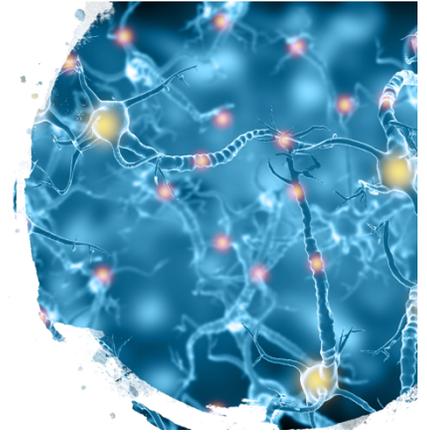# Neuroscience and the Bible

Marti Wibbels, MS, LMHC

In recent decades, neuroscience has made incredible discoveries about how our brains and bodies work, even helping us understand how to create new synapses in our brains. We've learned how trauma occurring before birth can impact a child's ability to attach with others. Dr. Allan Shore explains, "It's now well established that if the caregiver is in a highly dysregulated state, you will get cortisol literally passing through the placenta in utero." With increased cortisol, the HPA Axis (intertwining of hypothalamus, pituitary gland, and adrenal cortex) is impacted, interfering with a child's ability to emotionally regulate.

What we're learning in neuroscience confirms the Bible. Our brains have "neuroplasticity," the incredible ability to change. Instead of allowing our past or present circumstances to define us, we can allow God to restore us, when we *walk habitually in newness of life [abandoning our old ways],* per Romans 6:4b. To help us maximize what we're discovering so we can experience mental and emotional health, we need to know how to accurately apply God's Word to our daily lives. Psalm 139:13-14 says, *You formed my inward parts; You covered me in my mother's womb. I will praise You, for I am fearfully and wonderfully made; marvelous are Your works, and that my soul knows very well.* How can we move into the certainty of God's beautiful design in a world where people hurt each other; where wars, hurricanes, and disease happen, where babies are damaged in the womb? Applying the Bible, we can experience transformation from the inside out.

We can train our brains to replace debilitating reactions. A conscious or unconscious memory can be "triggered" by any of our five senses in as little as 1/12 of a second. Known as an "amygdala hijacking," it feels like an ambush and rapidly moves us from the logical thought of the brain's prefrontal cortex (PFC) to one of the 5Fs (Fight, Flight, Freeze, Fornicate, or Feed). 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 (ESV) shows us how to quickly move back to the PFC: *For the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh but have divine power to destroy strongholds. We destroy arguments and every lofty opinion raised against the knowledge of God and take every thought captive to obey Christ.* Applying Truth, you can immediately ground (anchor) yourself in the present via **Physical, Mental,** or **Soothing Grounding,** explained in my article*, Managing Anxiety* (https://cutt.ly/qBbkkIU).

Knowing and applying the Word of God can help us move away from automatic human reactions into new life. In *My Utmost for His Highest,* Oswald Chambers says, "If Jesus Christ is truly a regenerator, someone who can put His own heredity of holiness into me, then I can begin to see what He means when He says that I have to be holy" [see 1 Peter 1:16]. God's beautiful provision for managing our brains is woven throughout the Bible:

- *A heart at peace brings life to the body* (Proverbs 14:30)*.*
- *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation. The old has passed away; behold, the new has come* (2 Corinthians 5:17)*.*

To enhance your brain's neuroplasticity this week: go on an adventure in God's Word, looking for additional examples of how to apply Truth and change your brain!