

The graphic features a central dark blue circle containing the text 'UIC' in light blue. This circle is surrounded by a yellow ring, which is further enclosed by a red ring. Four thick lines radiate from the center: a yellow line pointing up and right, a red line pointing up and left, a yellow line pointing down and left, and a red line pointing down and right. The background is a solid light blue.

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# Mindfulness and the Mind-Body Connection

Presented by Rachel Thompson

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# Rachel Thompson

BodyMind Coach  
UIC AHS Alumna '18  
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# Intentions for our talk today:

1. Introduce mindfulness & mind body connection
2. Get familiar with the science behind it
3. Walk away with some tools to start using it in your life!

## My ask of you:

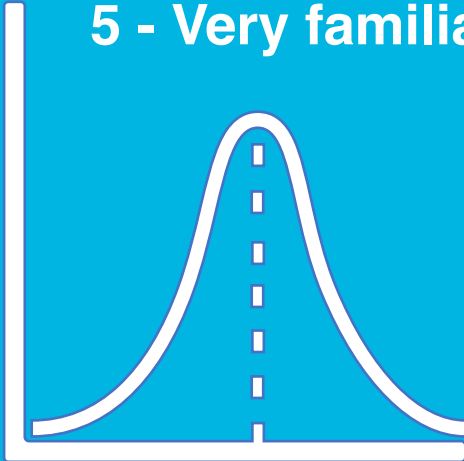
Keep a curious, open mind!  
And most importantly... have fun!

# POLL

On a scale of 1-5, how familiar are you with mindfulness & the mind body connection?

1 - Unfamiliar

5 - Very familiar



# Why are mindfulness & the mind body connection important?

They can help you...

- \* Reframe your relationship to stress and pain
- \* Make better decisions, more often!

# Core Pieces

1. The body is INNATELY intelligent
2. The body is CONSTANTLY communicating with us

“Healing” applies to stress and physical / emotional pain  
“Conditions” meaning whatever the body needs to restore balance

# What is the Mindbody Connection?

Relationship to life and self

## Promise of the Mindbody Connection

By being aware of what's going on in our bodies (and our lives), we can directly influence our physical health & wellbeing



# What is mindfulness?

Awareness



# Best way to increase awareness: EDUCATION!

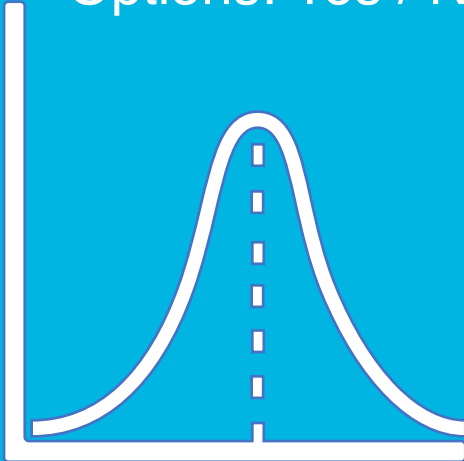
Successful people ask better questions,  
and as a result they get better answers.

- Tony Robbins

# POLL

**Do you believe the mind (thoughts, feelings, etc) creates physical sensations in the body?**

Options: Yes / No / Not sure



Why do we need mindfulness & the mind body connection?

# Disconnection

**POLL:**

**On a scale of 1-5, how connected do you feel right now?**

**1 - Disconnected**

**5 - Very connected**

# Why does connection / disconnection matter?

The body needs an efficient communication system!

Connection = good communication

Disconnection = poor communication

# How to know you're disconnected

Two major symptoms: **Stress and Pain**

Disconnection is **expensive**...

**Chronic stress costs \$300B every year**  
*American Institute of Stress*

**Chronic pain costs \$635B every year**  
*American Pain Society*



# Why are we so disconnected?

- \* How society evolved

*Learning = compartmentalization = separation = disconnection*

- \* Western medicine is just now embracing validity of mindfulness / mind body practices



# Symptoms of Disconnection: Shifting our relationship to stress & pain

Stress and pain are MESSAGES from the body

## This allows us to...

Better understand the body

Exercise autonomy (not let stress / pain get the best of us) and make better decisions

When the body and mind ARE  
connected...

- \* good health
- \* high energy
- \* clarity of mind
- \* higher productivity

...we feel really good!

# The Mindbody Connection in action!

We need our mind & body to experience life

“Mind” = conscious, non-corporeal aspect of experience

“Body” = **subconscious**, corporeal aspect of experience

(Dr. Candace Pert)

# Who was Dr. Candance Pert?

- \* Georgetown University grad
- \* NIH neurobiology researcher
- \* Studied the physiology of emotions
- \* Proposed joining “mind” and “body”
- \* Joined disciplines of psychology, neurology, endocrinology and immunology for the first time (PNI)

...aka the “mindbody connection”

# The body and mind are *really* connected.

“Dr. Pert’s research provides scientific evidence that a biochemical basis for awareness and consciousness exists, that the mind and body are indeed one and that our emotions and feelings are the bridge that links the two.”

*Excerpt from “Research of Dr. Candace Pert”*

# The body and mind are *really* connected.

“In the beginning of my work, I matter-of-factly presented that emotions were in the head, or brain. Now I would say they are really in the body as well. They are expressed in the body and are part of the body. **I can no longer make a distinction between the body and the mind.**”

- Dr. Candace Pert

# Physiology: How the body speaks

Central Nervous System (CNS) = brain + spinal cord

The brain is the "command center"

The body is designed to feel

# TWO brains are better than one

Enteric Nervous System (ENS) =



brain in the gut



# TWO brains are better than one



## Brain in head:

- \* 50% dopamine
- \* 5% serotonin

## Brain in gut:

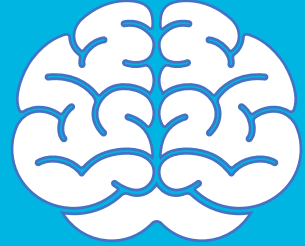
- \* 50% dopamine
- \* 95% serotonin



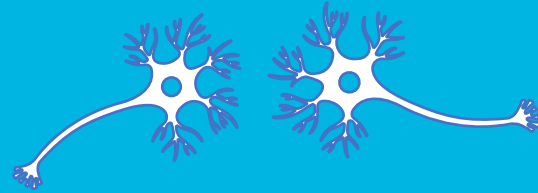
**80-90%** of information travels FROM the body  
TO the brain via ENS

*Why I'm a "bodymind" coach*

# How can we “reprogram” the brain?



Build new neural pathways



1. Activity fires synapses in brain
2. Synapses fire together to form a pattern (efficiency)
3. Repetition strengthens the neural pathway

New neural pathway = new habit / behavior / way of being

# The Brain

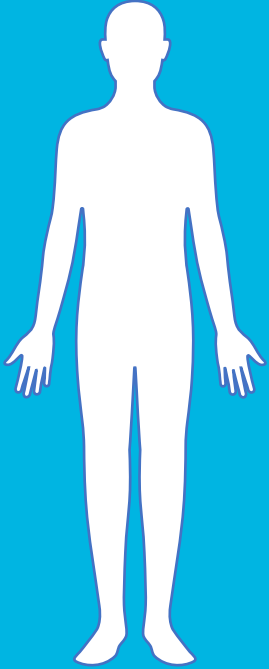
- \* Wired for safety, not success
- \* Stress response



**Safety** = what's known / experienced

**Success** = doing something you've never done before

# The Language of Feelings



Feelings are the language of the body  
Feelings = **messages**

# The Physiology of Feelings

**Physiology** = how the body communicates with itself (and us)

**Feelings** = what the body uses to communicate

**Common messages include...**

- \* Thirst
- \* Hunger
- \* Sleep

# The Physiology of Feelings

## Messages also include emotions

*“Chemicals called neuropeptides have a connection with specific receptors, like a key and lock. For example, morphine reduces pain because it connects with and activates receptors in the body that reduce pain. Receptors exist for feelings of rage, joy, hunger, pain, pleasure, grief, and for all emotions, as well as for body reactions like appetite, sexual behavior and water balance.”*

*- Dr. John Sarno, “The MindBody Prescription”*

# The Physiology of Feelings



## Let's try it out!

1. Think of something happy, or something you love.
2. Notice how you feel!

# Physiology of Emotion



Emotional Intelligence (EQ): Dr. Daniel Goleman

- \* Emotions take 6 seconds to flood the body (physiology)
- \* Emotions take 90 seconds to be felt, processed and released by the body

## What stops it? **A choice**



**Physical pain & emotional pain have the same neural signatures, meaning the same areas of the brain fire when we experience physical OR emotional pain.**

“Mind-body symptoms exist to serve a purpose. If you thought of that purpose by taking away the symptom without dealing with its **cause**, the brain will simply find a substitute symptom or disorder.”

- Dr. John Sarno *on TMS (mind-body disorders)*

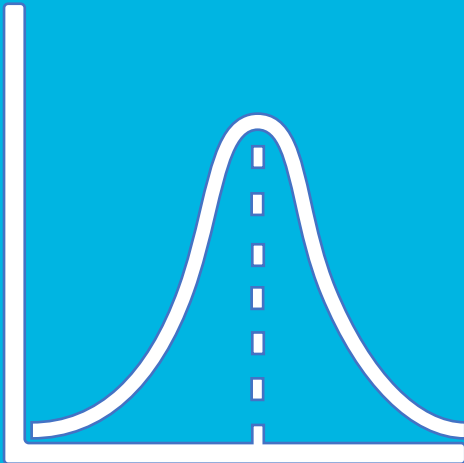
# The process of physical and emotional pain are the same

“The chemicals that are running our body and our brain are the same chemicals that are involved in emotion. And that says to me that we’d better pay more attention to emotions with respect to health.”

- Dr. Candace Pert

# POLL

On a scale of 1-5, how **EASY** is it for you to make decisions? (1 is difficult, 5 is very easy)



# Resistance to change / indecision

Stress response! Fight or flight

We have to be willing to move THROUGH resistance to achieve success, make a change, try something new...

# Decisions

We make dozens and dozens of decisions...

The conscious mind only contributes 5% to our decision-making process

Where does the other 95% come from?

The subconscious (the body)

# What goes into our decisions



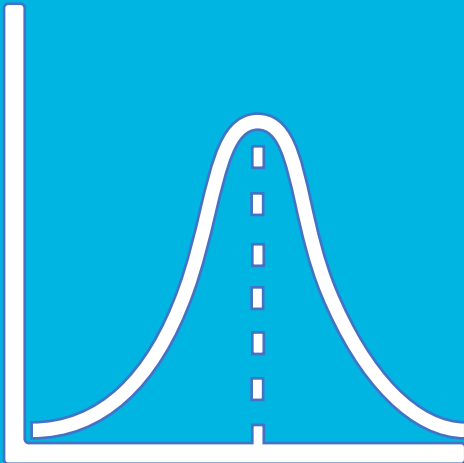
How do we make **better**  
decisions more often?

Get (bodymind) connected

Let's try! **BODY SCAN**

# POLL

**On a scale of 1-5, how connected do you feel NOW?**  
(1 is disconnected, 5 is very connected)





# Recap

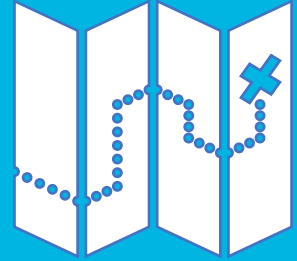
**Life is a felt experience. We need our body & mind to experience it fully!**

1. Listen to your body - it's always communicating with you and it wants you to feel GOOD!
2. You have everything you need to experience anything you want
3. Awareness is your most powerful ally. Stay curious and let the body guide you



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You can experience **anything**  
with a clear vision and a plan!



# As a **BodyMind Coach,**

I help ambitious optimists **use** their **bodymind connection** to get clear on what you want for your life and create a plan to make it happen, so that you can get out of limbo and move towards your dreams with confidence!

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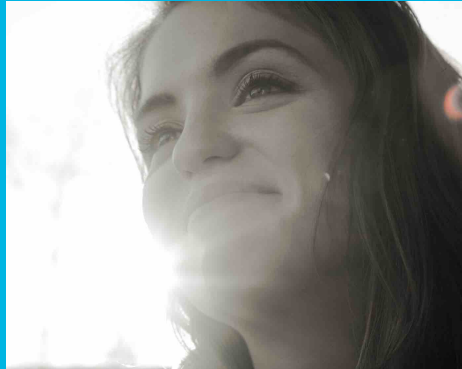
**If that's you, let's connect!**



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# Schedule a Free Connection Call!

Visit: [www.kinesthesia.as.me](http://www.kinesthesia.as.me)



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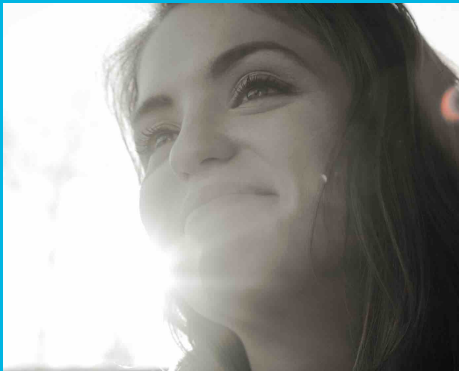


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# Q&A

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