

SPIRITUAL PRACTICE CHANGES BRAIN - NEUROSCIENTIFIC APPROACH

Maja Roje Novak

Private neurological practice and Center AKUMED, Zagreb, Croatia

Spirituality can be defined as awareness of permanent and higher aspect of life and nature. God is perceived as supreme being which supernaturally intervenes relieving suffering and fulfilling needs. God is totally subjective experience of an individual. For some He is a symbol of ideal parent and for others God is a physical phenomenon of quantum field. Recent neuroscience evidence shows that spiritual practice is beneficial for physical and mental health.

It relieves stress, enhances cognitive abilities, incents compassion, reduces anxiety and depression and is developing selective attention. Only 12 minutes of meditation or contemplation per day can slow down aging process. Fundamentalism combined with hostility towards people of different worldview can damage the brain and on the contrary, intensive prayer can change numerous brain structures, correcting our values and perception of reality. Therefore medicine can improve human health suggesting patients to study spirituality and implement spiritual practice.

KAKO DUHOVNOST MIJENJA FUNKCIJE MOZGA- NEUROZNAJSTVENI ASPEKT

Duhovnost definiramo kao svijest o neprolaznom i uzvišenom aspektu života i prirode, Boga. Bog se percipira kao nadljudsko biće koje nadnaravno intervenira temeljem svoje ljubavi prema čovjeku umanjujući patnju i ispunjavajući potrebe. Bog postoji u subjektivitetu pojedinca na različite načine. Za neke je On simbolizacija idealnog roditelja dok je za druge Bog fizikalni fenomen npr. kvantno polje. Recentna neuroznanost ukazuje da je duhovnost blagotvorna za naše mentalno i fizičko zdravlje.

Navedena tvrdnja proizašla je temeljem dokaza iz neuroznanosti i novih metoda istraživanja moždanog metabolizma. Duhovna praksa umanjuje stres, pojačava kognitivne sposobnosti, potiče suosjećanje, smanjuje tjeskobu depresiju i razvija selektivnu pažnju a samo 12 minuta meditacije na dan usporava proces starenja. Fundamentalizam, ako potiče ljutnju prema drugima i drugačijima može trajno oštetiti mozak, a intenzivna molitva može promijeniti brojne moždane strukture mijenjajući naše vrijednosti i percepciju realiteta.

Stoga medicina može unaprijediti zdravlje bolesnika upućujući ih na proučavanje duhovnosti i duhovne prakse.

* * * * *

CATEGORY "SPIRITUAL HEALTH"

Marina Larskikh, Natalia Vjunova & Sergey Larskikh

N.N. Burdenko Voronezh State Medical University, Voronezh, Russia

The future of mankind directly depends on the spiritual health of society. But, at present, the category "spiritual health" is the least developed category in comparison with such categories as health, mental health, psychological health. The analysis of the works devoted to spiritual health made it possible to conditionally single out several points of view. First, spiritual health is considered in valeology as a system of thinking and a person's relationship to the world around him. Secondly, spiritual health is often reflected in popular television programs. From this point of view, spiritual health is the existence of a special culture of life, special personal qualities (willpower, courage, perseverance, courage). We find the Christian understanding of "spiritual health" in the pages of Holy Scripture. Thus, Theophan the Recluse considers spiritual health as a certain hierarchy of body, soul and spiritual - "... the body must obey the soul, the spirit soul, the spirit must be immersed in God according to its nature."

Christianity refers spiritual health to the highest property of man, the achievement of which is more valuable than the achievement of physical and mental health. And spiritual health is not necessarily connected with bodily health, i.e. refutes the famous formulation of D. Locke "in a healthy body - a healthy mind." You can be physically strong, healthy and at the same time a spiritually sick person, as somatic, mental and psychological health can be preserved until old age in adventurers, swindlers, murderers. Moreover, bodily health can even be disastrous for spiritual health, since the commandments of the Law of God are easier to violate, being bodily healthy than sick. A bodily disease, on the contrary, can serve to acquire spiritual health, as a person develops in himself the virtues of patience, humility, obedience, and also compassion and mercy.