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Brain References

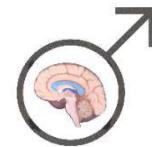
# Tsunami of 'Romantic Love'





# Human Beings

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**Whatever else they are, they are relational, spiritual, and sexual (whether or not they engage in sexual activity)**

- The brain is your primary sex organ – sex begins in the brain
- Sexuality impacts every aspect of, personal, professional— at home, school, church, work, clubs, play, vacation ...



# This Presentation

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**Is not designed to be a theological or a religious discussion or a prescriptive ideological ideal**

**It is designed to share information and study conclusions related to the tsunami of romantic love**



**Chemicals and hormones released during romantic love versus the chemicals that are released in a long-term committed partnership (marriage or common-law)**



# Gender Differences

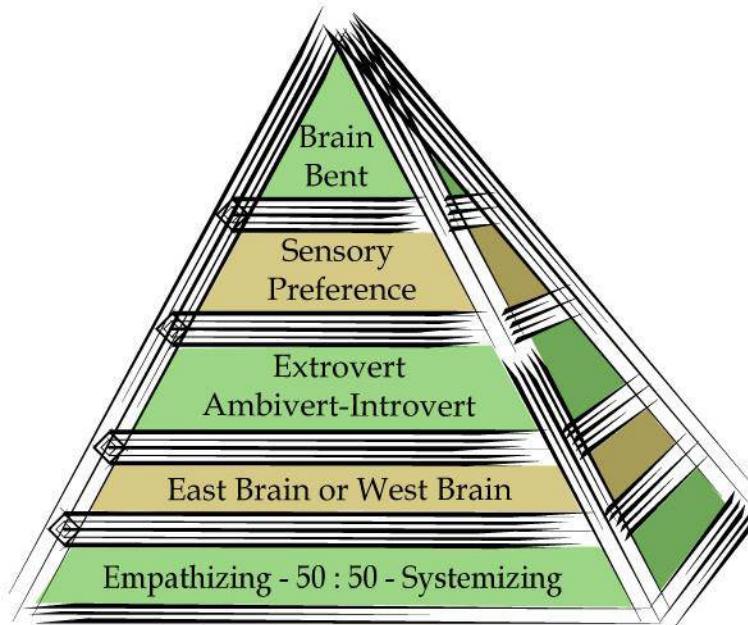
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**Are represented by the  
the foundational layer**

**Gender differences  
are here to stay**

**You can either be  
frustrated and  
miserable or have  
fun with them**



***Who I Am Pyramid***

# **Society Has Been Remiss**

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**In failing to teach its individuals about the brain chemistry of infatuation (sexual / romantic attraction) versus committed monogamous love—but you can only teach what you know . . .**



**When individuals say ‘We have chemistry’ they are correct—and that’s pretty much all it is initially: just Brain Neurochemistry**

**By misunderstanding this, many have made disastrous liaisons and / or untenable marriages**

# **Romantic / Sexual Attraction**

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**Begins in the brain and involves hormones, neurotransmitters, and sexual energy**

**The chemicals triggered appear to depend on the situation: a sexual or romantic encounter or a committed life partner situation**



**Individuals who are attracted romantically and whose brains are not yet mature or have little if any valid information, may be at increased risk for partnering unwisely**

# **Brain Neurochemistry**

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**A sense of *Falling in love* or *Being in love* is fueled by a tsunami of three neurochemicals known as the ‘love chemicals’:**

- 1. Phenylethylamine**
- 2. Norepinephrine**
- 3. Dopamine**



**Without this initial neurochemical impetus some might never choose to marry or have children . . .**

# **1. Phenylethylamine or PEA**

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**Your brain is the most outstanding organ on this planet and probably in the Universe itself**

**It works 24 hours a day,  
365 days a year, from birth—  
until you ‘fall in love’**



**Then it gets hijacked by phenylethylamine or PEA that results in the ‘pea-brain effect’ and puts you at increased risk of becoming a Pea Brain**

# **Phenylethylamine**

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**PEA is a naturally occurring neurotransmitter that resembles an amphetamine (stimulant)**

**It is responsible for the elation and head-over-heels sensations associated with ‘falling in love’**



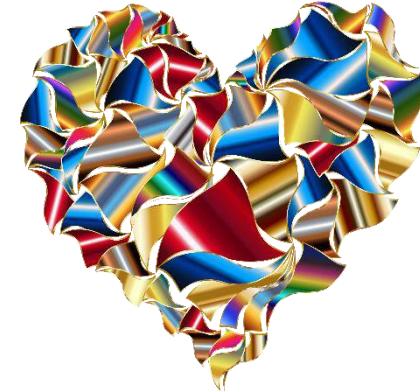
**PEA triggers the release of norepinephrine and dopamine (PEA is also found in some foods such as dark chocolate and avocado)**

# Addicted to PEA ...

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**It is easy to become addicted to PEA—especially when you don't understand the neurochemistry—and it can be a challenge to alter the addiction**

**Some move from one relationship to another as soon as PEA begins to fall—seeking that passionate PEA brain stage**



**The couple may not make it past the PEA brain stage (if they are sexually active, PEA may last a little longer)**

# Addiction Risks

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- **The more sexual partners you have prior to partnering, the more difficulty you may have being monogamous as PEA falls**
- **The higher at risk you are for having emotional or sexual affairs or becoming involved with alternative sexual behaviors such as masturbation and pornography**
- **If one or both are addicted to PEA and marry, one or both may have extramarital affairs trying desperately to re-experience that romantic hormonal tsunami**



# ‘Honeymoon’ Period . . .

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**Chemically speaking, the *honeymoon period* of the relationships is over about 18 – 48 months into a relationship—after that, you may have some small neurochemical tsunamis but rarely like it ‘used to be’**

**At times it may last more than 18 months if the relationship includes sexual activity or if they spend large amounts of time apart**



# **Brain Chemicals Help ...**

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**Relationships that last longer than 18-48 months (especially if the couple marry) are assisted by three other (different) neurochemicals that are very powerful:**

- 4. Oxytocin**
- 5. Serotonin**
- 6. Endorphins**



# **4. Oxytocin**

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**Plays a role in the neuroanatomy of intimacy, pair bonding (sexual activity increases oxytocin), and maternal behaviors**



**Oxytocin crosses the Blood Brain Barrier but is destroyed in the GI Tract**

**Evokes a sense of contentment, reduction in anxiety and stress, promotes feelings of calmness and security when in the company of the mate, and allows orgasm to occur**

# **5. Serotonin**

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**Serotonin is a chemical found in the brain and central nervous system or CNS (10%) and in the gastrointestinal tract or GI (90%)**

**It is believed to impact mood and has been found to contribute to feelings of well-being and happiness**

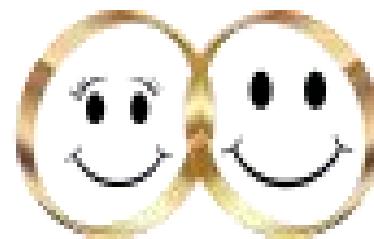


**Increases with mild to moderate physical exercise**

# **6. Endorphins**

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**As the brain develops tolerance to the ‘love chemicals,’ it starts to release endorphins (brain opiates)—if the couple are in a committed relationship—produced during physical exercise, love, and sexual activity**



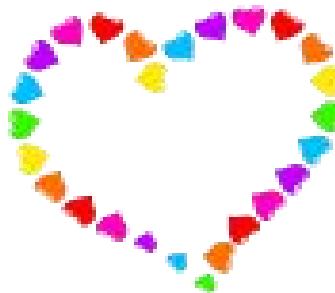
**Endorphins can calm anxiety, reduce stress, relieve pain, and increase attachment and comfort**

# Think Ahead

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**To compensate for the hormonal tsunami that hits when you're 'in romantic love':**

- **Identify the key characteristics for a partner**
- **Set clear moral standards and boundaries**
- **Be the person you want to attract**
- **Get to know the other person's family—do you want them as relatives for you / your child?**

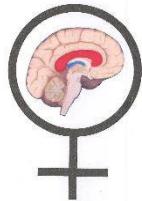


# Think Ahead, Cont'd

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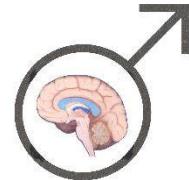
- **Do you want that individual to be the parent of your child(ren) or uncle/aunt to your nieces and nephews?**
- **The more you have in common, the less energy it will require to keep the relationship going**
- **Trying to change someone is like barking up the wrong tree or heading down a dead end street**
- **The past is the best predictor of the future**





# Attraction

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**Notice first the person's clothes, eyes, and figure**



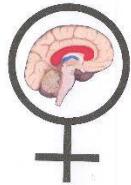
**Appreciation of the sex partner is more romantic than sexual**

**Attracted to wealth, position, skill, and see *possibilities***

**Are attracted first to looks (figure, face, hair, clothing)**

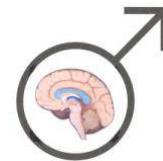
**Decide in about seven seconds if they want to get better acquainted**

**More aggressive and fall in love faster (25% by first date)**



# Socialization Differences

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**Males are encouraged to sow their wild oats, while females are not; even in the era of ‘free love,’ promiscuity is accepted as more of a male norm**

**In some cultures: females are encouraged to LOOK sexual (arm candy for male partner) but then punished emotionally if they respond to flirting**



***When it (sex) is merchandised as a commodity for instant gratification, there is nothing deadlier than sex***

—William Swing

# Know Better – Do Better

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***It is not that I do not know  
what to do; it is that I do  
not do what I know***

—Confucius



**By itself, knowing is insufficient—knowing must  
be practically applied by choice in doing on a  
consistent basis . . .**

**What do you know and what do you do?**