

Interview for journal Heartfulness

Hello, Alexander! We'd like to thank you for becoming a reader of our journal Heartfulness and agreeing to answer questions which might be of interest to our readers.

1.) Could you tell us please why, having achieved doctoral level in the technical sciences, you changed the focus of your attention and began investigating the science of the soul – psychology?

I've been keen on technology since childhood; I was a radio buff. Accordingly, I elected to attend a technical institute. During my studies I got involved in a student scientific society. In parallel I got interested in the methodology of discovering new technical ideas – I've co-authored a book on this subject. After completing my studies at the institute I worked in manufacturing and at the same time became involved with scientific activity and invention. At the age of 30 I successfully completed a dissertation, but then somehow I suddenly lost interest in technology. I then became interested in the question, how people hit upon new ideas and invent things.

Motivated by this new passion, I went to work in the Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, where I began working on the development of the creative technical thinking of schoolboys. And later, as soon as the opportunity arose, I created my own Centre for childhood invention and continued to investigate the subject of developing the creative abilities of human beings.

So gradually my focus of interest switched from technology to

man, to the method of discovery of new ideas and the uncovering of the inner possibilities of human beings.

2. *Why did you decide to create your personal method and how does it differ from ordinary psychology? Why did you call your method The Rational Path?*

I never decided to create any new method. I simply worked on what interested me. And only with time did the results of my investigations lead to a personal method, which is set forth in 16 books.

I don't concern myself with psychology in its generally accepted interpretation. As is well known, psychology grew out of the medical science of psychiatry. Hence in psychology, as in psychiatry, the accepted approach is that the specialist carries out certain actions with the client and as a result the client obtains the result he requires.

I don't accept such an approach. I consider that every person should correct what he has created in his own life himself. And for this he merely needs to be given the essential instruments.

That is, in my method it's not a question of a Teacher transmitting knowledge to a Pupil, or a specialist carrying out actions which the client doesn't understand, but which improves the client's situation. I only develop and utilize those instruments which the client can use independently. And I know that many thousands of people have themselves dealt with their problematic situations using the instruments referred to in my books.

But sometimes people don't have enough time, patience, perseverance or the level of development to apply the instruments proposed in my books. For such people we organize training sessions and give personal consultations. But again

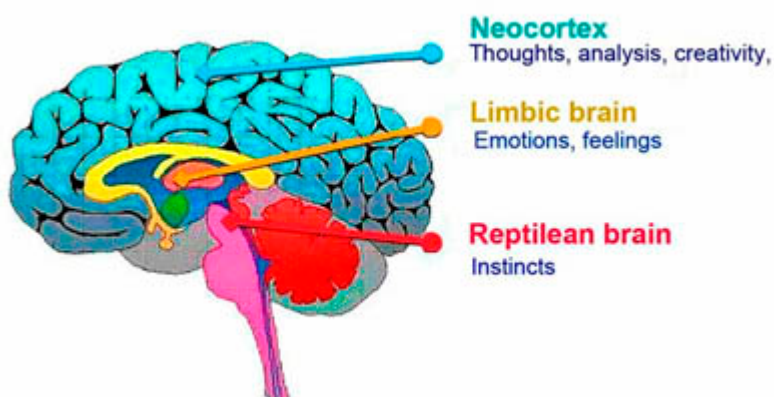
it's not us who solve the clients' problems – we teach them to use instruments of the method of The Rational Path.

Why is the method called The Rational Path? Because the approach proposed is one where the person has to engage his logic and understand in what way he himself has created his bad relationships, loneliness, lack of money or ill-health. And what he needs to do make the transition from this situation to the one he wants to be in.

That is, it's not a path of the soul or a path of the heart or something else. It's a path of Reason. Neurophysiologists have known for a long time that man is the only creature on the planet who possesses the New brain or Neocortex. This New brain arose in us a total of 40 thousand years ago and it's precisely this which enables us to analyze, draw conclusions, plan, predict and so on.

Animals don't have this brain, they only have the ancient, Reptilian brain, which enables them to survive.

Man also has a Reptilian brain, which actively manifests itself in many people. But broadly it's precisely the New brain which has made us human.



God, Nature or someone else has given us a uniquely powerful instrument – the New brain, and it seems to be rather strange when people don't use it in the organization of their lives. In other words, my method is oriented towards the fully fledged use of our Reason, though of course it does not reject any other approaches.

3. Could you tell us please about the unique features of your personal method, the Rational Path. Where does the Rational Path take a person? Is this method only effective for Russian people or can it be used by people of any nationality? Did you take into account the national peculiarities of the Russian soul when you created the method?

The method of the Rational Path bears no relation to the nationality of its users. The method is based on the idea that the decisions and actions of most people are the result of the action of the two independent organs which control us – the New brain and the Reptilian brain.

Some people are very rational; all their actions are thought through and based on Reason. Such people are always confident in their future, enjoy financial stability, have their own accommodation, good medical provision and other social benefits. Broadly speaking they are the native inhabitants of Central and Northern Europe. They take decisions predominantly by means of their Reason. The Reptilian brain has a minimal influence on their lives. These less instinct-driven people advocate tolerance and respect for the rights of other people.

And there are a huge number of people with a low income level, living in dangerous conditions and under pressure from religious, political or other forces. These are, to varying degrees, the inhabitants of practically all the countries of Asia, Africa and South America.

They require the Reptilian brain, which is activated and manifests its activity in the form of instincts, in order to survive. One could say that these people are more instinct-driven.

Instinctuality as an indicator of human behaviour is not taken into account in psychology or any other science. And yet it exerts a real influence on the behaviour of billions of people.

Of course, in both Asia and Africa there are a certain number of affluent people, whose decisions are based on Reason. But the overwhelming majority of people there are highly instinct-driven. To varying degrees, of course.

Russia is also one of the countries with quite a high level of instinctuality, since we are continually shaken by revolutions, wars, economic crises, changes to political systems and other highly stressful processes.

In my method I show in detail how the Reptilian brain seemingly foists its decisions on rational human beings and as a result creates a multitude of problems for them and people around them.

For example, the Instinct to continue the bloodline foists on highly instinct-driven women the obligation to get married and have children. The more the instincts hold sway, the more children a family has – this is a condition of survival in dangerous conditions, since some of the children might not survive.

And at the same time highly rational European women, living in a safe environment, consciously plan for the number of children they intend to have. Or decide against having any children at all. They are not troubled by Instinct.

The survival instinct demands of men that they occupy the highest possible position in society – the higher you've

climbed, the safer you are. This gives rise to the unconscious desire to demonstrate one's superiority over other people by owning expensive cars, huge houses, high-class women (for men) and so on.

It's the herd instinct which is acting as an aid to survival when relatives help out in difficult situations. But it divides people up into distinct groups along religious, political and other lines. This instinct demands that we help "our own", but be hostile to "them". Whence the endless religious and other wars.

In general, people behave very irrationally every now and then, and when they do, they don't understand why they act in that way. And in my books I explain the inner mechanisms behind the taking of decisions. I provide the instruments with which to become more conscious and not be led by one's Reptilian brain.

On the other hand, our New brain also creates lots of problems for us with erroneous convictions which we perceive as true.

4. Why do you think your personal method has become so popular – your books are all bestsellers, aren't they? – and millions of people from different countries use the method of the Rational Path?

In reality, all my books have been republished every year for the last two decades. Why is that? The unanimous answer which all people who use my method and achieve wonderful results give to this question is simple: "It works".

That is, people read my books and use the ideas set forth in them. The problematic situation they find themselves in is resolved and they share their experiences with friends and relatives. And if their friends are ready for inner change,

they'll read the books as well and will use the ideas set forth in them to improve their lives.

Of course, there are in the world thousands of religious, psychological and other theories, and they are all aimed at helping people. Some people like one theory or method, some like another, and some like Sviyash.

My method is fairly complicated: it requires the ability to analyze one's behaviour, draw conclusions (in accordance with specified rules, of course), and carry out exercises. To complete the process of self-transformation, 3-4 months of independent work for roughly one hour a day are required. And then for a further 6 months after that I recommend repeating certain exercises for an hour or so at least once a month in order to reinforce the results obtained.

My principal users are people with higher education, who actively use the left (rational) hemisphere of their New brain. These are predominantly people with a technical, economic or managerial education.

To a large extent the people who use my method are 30 or over. In our youth we are all full of hope that everything will turn out in the best possible way of its own accord. And then, when this hope isn't realized, and you don't understand why your efforts aren't leading to the desired result, you start looking for outside help. And here the method of the Rational Path might be of benefit.

What usually happens when people use the instruments of the method of the Rational Path? The most varied positive changes, for example, the following:

- The person overcomes struggles with himself and other people, and achieves inner peace and harmony.
- An increase in the person's energy-level results, he feels 5-10 years younger. Sometimes he actually becomes physically 5-10 years younger.

- Sometimes illnesses which were brought about by endless negative emotions disappear of their own accord.
- The endless flow of thoughts in the head ceases of its own accord.
- The person stops getting embroiled in unwanted conflicts despite himself.
- Obstacles on the path to his desired goals disappear and he moves towards them in conditions which are most conducive to success. Moreover, they can be absolutely any goals, although they have to satisfy certain conditions.

It seems like a miracle that all this can be achieved in 3-4 months, one hour a day, but this is the reality which the many people who use the instruments of the Rational Path experience. But to make the transition to such a state, one has to put in the effort and change oneself.

Most people are afraid of change – unfortunately, that's a manifestation of the survival instinct. Therefore, the method is used primarily by people who have a strong desire to resolve an accumulation of problems and are highly motivated to make changes. In that case, by exerting their will, they overcome the resistance of the Reptilian brain and work on making changes in themselves.

Many other people adopt the position of victim of unknown forces and ask Higher forces beyond their understanding to help them. That's another path.

Some of my books have been translated into English; they can be found at amazon.com. Other books and additional materials can be found at my site www.sviyash.com.

5. *What practical recommendations can you give our readers regarding the following questions?*

Many people on earth today suffer because of the low quality of their relationships. What would you recommend to people who wish to create happy relationships within a couple, family or group of work colleagues?

In reality, a huge number of people constantly find themselves in conflict with other people or with themselves. What lies behind this endless struggle?

Most of us have Expectations about how things should be for us and in the world around us. For example, how much you should weigh, how you should look, how much you should earn. Similarly, we have expectations as to how our parents, children, husband or wife, boss, employees and so on should behave. All this constitutes our internal picture of the world – it's created during the process of growing up. It's then added to by our positive or negative (betrayal, divorce, infidelity, etc.) experience.

Our Reptilian brain knows about these Expectations. And when it sees that something in reality diverges from our Expectations, it evaluates the situation as dangerous. And rushes to our defence.

It does this very quickly and in one of two ways.

If it recognizes that the destroyer of an Expectation is stronger than you, or the destruction of your Expectation has taken place and there's no possibility of changing anything (your beloved has married someone else, your business has gone bust), then it takes energy away from you. And you lapse into a prolonged depressive state. In the same way animals in nature sometimes freeze in the hope that a stronger enemy won't notice them. When the sharpness of the perception of the event has faded with time, the Reptilian brain returns the person to a normal energy-level.

If the Reptilian brain considers that you are stronger than the person whose behaviour you consider to be incorrect, then

it puts your body into an aroused state. You start to experience what we call “negative emotion”. The greater the divergence between reality and your Expectations, the higher your level of arousal. People call this “anxiety”, “alarm”, “irritation”, “rage” and “fury” – depending on the level of arousal reached.

Why does the Reptilian brain put us into a state of arousal without our (our Reason’s) agreement? So that we’re ready to defend ourselves against danger. More precisely, so that we’ll use force to make reality fit our Expectations and thereby remove the danger. Such is the “caveman” algorithm for reacting to danger, developed over millions of years.

For example, you have the perfectly acceptable conviction that your husband should be faithful. Or that he should earn enough money to support the family. Or that he should help with the upbringing of the child, and so on.

When confronted with the fact that your husband, because he has different convictions, fails to satisfy certain of your Expectations, you start trying to get him to agree to change himself and become as you want him to be. So you try to resolve the problem at the level of Reason. But a simple conversation very rarely succeeds in changing another person’s convictions (your husband’s), so your Reptilian brain comes to your aid. It puts you into a state of irritation or rage, and from a position of strength you start attacking your husband. So that he’ll be frightened of you and start behaving in a way you consider to be correct.

With children this use of intimidation often leads to the desired result, but with adults (with your husband, for example) this mechanism of coercion often fails to work.

And it fails because, as soon as you attack your husband, his Reptilian brain is activated and puts him into a state of arousal in order to defend himself.

And from then on, your relations proceed at the level of coercion – who intimidates whom. Such battles can go on for decades without any visible result. Or the stronger-willed of the two gains the upper hand.

Such are the internal mechanisms of all our conflicts, whether they're between children and adults, husband and wife, boss and employees or any other instinct-driven people.

Rational people don't intimidate each other, they come to an agreement. But such people are quite rare in our world.

Everyone else unconsciously (that is, under the influence of the Reptilian brain, which acts without Reason agreeing to its actions) experiences irritation or rage as soon as reality diverges from their wonderful Expectations.

You might have an Expectation about how much you should weigh and be enraged by your body, which for some incomprehensible reason has put on "excess" kilograms and has no wish to lose it. And you might be engaged in this useless struggle with yourself for many years.

You might have the Expectation that you should have lots of money, and be enraged at callous Life for not fulfilling this Expectation.

Under the influence of the instinct to continue her blood-line, a young woman might have the Expectation that she should definitely have a husband and children. And as a result she might find herself for many years in a struggle with Life, which fails to send her the desired man.

Some men have Expectations which they struggle to fulfil for decades.

You'll agree that it's quite difficult to call behaviour of this sort, exhibited by billions of people, "rational".

This endless struggle makes it impossible for you to progress

towards the goals you desire and gives rise to a multitude of other problems.

The fact is that all our negative emotions have very unpleasant consequences. The Reptilian brain gives us energy for real physical struggle with an adversary, but we don't lash out – we restrain ourselves – we're civilized people after all.

As a result the Reptilian brain stores the energy already released in the body for the next skirmish. In the method such an energy-charge, directed against a specific adversary, is called an “emotional block”. The energy is stored in the form of bodily “springs” – resulting from spasms in distinct muscles in our bodies.

The more negative experiences you've had – the more emotional blocks (bodily spasms) you carry inside yourself (if you haven't eliminated them, of course).

Emotional blocks are “allocated” by the Reptilian brain to the body thematically – here blocks for struggle with yourself, there for struggle with your husband (wife), there for children, and so on. Moreover, no correlation between a group of emotions related to a specific issue and a particular place where the emotional block is located in our body has been established. These places vary from person to person.

The accumulation of a large number of emotional blocks in the body gives rise to the following consequences. The emotional blocks impede the flow of energy through the body – our energy-level drops. Initially, in the places where the large emotional blocks are located, psychosomatic pains arise, which later turn into specific fully-fledged physical illnesses. Emotional blocks create an endless and uncontrollable flow of thoughts in the person's head.

The main thing is that they plunge you again and again into conflicts with those people or circumstances against whom or

which they are “charged up”. Therefore conflicts in families or at work can last years or decades, and it’s difficult to stop them merely by wishing or even by exerting your will.

To eliminate any conflict, one needs to carry out two steps:

- work with the technology for cleansing the body of the accumulated emotional blocks;
- change your conviction that everything should only happen in a way which you consider correct.. If you change your conviction, or simply reduce its importance for you, the Reptilian brain no longer has anything to defend and will be pacified. That is, the conflict will come to an end on its own as it were.

For example, relatives who have been in conflict for many years and haven’t been communicating with each other, immediately after erasing the emotional blocks, might ring each other up and chat as if they’d only parted company the previous day without any problems.

In my books I talk about these mechanisms which control our behaviour. And provide the tools which enable people to escape from the control of the Reptilian brain and start living more consciously and successfully.

6. You recommend to people that they develop acceptance, but how can people develop acceptance and really accept everything which life gives us? It’s easy to talk about acceptance, but how do you really learn how to accept? What do you recommend to people? What results do people who practice the Rational Path achieve in this regard?

Acceptance is not a distinct aim in the method of the Rational Path. It arises as a result of you changing your expectations and convictions. And as a result of you eliminating emotional blocks from your body.

To erase emotional blocks we employ the technique of Effective forgiving. It consists of two stages.

In the first stage you write an Extended formula for forgiving which asks your adversary for forgiveness for all the unpleasant things you've done to him. For example, an EFF for a husband, written by the wife, might be the following phrases:

- *I ask my husband for forgiveness for having considered him a failure*
- *I ask my husband for forgiveness for having refused him sex.*
- *I ask my husband for forgiveness for not having cared about him.*

And so on. Most women easily find 20-30 reasons to ask for their husbands' forgiveness.

In the second stage you forgive your adversary for the bad things they've done to you. For example, in the EFF for a husband, many women might write:

- *I forgive my husband for having deceived me.*
- *I forgive my husband for not having helped me around the house.*
- *I forgive my husband for not having helped me much with the upbringing of the children.*

And so on. In this part many women write 20-30 phrases.

In the EFF there are another 3 parts; you can read about them in more detail in my book "The Method of Effective Forgiving".

In the second stage you need to download these phrases into the Subconscious. For this it's usually recommended to repeat such phrases to oneself over and over again – that's how one works with affirmations.

We also use another approach. As you've no doubt noticed, when a powerful emotion arises, Reason is switched off – it only functions well in a calm state. And emotion is usually an energy-state triggered by arousal.

That means that if we raise the energy-level of the body through active breathing, for example, then the control function of Reason is weakened. Therefore we recommend doing active breathing in a standing position and at the same time repeating to oneself phrases from the EFF. Experience shows that this way of doing it significantly speeds up the process of forgiving.

The inner essence of the technique of forgiving is that by means of Effective forgiving we bring to the attention of our Reptilian brain that henceforth we will choose to forgive our adversary and allow him to behave as he wishes. If we make the effort a sufficient number of times, the Reptilian brain excludes the object of our forgiving from the list of those that need to be fought against. It ceases to pay attention to it. In other words we stop reacting to what previously annoyed or infuriated us.

You could call this acceptance – now we react calmly to the occurrence of something which previously triggered a sharp reaction.

Through the technique of Effective forgiving one succeeds very quickly in achieving a state of acceptance of any situation or person.

7. How do you recommend dealing with childhood traumas which prevent you realizing your goals in later life?

We don't deal with illnesses, let alone childhood ones. And I don't have any information about the causes of such misfortunes, which one could check out.

And then the method of the Rational Path is not aimed at influencing other people. Changes in other people occur, of course, but they are usually not the result but rather a by-product of our work on ourselves. I'll give you an example.

A married couple have been rowing with each other for many years. Then the wife comes across my book (goes to a seminar) and works on forgiving her husband. She eliminates from her body an emotional block "charged up" against her husband.

The reptilian brain of the husband suddenly discovers that the enemy as represented by his wife has suddenly disappeared. That means that he no longer needs the emotional block which is "charged up" against his wife. And the husband's Reptilian brain itself eliminates the emotional block which is "charged up" for the struggle with his wife. That is, changes have taken place in the husband as well, although he hasn't done anything to himself.

And that's it, there's no longer anyone to struggle against. Relations between the husband and wife become harmonious, sometimes there might even be a blossoming of love again. It does happen.

But we don't have the tools for acting purposively on other people; we don't need them.

8. *Do you accept that Yoga, the use of Meditation and your recommendations can complement each other?*

Yoga in the sense, not of a set of specific exercises from Hatha-yoga or Prana-yoga, but a spiritual teaching, is completely self-contained. It's simply a different path.

The method of the Rational Path is aimed at people with completely normal, earthly interests. It's totally practical

and aimed at a rapid and successful achievement of completely earthly goals – love, good relationships, material well-being, creative self-realization, career enhancement, building or re-establishing a business, and so on.

But I'd like to point out that people working with the instruments of the Rational Path easily obtain the same results which various spiritual schools take many years of practice to achieve. For example, the same cessation of the uncontrolled flow of thoughts in your head is achieved automatically as a result of eliminating emotional blocks from the body – insofar as it's precisely the blocks which create these highly unnecessary thoughts.

The acceptance of other people, with all their psychological and other peculiarities, is also a by-product of the work on your excessively important convictions, and so on.

One could say that this is a new spirituality, quickly and effectively cultivating in people those qualities which spiritual people are supposed to possess.

As regards meditation, probably it does provide effective tools to replace convictions, given that you're capable of achieving a state of total tranquillity in your head during the meditation. But few people really have this ability. And what is nowadays called meditation, where the facilitator utters certain phrases and the listeners imagine what he is saying, is probably not, in fact, meditation.

I myself sometimes use meditation as a practice leading to the achievement of a state of inner tranquillity. But my heavy workload doesn't allow me to devote much time to meditation.

So on the whole I use techniques from the method of the Rational Path.

But our trainers use meditation in our training sessions and people like it.

I think it's possible to divide people into two large groups. The first is made up of people for whom the result is important and who strive to achieve it as quickly as possible. The second large group is made up of people who still want a result, but are able to derive joy from their current states. It seems that people in the second group like meditation. I'm concerned with people in the first group.

In summary, one could say that the method of the Rational Path is a well-developed instrument with which we can make more effective use of the limitless potential which the Creator has given us.