

The Second Brain in Your Gut



Transcription:

Bill Gasiamis 0:00

It's Bill from recoveryafterstroke.com and I just wanted to have a chat to you and let you know why it's important that you know that in your gut, you have 500 million neurons. That's 500 million neurons in your gut.

That's right. The gut is now commonly referred to as the second brain. And that is important because you need to know the job that the brain in your gut does for you on a daily basis.

Bill Gasiamis 0:29

Now, how many neurons is 500 million well it's 500 million. But what does that mean? That means that that is about the size of a cat's brain. And if you know cats, you know that they are quite intelligent. Yes, sure, they're lazy and they sleep all day and they don't do much more. But they are quite intelligent, and that's roughly the amount of neurons in a cat's brain.

Bill Gasiamis 0:55

And if you can understand how that is important to you, then you can harness the intelligence of your gut to help you make decisions, especially when you're in a time when you're struggling perhaps from a brain injury that was caused by stroke, whether it's hemorrhagic or ischemic, maybe you had brain surgery,

maybe doctors have gone in there and interfered with all the jelly in your brain.

Bill Gasiamis 1:19

And as a result of that, now you're experiencing some challenges like I was, and like many stroke survivors, and other traumatic brain injury survivors experience. So the 500 million neurons in your gut, help you make decisions, believe it or not, and if you have used the term, I followed my gut, or I didn't have the guts to take an action.

Bill Gasiamis 1:43

That is not a coincidence. You are specifically referring to the intelligence in your gut when you use those words. You are using words to express externally what it is that you are feeling internally. And why didn't you say I used my head to make that decision.

Bill Gasiamis 2:00

Or I use my heart to make that decision. And you said I used my gut to make that decision. Now, you also didn't know that there was between 30 and 120,000 neurons in the heart. And basically what that means is that there's an intelligence in your heart, and those neurons will increase or decrease depending on the kind of person who belongs to that heart.

Bill Gasiamis 2:29

For example, if you've heard of somebody who is cold-hearted, it is commonly believed that potentially that person has less than 120,000 neurons in their heart, and somebody who is young at heart is potentially far more likely to have more than 120,000 neurons in their heart. And Yep, once again, you've said and you've made the decision to say words and sentences like I'm going to follow my heart.

Bill Gasiamis 3:02

And when you follow your heart, you get a different outcome when you follow your gut. Or you've described somebody as being heartless. Or maybe you describe yourself as somebody who wears the heart, the heart on their sleeve.

Bill Gasiamis 3:16

If you do that, if you have done that, again, you are specifically referring to the intelligence in your heart and you are externalizing with words even though you might not have been aware of it until now. You're externalizing internal feelings that are happening inside your heart.

Bill Gasiamis 3:33

You've also probably said that that person is a headcase. Well, that's how I used to describe myself. I used to describe myself as a headcase. And that meant that I was doing all of my thinking all of my contemplating all of my decision makings was being done by my head.

Bill Gasiamis 3:51

Now the head's responsibility is to do the thinking, but not to solve everything all the time. You can't solve an emotional issue with your head, it just doesn't work. Your head is designed to do calculations, work out problems that are mathematical, perhaps, come up with creative ways to help you overcome a problem that you need to find a solution to.

Bill Gasiamis 4:14

So you don't go to your head to make decisions about emotions, about relationships, about the people you love. If you're going to use your head to make a decision, you usually end up getting to that point going, well, that seemed like a good idea at the time. And if you're having a good idea at the time that turned out that it wasn't so good later on, it is likely that you use the wrong intelligence to make that decision.

Bill Gasiamis 4:39

Now, if you've experienced fear before, or butterflies in your stomach, again, that is feedback that you're experiencing, that you're being told by your body to pay attention to, something is happening and your body is sending you some kind of a response to make you aware that something is about to happen. It could even be an exciting thing when you get butterflies in your stomach, or it could be something that is scary when you get tightness and tension in your stomach.

Bill Gasiamis 5:06

In your stomach in your gut is where you also do. Fight or flight response from, it's where you start to take action from and, run away from problems. It's your gut that motivates you to move away from danger. It's also your gut that makes you stay back and decide that you're going to fight a situation. Now, these intelligences don't make these decisions on their own.

Bill Gasiamis 5:33

They often use feedback from the rest of the intelligences to help make this

decision. But some people don't know how to harness the intelligence of their heart and their head and their gut when they are making decisions and they usually allow one of those intelligences to provide more information that is necessary in a decision making process.

Bill Gasiamis 5:57

So it is important also to know that you have neurons in your gut, because the same way that neurons in your head are impacted by stroke, your gut neurons are also impacted. The other reason it's important to know about your gut is because the gut is where the immune system resides, the majority of the immune system is found in the gut.

Bill Gasiamis 6:20

So if we nurture the gut, if we feed it well, if we put in good nutrition, it is going to support a really healthy immune system. Also, the gut and the head also talk to each other. There is this loop that continues to happen between the head and the gut all the time. It's not something that do not interact with each other. Our body is connected, and a healthy gut equals a healthy brain and a healthy brain, therefore equals a healthy gut. It's also where the majority of serotonin is created. The majority of serotonin is created in the gut and that is taken up by the brain.

Bill Gasiamis 7:02

It's also where dopamine is created. And there is an uptake of dopamine from the gut, into the brain. So this thing that looks like squiggly lines and, and houses your poo, and extracts your poo and takes nutrients out of your food and makes you feel different ways when you have a bad meal. This thing that's in your gut is really, really important. those neurons get negatively impacted when we feed ourselves food that is not going to be nutritious and is not going to be good for us.

Bill Gasiamis 7:36

And as they get negatively impacted, you also get impacted in the head negatively. Now, everyone who has eaten too much during a festival or a celebration or some kind of a holiday will have noticed that they you know, they've done the food coma thing and think about it. You're impacting your brain negatively on those days when you're in a food coma and that's because you put too much into your gut, and the gut is having difficulty processing information and sending that information to your head.

Bill Gasiamis 8:09

And it is telling you that while we're in that state, we might as well just be sitting and resting and falling asleep and being sleepy because there's too much work to do in the gut, to give us support to do anything else so you go into a food coma.

Bill Gasiamis 8:27

So if you're healing from a brain injury, and you're experiencing fatigue, and you've got all those other challenges in your brain, you know, decision making, and all those things that are happening for stroke survivors after they are in recovery and healing, and you make a food decision that is going to put you in a food coma, your experience of fatigue and your experience of all the challenges that are associated to brain injuries are going to get worse.

Bill Gasiamis 8:57

So one way that you can get a lot of power back into your recovery journey is to control the types of foods that you eat. And carbohydrates, especially those real processed carbohydrates or white breads and all that type of thing sugars. Soft drinks, while other people might call sodas really make a massive difference in how you're going to experience your brain on a daily basis.

Bill Gasiamis 9:22

And I found that reducing the carbohydrates and decreasing the sugary drinks in my diet made a massive difference in how I was able to manage fatigue, how I was able to support my brain healing and how I was able to get through my day and be more productive and feel better about myself. So you've probably made a gut decision before.

Bill Gasiamis 9:48

You've recall when I said earlier that when you described some situations, you might say I followed my gut. So just know that you are directly interacting with your gut at that time, if you're getting stuck on decision making and you don't know exactly what to do, go into a place where it's quiet. Start just to breathe gently.

Bill Gasiamis 10:13

And then check in with your gut and ask yourself the question, what would you do? Connect in with your gut, put your hands on your gut and ask it, what would you do? I know it sounds weird. And the gut typically takes a little bit longer to

respond than your head, your head is lightning faster, coming up with responses, but the gut takes a little longer. And if it's not immediate, it might come up later on in the day or even the next day or even while you sleep.

Bill Gasiamis 10:43

So check in with your gut regularly and see what it would do in a situation that you need advice on that your head is not able to assist on. If you can relate to any of this, please leave a comment below and tell me how you experience your head, your heart and your gut after your stroke. After all these intelligences are there to help guide us in decision making and may be impacted. And you may need to do some work to help get them all back online and talking to each other.