

JOINT EVENT ON
24TH WORLD CARDIOLOGY CONFERENCE
and
25TH ANNUAL CARDIOLOGISTS CONFERENCE
September 17-18, 2018 Hong Kong

The insider's job: Emotions and the heart-brain connections

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Emotions are strong feelings that affect the mind, behavior and even relationships. When emotions are strong, they can be detected in the changing pattern of our heart rhythms. On the Heart Rate Variability biofeedback, emotions such as frustration, scared, worried, angry or upset cause uneven, irregular heart rhythms and they look like jagged mountain peaks on the computer screen. On the other hand, emotions of confidence, secure, being cared for, appreciative cause smooth and sine-like heart rhythms on the computer screen. The heart and brain are therefore connected and that smooth and sine-like heart rhythms prevents a person to suffer from brain fogs while he or she can make better decisions. Research has shown that positive emotions trigger improved performance and achievement, improved memory, improved immunity to disease, improved hormonal balance and a longer life span. This paper discusses the inside job on emotions, how emotional memories affect behavior, how emotions and nervous systems are related, how different parts of our brain function and work together and how our heart and brain communicate with each other.

Biography

Adrian Low is a Chartered Psychologist in the UK and he has attained his Doctor of Psychology in I/O and Clinical Psychology from California Southern University in the US. Dr Adrian is also a holder of the master's degree in Education from The Chinese University of Hong Kong. He received his B.A. in Religious Studies from the Hong Kong Baptist University. Dr. Adrian's doctoral dissertation on workplace stress has been published in numerous journals and magazines. Dr. Adrian was a plenary speaker at the 29th World Summit on Positive Psychology, Mindfulness and Psychotherapy held in New York City (USA). He has served as President at the Hong Kong Association of Psychology where he provides professional psychotherapy and mental status evaluations. Dr Adrian is privileged to have been influenced and mentored by world-class scholars and practitioners in the field such as Dr. Daniel Amen, Dr. Rollin McCraty and Dr. Wendy Nickerson. He is also an Adjunct Faculty member at Worcester University teaching Business Psychology.

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