

SHIFTING GEARS

A BRAIN-BASED APPROACH
TO ENGAGING YOUR BEST SELF



ROBIN ROSE

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A heartfelt thank you to my friends and family. They have supported my passion for learning, understanding and growth, and have contributed immeasurably to my work. In particular, thank you to Lisa Latin – friend, editor, and producer. Without her drive, this book might still be just an idea!

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[use your breath to engage your brain]

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[but act from your values]

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[make life easier]	
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Brain Basics

How can you tell which part of your brain you're using? It's simple – just watch how you respond when you're trying to relate and things don't go your way:

Survival Brain	Thinking Brain
Critical / Disrespectful	Curious / Compassionate
"I'm Right!!!"	Listens / Considers other perspectives
Rigid / Controlling	Creative / Adaptive
Overwhelmed	Optimistic / Resilient
Focused on blaming	Focused on solutions
Argumentative / Dramatic	Collaborative / Supportive
Personalizes	Does not personalize
Chronic pain / Fatigue	Healthy / Energetic
Irritable / Humorless	Can find the humor
Recycles the story or issue	Lets go / Moves forward
Reactive / Complaining	Proactive / Requesting

Here are some examples of common behaviors associated with survival brain reactions:

- *Saying mean or hurtful things to people we love*
- *Being critical – shaming and blaming*
- *Oblivious to or not concerned with others' needs*
- *Withholding information*
- *Being secretive or dishonest*
- *Recycling events without resolving them*
- *Accusing, complaining*
- *Sulking, shutting down*
- *Competing, comparing*
- *Gossiping, snide remarks*
- *Mean-spirited jokes*
- *Impatience*
- *Stomping off*

**Evidence suggests that people react
from their survival brains**



70 - 90% of the time!

The Downward Spiral

Here's the bottom line: when you downshift into your survival brain, you cannot think, relate, listen, or communicate effectively.

You may want to, but you simply cannot do it. Nobody can. The survival brain is not set up to handle those sorts of functions.

Consequently, when we are operating from our survival brain, we regularly damage personal and professional relationships, in addition to our own health. In survival mode we're not able to access our rational skill set, so we're not as effective, focused, or accurate. We lose access to our best skills.

Why is it that we end up in our survival brain so often?

The answer is surprisingly simple. When you feel irritated or stressed, or if you get surprised (happily or not), you're very likely to hold your breath. It's a normal human startle response.

But here's the catch: when you hold your breath, that automatically sends a message to your brain that something is wrong, so your brain immediately gets busy doing what it's designed to do: help you survive. *(Remember, your brain's number one job is to keep you safe.)*

Within eight seconds of holding your breath, your brain releases the chemicals it thinks you'll need in order to survive the perceived threat. Once those chemicals are released, your brain has downshifted into survival mode – and it all occurs within eight seconds.

This downward spiral is a simple yet powerful sequence – one we all go through (most often unconsciously) many times every day.

Now here's the good news:

As you start to practice using the skills and strategies suggested in this book, you'll expand your self-awareness and you'll develop the ability to recognize, interrupt, and reroute your downward spirals. Over time, you'll begin to notice that actually eight seconds *is* enough time. In eight seconds...

- ▶ you *can* remember to breathe
- ▶ you *can* stop the downward spiral
- ▶ you *can* stay in your thinking brain

8 *seconds*
is enough time
to change your mind

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Selected Excerpts

Parenting Tip:



Foster your child's resilience.

Mistakes + Reflection = Learning

What you say to yourself or to your child when either of you makes a mistake shapes your child's lifelong resilience.

If you find yourself getting irritable, judgmental, whiney or complaining, check your breathing. These attitudes are giving you the feedback that you are producing too many stress hormones. Are you belly breathing?

We need to use the part of the brain that fits the task at hand. Yet, all too often, we engage our survival brain when what we really need are thinking brain skills and solutions.

Remapping your response is the critical link that builds trust and alters destructive behavioral patterns.

*Feel your feelings,
but act from your values.*

The slower you breathe
the calmer you'll become,
the clearer you'll think,
and the more balanced
you'll feel.
Try it.



Robin Rose is a trainer, consultant, and keynote speaker who specializes in *helping people bring their best selves forward*. Her work is based on an in-depth understanding of brain based research, with a particular focus on high-function brain states.

Robin connects cutting-edge scientific information with an uncommon understanding of individual and group process. She has taught thousands of people *how* to engage their challenging moments with greater power, ability, and ease. In classrooms and board rooms, with groups large and small, Robin trains people *how* to override the fight-or-flight response, *how* to shift from reactive impulses into more effective responses, and *how* to stay respectful, productive, and professional.

Robin consults with a wide array of corporations, small businesses, educational institutions and nonprofit organizations, as well as social service, healthcare and government agencies. She works with teams and key leaders to enhance skills, integrate new behaviors, and improve performance. Robin holds a master's degree in counseling psychology from Lewis & Clark College, and has been teaching, training, and consulting since 1985.

LOOKING FOR ALTERNATIVES TO FEELING FRUSTRATED,
ANGRY, WORRIED, OR OVERWHELMED? TIRED OF BEING TIRED?

START SHIFTING GEARS...

Here's a fast, easy tour through the science of how your brain works and why breathing and self-talk matter. Make these connections and you'll experience a profound shift – immediately.

Robin has been training people for over twenty years. She's field-tested this material on over 100,000 people. These are the core concepts that really work.

This guide gives you easy access to tools that will upgrade your experience of daily life. Feel more energetic. Enjoy clearer thinking. Improve your relationships. Develop a renewed enthusiasm for living. You'll discover that you can shift gears internally – quickly and easily... and those are the shifts that'll make everything else so much easier. Take the express route to “better” – starting now!



Robin Rose teaches you *how* to make positive changes in your life. She translates the best from brain-based research into practical skills and strategies that anybody can use.

At home, at work, in the heat of the moment...

► **Be your best when it matters most.**

Topics include: Survival Brain Triggers • Engaging Your Thinking Brain • Belly Breathing • Productive Self-Talk • Unpacking Anger • Visualizing Success • Gender Differences • Parenting Tips • Nobody Makes You Feel Anything • Game-Changing Apologies • 8 Seconds: That's Plenty of Time to Change Your Mind •

"I'm amazed at how impactful this material has been for me, personally and professionally. Daily life is getting a lot easier. I'm happier, my family is happier, and suddenly my co-workers seem so much more tolerable. This stuff really does work."

"On a scale of one to ten... this is an eleven!"



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