

Body Before Mind

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Why is it that there is so much emphasis on our mind, intellect, and rationality-- but almost no emphasis on our body, muscles, and physiology?

The senses are evil

Something I've been curious about:

Why is sex and sensual pleasures seen as 'evil'?

For example, 'carnal pleasures' (pleasures of the flesh) are seen as evil. If you indulge in the pleasures of the body, you will go to hell (according to Christian-Judeo morality).

Yet in more ancient religions (like the ancient Dionysian-worship), they took great joy in intoxicated frenzy.

If you grew up Christian, or in America (even if you're atheist in America, Protestant morality still holds strong sway) -- we were taught that masturbation was evil, porn was evil, and sex was evil.

But why?

You don't want teenage pregnancies in modern society

Of course-- practical matters:

You don't want pregnant teenagers.

If you're a 16 year old teenager, with a child-- of course it will be much more difficult to attend college, and get a higher-status job. Furthermore, a lot of teenage couples with a child are seen as a drain on society.

So perhaps part of the issue is an issue of utility (American society is utilitarian):

Sex outside of marriage is evil, because it will eventually hurt society. The only "legitimate" sex is within a marriage-- because the institution of marriage is good for society.

Yet how do you keep these wild teenagers from doing the baby dance? Easy:

Frighten them, that if they participate in pre-marital sex, they will go to hell.

Nobody wants to burn in the hellfire for eternity. Thus, the morality that "God is always watching you", to keep us in check.

Anyways, through this simple moral rule, we are taught:

Sex is generally bad.

And where does our sexual desires come from? The body!

Thus, the body is bad, evil, and should not be trusted.

Furthermore,

Don't trust your bodily sensations.

And what is the ultimate good? Morality, ethics, and rationality.

Thus in society we are taught:

Don't trust your body; only trust your mind.

Serious problems which occur when no focus is given to the body

Now, what is the problem of trusting your mind 100%, and trusting your body 0%?

Simple:

1. Mental problems:

If you never allow your body to exercise, outlet your sexual desires, or walk around -- certainly there will be some mental degenerations. Because **the body and mind is intrinsically integrated; they are not separate things!**

2. Anaemic bodies:

Let us consider-- that only the mind is good, and the body is unnecessary. Then the desire that people have is to only build their mind, while disregarding their body. This might lead someone to reading books 12 hours a day, sitting in a chair all day.

Imagine if you never left the house. What would happen to your body? Of course your body would atrophy and get weaker!

And this is my belief:

A flabby, weak body is a bad body.

I have discovered for myself that my moments of the greatest intellectual power, strength, and action is generally *after* I lift heavy weights at the gym (squat, deadlift, heavy dumbbell presses; powerlifting style).

What do we desire as individuals?

I cannot speak for you, but let me try to think through some things which I assume most people desire:

1. *Vigorous energy, all-day-long*: I think the ideal is that from when we wake until we sleep, we have 100% energy and power. The hope is that we don't get tired during the day; and we only get tired in the evening (before we sleep, and we sleep deeply). I believe that we gain the maximum vigorous energy in a 24 hour period only *when* we participate in some sort of vigorous physical exercise. In other words, **if you want the maximal energy all-day-long, powerlift at least once everyday.**
 2. *A supreme sense of self-confidence*: To have self-confidence means to trust yourself, to confide in yourself, and to have infallible belief in yourself. What hurts our sense of self-confidence? When we look at our bodies naked in the mirror, and we don't like the way that our body looks (excess fat adipose tissue, lack of muscular mass). **I truly believe that almost everyone will gain self-confidence when they gain muscle mass, and reduce body fat tissue.** Also as another note, I have gained more self-confidence by removing 'nay sayers' from my life, by listening to more 'hard' hip-hop music, and more empowering philosophy (Nietzsche, Nassim Taleb, Seneca).
 3. *A feeling that we are getting more powerful*: How do we get a sense that we are becoming more powerful? Some simple things can include **stacking more money in your bank savings account** (seeing numbers progress; quantified approach), seeing your **physical strength get stronger** (seeing your deadlift increase from 405 to 415 pounds), and a self-assessment (do I feel I am paving newer, more innovative, more brave ideas?). The feeling of becoming more 'powerful' is both mental strength (willpower), as well as physical strength (deadlift power).
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Takeaways

Anyways sorry this essay is getting a bit too long, let me end it.

Basic takeaways:

1. Ask yourself: "Have I been taught that bodily sensations are evil?" If so, why? And -- do I believe this to be true?
2. Ask yourself: "How many hours a day do I engage in mental activities and exercises, and how many hours a day do I engage in physical activities and

exercises?" I can say that the average American probably commutes 2 hours a day, works 8 hours a day in an office, spends 1 hour a day exercising, 2 hours with entertainment, and 1 hour a day eating food. This is off-balance; we spend 90% of our day with mental activities, and probably less than 10% of our day with physical activities. Shouldn't this be more even-- 50/50 with *both* the mental activities and physical activities? **Solution: More time at the gym, more time climbing stairs, more time walking in the park, or more time walking-commuting.**

3. *Focus 90% of your efforts on your body and physical:* This is my thought: no matter what-- we will always default back to focusing on our mind and intellect. Thus, to balance the scales between the mind and body, it makes sense to put more of our concentrated effort into our body. This means, with your free time-- spend as much time focusing in physical activity. Go to the gym more often, and lift heavier weights. Walk around the block more often. When you have the option, don't just stay at home, go out with your friends or family. Focus on doing things which are more physical, which allow you to move around!

Body before mind. ERIC