What is the subconscious mind?

'Sub' means below and 'conscious' means awareness: so, below conscious awareness. It's that subterranean part of your mind pulling your strings like a puppet. Yet you don't always know it's doing it. When you say things like: *In the back of my mind something was making me uneasy or telling me not to do it*, that's you recognising your subconscious mind—but you often ignore it. *Back of the mind* is a euphemism for the subconscious. It enables us to fill our stories with an intriguing subplot of excuses. ***But whether it is via The Fear Project or not, the task is: to improve as many of the programmed internal conversations you have with yourself, as you possibly can.***

The subconscious is one storage part of your mind that houses many of your programmed thoughts, beliefs and skills. Anything you do automatically or with very little awareness is probably subconscious. Walking, talking, driving a car, riding a bike, many of your habits, attitudes and solutions, they're all in there. So, once you've automated a thought, belief or behaviour, your ability to use it is accumulated here—for convenience—in case you need to put it into action quickly. Put simply, your problems are ***not*** conscious.

The subconscious mind does so many things without you realising and before you're even consciously aware of it.[i] Take walking: it's an automatic behaviour that the subconscious mind handles for you. But imagine if you had to think about it. Consciously having to tell yourself *left leg forward, right leg forward, stop, turn 90 degrees* (how much is 90 degrees again?), *right leg forward, left leg forward,* just to get anywhere. It would be exhausting and extremely frustrating. Think about all the other things (like digesting food) that if you had to consciously think about doing them, would annoy you. It would also render the brain's one job to keep you alive severely impaired.

You are your own worst enemy.

Your subconscious mind is a formidable adversary. Do not underestimate it. Whenever you abruptly shake up your habitual thinking, it detects your change in equilibrium. It's not going to let you get away with your recalibration easily. Your subconscious mind will attempt to sabotage any progress you make. It has no problem initiating destructive ideas to keep you imprisoned in your comfort zone. You have to be prepared for this challenge or relive your familiar excuses over and over again: *I can't be bothered* or *I don't have the time*. You might even call yourself stupid or go back to blaming your 'fear' on harmless situations.

Trust me when I say your brain is the most complex thing in the entire universe. It doesn't need any more help to manipulate you. Your subconscious mind will concoct anything to hold you back. One of its most potent weapons is to wrap you up tightly in your own boredom. Once upon a time we were

simple creatures who only had to survive. Now we run mostly on mental auto-pilot navigating a world of possibilities. But having a brain the size of ours might not actually be worth it. What's the point of being so capable, if we can't easily find quick and effective solutions when we get bored?

Boredom is probably the most unwanted consequence of developing our ginormous brains. We *never* want to be bored. Ever. This is virtually impossible (but, oh, do we 'try'). We'll do anything with anybody. We'll sabotage jobs or opportunities, risk our health or gamble with our family, relationships and possessions. Even choosing to engage in psychological fear situations—with all its obvious distress—is sometimes more enjoyable than being bored. And your subconscious mind takes full advantage of this. It uses your boredom to dismantle your rationality. It poisons (or mutes) the production of any positive self-talk that can challenge it.

Also, your fundamental idea (the central foundation of your subconscious mind, telling you how to live your life) often embraces your sabotage and avoidance. It sometimes takes pleasure in moulding your perception of the world to your strongest insecurities. It does give you an identity. However, you cannot just continue to idly ignore the problematic mental barriers you built *yourself*, if you *truly* intend to turn your life around.

What is your fundamental idea?

This is the big one. Visualise the most imposing and important skyscraper you can in your mind. The Burj Khalifa or the Empire State Building perhaps. Picture the size, the steel, the mortar and the concrete. Now, imagine your mind *is* that building. Every floor responsible for something different in your life. Messages being sent and communicated from room to room. Your fundamental idea is the foundation of that structure, holding everything in place. Nothing exists without it, nor can anything passively built above, topple it.

FUNDAMENTAL IDEA: *Your fundamental idea is the starting point of all your conscious and subconscious thoughts and feelings. It is made up of solid, multi-layered mental processes and experiences (such as memories and perceptions) which dictate your everyday habits, worldviews and behaviours.*

Your fundamental idea sits at the core of your subconscious mind. It is the central part of your 'education system' forming your social sense of values, ideas and beliefs. It tells you how you're supposed to live your life. It concurrently reveals what makes you happy and what fills you with guilt, confusion and indecision whenever you go against it. We have all had our minds programmed by the specific knowledge and information we have been exposed to. By the age of seven, your fundamental idea is almost automatic.

Years of passive, repetitive acquisition of this information has seen to this. Everything else you learn or retain mentally after this age (i.e. your elaborated attitudes and behaviours) are built on top of it. When you struggle to comprehend something or encounter discomfort in your life, it's likely your fundamental idea has no efficient programming to easily interpret the experience. So in order to handle these situations you have a choice: you make comfortable, habitual excuses or you *choose* for part of your education system to die! What exists at the core of *your* existence?

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[i] *Soon, S., C., Brass, M., Heinze, H., Haynes, J. (2008) Unconscious determinants of free decisions in the human brain. Nature Neuroscience,* May;11(5):543-5. doi: 10.1038/nn.2112. Epub 2008 Apr 13.