



PNE: Neurotransmitters and Self-Consciousness History, Discoveries, Latest Research.

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Over the decade following the discovery of the newly identified opiate peptides, my lab (CP) and others rushed to map them, finding endorphin and opiate receptors in parts of the brain known to be associated with the emotions. The *amygdala* and the *hypothalamus*, two structures within the limbic, or old emotional brain, were found to be enriched with what we came to call the *molecules of emotion*.

Emotional neuropeptides, and the cells that secrete them, were not confined to the brain, and we eventually were able to show the existence of a network of intercellular communication, throughout the brain and body under the control of these informational molecules, which we called the “psychosomatic network”.

The brain, we proposed, is just one nodal point of entry into this psychosomatic network that had many nodal points, the spinal cord, sensory organs, skin, the entire body actually. The “nodal points” are anatomical locations where many pathways converged and informational processing is filtered, modified, altered, and ultimately integrated with other competing bodymind systems. This network could be accessed from different nodal points, depending on a person’s focus of attention. Attention, and the consciousness that is associated, then become primary regulators and controllers of the organism.

The matter of consciousness—the measurable, material substance—we proposed is the vibrating, moving, breathing, pumping molecular complexes of receptors and their ligands, as they bind on and off of every cell of your body. The activity of these molecules generates a field of information flow throughout the bodymind to direct attention, run physiology, maintain wellness and effect healing. Indeed it keeps you awake, alert, functioning and conscious, or not!

This is why we say the molecules of emotion are the molecules of consciousness. Emotions span the material and the immaterial realm. They are the bridge linking the two. Just like the simultaneous particle and wave properties of light, the molecules of emotion have both properties. At the same time, they are physical molecules you can measure in the laboratory, and they are a kind of field between cells, tissues, organs, even people, that conveys information. Ligands do not “lock” into receptors, rather the molecular fields entrain to initiate the signaling action.

The actions of the molecules of emotion are both physical and psychological, linking brain to body in one vast network of communication to coordinate the entire bodymind. The various informational substances, such as the neuropeptides or cytokines/chemokines create altered states of consciousness

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23° Convegno Nazionale di Psicosomatica PNEI
Lucca 26/27 Maggio 2012

with different emotions, memories, and physiologies to create psychological states. We will review past, and discuss current, ideas related to consciousness and states of mental and physical healing.

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