

The Minder Brain: How Your Brain Keeps You Alive, Protects You from Danger, and Ensures that You Reproduce

By Joe Herbert

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Ambition, genius, thought, imagination, love, hate, greed and, above all, consciousness ourselves as alive and as part of our world -all this is somehow enabled by the brain. The brain is the person, and if it goes wrong, a person is ruined. This book is about part of what the brain does - a role of which many of us are hardly aware, but one that has ensured, the survival of mankind. Despite famine, drought, wars, cold, infections and hostile environments, we survive as a species - though not always as individuals. All this time, our brains have been coping with what fate throws at us -a process that some call adaptation. How does the brain do it? How does it know what's needed? How does it enable us to provide that need? How much do we depend on our own brains, or on those of others? This book is different from other books on the brain. It deals with the brain's role in survival, rather than "higher" cognitive functions (such as language or thought). It describes the special part of the brain that keeps you alive: that makes you feel hungry when you need energy, makes you feel thirsty when you need water, drives you to reproduce so that your species survives, makes you fearful of things or individuals that might harm you, and defends you against adversity.

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Review
Brain chemistry and human behavior are explained in terms that an intelligent layperson can understand. -- *Choice*

The author is clearly a real enthusiast with considerable experience of imparting his enthusiasm to student audiences ... this is a book that grows in conviction and impact as you read on ... he has really succeeded in putting together a fascinating and thought provoking book that will appeal not only to lay readers but also the neuroscientists who would appreciate the breadth and literary links to the subject ... I certainly enjoyed the book and would be happy to recommend it to others. -- *Journal of Anatomy*

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