



James Tobin, Ph.D.
15615 Alton Parkway | Suite 450
Irvine, CA 92618
(949) 338-4388
www.jamestobinphd.com

Psychotherapy
Couples
Parent Guidance
Buddhist Psychology and Mindfulness
Executive Coaching

Group Seminar Audio Series

Your Fate is Neurobiologically Sealed

Beyond our awareness, we are neurobiologically communicating our history to others in ways that ultimately seem to perpetuate that history. The latest scientific research indicates that a person's brain and nervous system, imprinted by early developmental events and relational dynamics, create a kind of "aura" or neurobiological cue that is transmitted into the social world. Others who come into contact with us "read" these cues and respond to them without ever realizing they are relating to us primarily on this plain and less directly on others. Consequently, what happens to us gradually takes on a particular pattern, often an insidious one that is more powerful and deterministic than what we intend or desire. *This interactive seminar in which Dr. Tobin presented to a small live audience as part of his ongoing Relationship Group was recorded on February 16, 2019 in Laguna Hills, CA.*

Key Excerpts:

- We all have free will, but free will doesn't help us with our fate. We are fated neurobiologically to have certain experiences again and again. A neurobiological template to repeat overpowers conscious intentions.*
- The central experiences we repeat often trace back to early childhood. Freud was the first to describe this "repetition compulsion" and there is now scientific evidence supporting his claim. The mechanism that drives the repetition compulsion appears to be neurobiologically-based.*
- Our brains and nervous systems are "wired" in the nature of early relational experience. Shaped by these relational dynamics, brain structures, neurochemicals, and neurophysiology organize into idiosyncratic set-points; we each have an idiosyncratic, personalized calibration.*

Your Fate is Neurobiologically Sealed

Key Excerpts (continued)

- *For example, if a young child is repeatedly exposed to an abusive alcoholic parent, cortisol, the stress hormone, will be intensively secreted in the child. Then suppose it is a pattern that this abusive alcoholic parent, after treating the child negatively, attempts to make up for this treatment by doting on the child. As a result, the firing of cortisol in the child's neurophysiology is routinely followed by the secretion of dopamine, i.e., when pleasure is experienced by the child as the parent draws close. So, this particular child's brain and nervous system become organized by the repeated pairing of intensive secretions of cortisol and dopamine. In future relationships, extending into adulthood, this individual will continue to seek out or create experiences that activate the same intensive cortisol-dopamine pairings; this individual's brain will "crave" these pairings again and again through new experiences.*
- *We each have our own idiosyncratic profile of patterned neurochemical dynamics that seek continued reinforcement in contemporary life.*
- *Thoughts, feelings and perceptions appear to be impacted by one's neurobiological profile which, in turn, further reinforce it. For example, if one's early developmental experience resulted in the need to secrete adrenaline, often in the context of negative or over-stimulating situations, decades later thoughts, feelings and perceptions will be oriented to activate adrenaline. And so in a complex ambiguous situation that may ensue, the nature of one's perceptions may engender distorted conclusions that then activate intensive emotional reactions (and the consequential need to secrete adrenaline).*
- *Random linkages between thoughts, emotions, and behaviors also occur neurobiologically in childhood. For example, perhaps the following linkages become organized in the child's mind/brain across repeated events (remember, the child's mind is unsophisticated and irrational): "Whenever I play and have fun Daddy gets drunk and sick and then becomes angry and yells at me." These linkages ultimately become organized as a permanent bundle, are sealed in the child's neurobiology, and are inevitably perpetuated, i.e., as an adult this individual may create situations in which he or she is compelled to coerce negative or abusive treatment from others that interrupt experiences of joy and fulfillment.*
- *Our neurobiological profile maintains a keen sensitivity as well. For example, if a child is consistently ignored by a woman he needs (his mother, for example), the child becomes wired to over-react to any sense of being ignored during times of need. So, decades later in adulthood, during a time of stress when this child who is now a husband urgently needs to speak with his wife, he may be disproportionately angered by his wife's unavailability to take his phone call during a busy workday. The mild experience of his wife being unavailable to him, which of course may not be linked in any way to her ignoring him, activates a neurobiologically-entrenched pathway deep in the husband's brain and nervous system and becomes the proverbial salt in the wound.*