When one rises above the three gunas that originate in the body; one is freed from birth, old age, disease, and death; and attains enlightenment" (Bhagavad Gita 14.20).

So why not eat a sattvic diet and make things easier ?

Sattvic foods are soothing, nourishing and promote and maintain a quiet, steady mind as well as help to sharpen your intellect and give you a greater sense of empathy. Sattvic foods are vegetarian and do not include foods derived from animals that have been harmed in any way. It is important that foods are grown naturally and do not contain preservatives, artificial flavors, or additives.

A sattvic diet generally consists of:

fresh, organic fruit and vegetables
whole grains and nuts
dairy products such as milk and ghee
beans and lentils
plant-based oils
mildly sweet foods (natural, unrefined sugars), honey, molasses
spices such as cinnamon, basil, coriander, ginger and turmeric

In addition to fresh, organic, whole foods, a sattvic diet requires the energy and intention within your kitchen to be a calm and pleasant atmosphere for food preparation. Preparing your food with mindfulness, care and love will create energetic vibrations that are absorbed by the food you are preparing and will enter your body during digestion. The quality of your food is greatly enhanced by loving attention, including how the vegetables are cut, how the spices are ground and the way you add ingredients to the dish you are preparing.

It is important to remember that a sattvic diet is intended to improve the mind.

(more coming)

Im back --now I'm 210 of 241

So at the core of Dr Leaf's book is that it is our CHOICE what type of impressions we allow into our mind -- the company we keep , the books we read, the movies and videos we watch . Because the impressions on our mind give rise to thoughts and our thoughts determine what we become positive and constructive or negative and destructive , functional or dysfunctional , purer or impure , Godly or satanic . Dr Leaf EMPHASIZES that once a negative thought arises from our "unconscious mind" we are to recognise it as undesirable and CHOOSE to think of something else .

What we think creates impressions on our mind even more potently than what we see, hear , taste , smell and touch.

Dr Leaf has what she calls a 21 day program for correcting negative adaptations to our brain resulting from a recurring negative thought or genre of thought. For 21 days we are to dwell on the positive opposite of that negative thought. She says that after 21 days our brain will be "hardwired " to think the positive virtue which is the opposite of that vice .

My comments about her 21 day time frame are that this is a life long struggle and we should never let our guard down because --"the enemy* "will stop attacking us to lull us into a sense of complacency and then try to pull us down into the filth. So its not a 21 day program its a life long struggle. making it 21 days without caving to a negative trait is definitely a significant victory in a life long battle. (* Satan, Kal or what ever

you want to call the "negative power" --- whose job it is to make sure we can not enter the pure positive planes of consciousness until we've purified our minds of negativity and who therefore assails us with temptations from time to time. Satan or Kal serves as a sparring partner to strengthen our higher mind's upwards yearnings and strengthen its power of resistance . Satan's challenge is necessary for our evolution into superior beings)

The only real flaw I can see in Dr Leaf's approach is that it is TOO self analytical or diagnostic > for example she says " Ask yourself "What am I thinking , feeling now ? what is my attitude now ? am I fearful? or loving ? Do I feel relaxed or threatened and tense ? " This self analysis is NOT necessary or desirable for "detoxing" and rewiring the brain on the contrary it distracts from the positive focus on the ideal we are heading towards and diverts us back to what we are trying to rise above .

On my spiritual path we have a saying " don't curse the darkness - Light the candle" If we are feeling "dark" then all we have to do is focus on the "light" and the darkness automatically vanishes. So i would advise readers not to pay much attention to any particular defect and just stay focussed on the positive then all negatives will automatically vanish with no need for much introspection .

Emma Nutt says

Reading this book brought me much anguish and self doubt. It was recommended to me by a christian friend who I believe had best interests at heart, however this book is so out of touch with people living through serious day to day mental suffering.

As a person who has suffered with OCD since I was 15 (in the form of unwanted and anxiety riddled sexual thoughts and doubt), this book only attempts to put me back as the person who is responsible for these thoughts. I spent 3 years in secrecy with my thoughts taking up most minutes of everyday life with sexual thoughts. Caroline's positive thinking approach I certainly tried over and over again thus producing more doubt within my mind and constant ruminations, searching for absolute certainty.

Caroline claims that we can out-positive our negative thinking and unwanted thoughts. Boy! I can tell you 3 years of trying to do this in my head made me more and more sick to the point of wanting to die. Caroline tells me I am what I think, 'YOU ARE WHAT YOU THINK' screams out of her pages. She tells us we need to stop these negative thoughts - claiming her 21 day detox works for OCD sufferers. As someone who seeks a career in mental health and has experienced a lot of mentally ill people within and outside of the church I can tell you this is an absolutely ridiculous, scare-mongering method which only leaves the sufferer feeling more guilty for having 'bad' 'unwanted thoughts.

Dr. Leaf litters her work with biblical support for her claim we should never be anxious. She is selective with her work and does not include examples such as Job where God allows Job to experience circumstantial pain and suffering as well as deep mental anguish. Caroline acts to me like one of Job's companions Zophar who tells Job he needs to pray more and is not repenting enough or Eliphaz who hounds Job with guilt: "Are God's consolations not enough for you?" (Job 15:11). Eliphaz blames Job for his suffering declaring he has shaken his fist at God. Job responds to Eliphaz that: "you are miserable comforters, all of you! Will your long-winded speeches never end?" (Job 16: 3) Job also responds to Zophar "I desire to speak to the almighty and to argue my case with God. You however, smear me with lies; you are worthless physicians, all of you!" (Job 13:3-4). Job's 'spirit is broken', his days are 'cut short' and the grave awaits him (Job 17:1). Job is seriously depressed in modern language and needs love and compassion, not the voice of someone telling him he is not doing enough of this, that or the other. The ending of Job ends with the Lord declaring his absolute power and control. He then says to Eliphaz: " I am angry with you and your two friends because you have not spoken the truth about me, as my servant Job has" God declares these men need to make many sacrifices in repentance to him. The book of Job ends with these friends now comfoingt and consoling Job

after all he has been through because of what the Lord has spoken.

Caroline to me is Eliphaz - burdening Job with more and more condemnation claimed to be from the Lord, instead of comforting and embracing him in the knowledge we are all weak and in need. Eliphaz claims to know the Lords will in Job's suffering but the Lord rebukes his words as lies because he has arrogantly declared that he knows the way for Job to restore favour with God.

In a similar way, a mental health sufferer does not need to feel inadequate because they have not been able to activate their brain in 21 days with the methods Dr Leaf uses. God is far greater I'm afraid than Caroline's research and if he is not performing dramatic healing on a person's life it is He who only can know fully why.

This book is entirely unsympathetic to those who need love and support - reinforcing deep feelings of guilt which the sufferer probably already experiences with words such as: "You have RESPONSIBILITY for your thoughts" "You are YOUR thoughts" "positive thinking can change the negative". I can tell you for a fact that I did not have responsibility for my sexual intrusive thoughts - i did not actively think them - they came into my mind without want and tormented me. To tell me it is my responsibility undoes all what therapy has taught me about accepting the unknown and not seeking absolute certainty in order to break free of these mental struggles. In fact, allowing doubt to be there as opposed to constantly spending every second of the day trying to get rid of it has been incredibly healing. As my specialist OCD therapist has said: Compulsive behaviour - trying to control everything in the mind, only makes obsessions worse.

Caroline also writes: "Research also shows that there is a negative side to positive self-statements and affirmations, showing that individuals with low self-esteem felt worse after repeating positive self-statements. Don't become part of that statistic (pg 66)" I read a response to this by 'Neil Couter' on goodreads.com who says words to the effect of: 'oh wait that's me then, repeating positive self affirmations makes me feel worse. What can I do about it when all the advice you have for me is not to become part of that statistic!!' This made me laugh and comforted me with the knowledge that we can't out-positive our negative thinking and in fact trying to STOP the brain thinking negatively with constant positive thoughts CAN make us feel 100 times worse and like we're fighting a losing battle!

Dr Leaf clearly has clearly never experienced deep mental anguish which has perpetuated her life for a long period of time. After researching her further I discovered she is not even trained in psychiatry, psychology or medicine! She is a scientist with great things to say about the brain's neuroplasticity and how the mind can reshape the brain. Despite this a 21 day detox is a very simplified response to the various sufferings of individuals with mental illness.

Another serious problem with Caroline's theology is that she proved a works based theology – (you need to do this so you will be mentally good and free of anxiety and DOING these thing will please the lord). Does she forget we live in a fallen world and anxiety is a consequence of that? If her work doesn't resonate with you or the 21 day detox does not 'switch on your brain' as it promises you are made to feel like a failed christian! Someone who has not been able to work towards something which God wants us to do. No. Paul tells us now there is no condemnation in Christ Jesus and we are all loved by him ESPECIALLY in our brokenness and weakness which Paul boasts in. It is God's grace that delivers us, not our works. We are set free from condemnation and guilt by HIS work on the cross, NOT by resetting our thoughts by our own attempts! We are screw ups - Caroline may perfectly work to build positive proteins in the brain but I'm afraid we are not all so perfectly able! There is no quick fix to mental illness - there is not a one fit for all response.

I apologise for mistakes in my writing here but this book has made me doubt my worth before the Lord and that I am doing something wrong and need to do x,y,z to improve myself. This book made me feel not worthy before God and challenged my therapy of accepting doubt (which has been very healing for me and God-given in my view). For OCD sufferers striving for absolute mental clarity and certainty only causes more uncertainty in our pursuit for perfect mental clarity which is unattainable for all in this life. God is the only constant we can rely on who is never-changing. Our brains however are not.

- ?? jess ??- says

My mom made me read this. Bullshit pseudoscience. I have no time for this nonsense I have actual books to read.

Stephen James Johnson says

I was recommended to read *Switch on Your Brain* by a trusted, Jesus following colleague. As an emergency services chaplain, I work in some of the most emotionally draining environments. As a result of that work and the ongoing challenges of daily living, I found myself in need of a brain "detox." It was then my colleague advised me to read this text. I appreciate her love for me and her care for my thought life, even if I did not appreciate this book as much as she thought I'd might.

I feel a need, even if only an obligatory one, to stress my faith in Jesus and in the Scriptures. I believe with certainty that the Bible is the inerrant word of God and within its pages are found truth and power for living. I do not, however, interpret the Bible through a prosperity hermeneutic; in other words, I don't buy the "name-it-and-claim-it" theology that God wants me to be healthy and wealthy if I can muster enough faith to unleash His blessings.

It appears to me that Dr. Leaf seeks to grant academic credibility to the prosperity gospel. The long and the short of her book is that we are responsible for our thoughts. If we can capture our thoughts and replace all negativity with Bible verses and positive affirmations, then we can experience healing and emotional wellness. We can even "think" our sicknesses away by believing in the promises of the Scripture. All of our brains are clay in the potter's hands and we are potters.

Leaf's theology is entirely anthropocentric: man is the center of God's plan and any lack of wellness is the result of insufficient action on a believer's part. God is sovereign only in as much as we allow and His omnipotence is limited by the free will of man. In Leaf's view, man chooses God, God does not choose man, and God is simply cheering for positive outcomes. Leaf does not effectively address the impact of original sin and offers an offensively simplistic approach to post traumatic stress (i.e., think yourself out of it). Leaf has a very high view of man, a higher view of Scripture, a low view of God's sovereignty, and a total disregard for purposeful suffering.

Theology aside, the writing is difficult to read. Perhaps the repetition is intentional, but reading the same material (over and over and over again) is exhausting. I did some individual research on the scientific topics presented in the text (with footnotes that do not include Leaf's own name or Kenneth Copeland) and found that some of the theories presented have merit, but not nearly as much merit within the scientific community as Leaf presents. Leaf sounds as if she is so excited to see science and the Scripture align (and this is indeed exciting), but she presents theories as facts and opinions as gospel (you know, the nonreligious one). I'd respect her position more if she dealt with the opposition more effectively than citing her personal interpretation of one scripture as victory for her position.

We are responsible for what we think. Sometimes we need to see a counselor to deal with thoughts that are beyond our control. Sometimes we really do need medication (not a name-it-and-claim-it cure) for our ailments, including mental illnesses. Sometimes we really need to explore past trauma and ask God where He was during the process. And sometimes, we just need to adjust our thoughts. And for those latter moments, Dr. Leaf's theories apply. I'd respect her approach more if she didn't disqualify all the other circumstances as sinners who can't seem to conjure the faith and courage to think well enough. She may not say those words, but oh how they are implied.

Alcieta says

An illuminating read. I firmly believe in the truths Leaf relates here. My main issue with her 21 day detox regime, though, is how obscure it felt. I feel like instruction on actually carrying the process out was lacking, and I'm still not entirely sure how to do it, despite her outlining of the steps. I think I need clearer examples of such a regime, because the mind is an obscure black hole of a thing. I love the science of psychology too, but I feel like in this book she was too wrapped up in convincing people about physiological change in the brain and will power (I am already fully convinced of these things, so it was tiring to hear it repeated over and over, though I'm aware that some people really do need that much convincing), and though the science behind all this was sound, it was somewhat distracting.

This book has helped me to become more conscious of my thoughtlife, and I hope I can get into the habit of catching them before they do more damage than they're worth.

Lisa Shultz says

I generally like topics such as this book, but I didn't like the presentation of the material. First, the preamble was excessive. I wanted her to get to the point much sooner. Second, the techno-speak was annoying. I am an intelligent person but I don't want to have to figure out scientific words and then translate into words I can relate to. I was turned off when "satin's lies" were interjected in the middle, which seemed out of context and inappropriate. Overall, not a book I will recommend to others.

Adriane says

I think I'm too dumb to get this book. Well, at least I tried to engage my Basal Ganglia and Cerebellum but I think I need more myelin sheath.

Joan says

I was impressed with this book. She has done a great job of correlation recent brain science with biblical commands, such as renewing your mind. The understanding now that the brain can be changed - neuroplasticity - means that renewing the mind is a scientific reality. It takes about 21 days to create integrated long term memory, hence the 21 day plan. Since so many issues people have today are caused by wrong thinking, this is a valuable book. See my full review at <http://bit.ly/16vuPCV>.
