

# The Power of the Mind



And you must love the Lord your God with all your heart,  
all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength. Mark 12:30

It is the mind that distinguishes us as human beings. Brain biochemistry controls behavior, so when these organic pathways are blocked or altered, the symptoms are manifested in altered behavior.

Perhaps this explains the mystique associated with illnesses affecting the brain. They change the personality of the afflicted and create bizarre or "different" behavior patterns.

Often, the person becomes unrecognizable from their healthy self. At least one in five people suffer with some type of biological brain disorder or mental illness.

Depression, schizophrenia, bipolar, obsessive compulsive, and panic-anxiety disorders are all classified as mental illnesses. The mind loses the ability to function normally by processing information with altered amounts of chemical modulators (a chemical imbalance).

Symptoms include the inability to focus attention, disorganized thoughts, poor impulse control, paranoia, irritability, and sleep disturbances.

These same symptoms can appear with traumatic brain injuries (TBI) resulting from the head being struck, penetrated, or shaken violently. Conditions involving the central nervous system exhibit similar symptoms. Spinal cord

injury, stroke, epilepsy, cerebral palsy, or Alzheimer's disease must be considered when evaluating patients for brain-related maladies.

If a behavior change occurs, consult your physician immediately. Delayed diagnosis and treatment may lead to deteriorating consequences.

There is hope on the horizon for illnesses that have a genetic component.

The human genome project was completed this year giving scientists a complete map of DNA. There are nearly 16,500 active genes in a mammalian brain! Most mental illnesses fall into the category of complex genetic disorders.

This information is important in developing diagnostic tests, prevention, and targeted drug treatment.

The human brain is the most complex organ we have. Take care of this precious commodity by protecting your head, exercising your mind, and practicing good mental health. Develop personal qualities like resilience, adaptability, tolerance, and facing the challenges of life.

Mental illness is a real, biological fact that can strike anyone at any time. We, as Christians, must have empathy for those who suffer, and provide a place of solace for their families and their recovery.

Do not forget to entertain strangers, for by so doing some people have entertained angels without knowing it. Hebrews 13:2