

The Battle Between Left-Brain And Right Brain Dominance

Help, You Are Driving Me Crazy!

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"How many of you have your spices organized alphabetically?" the speaker asked. Two women out of 100 raised their hands as the other 98 laughed and groaned.

"How many of you save a 10" piece of embroidery floss thinking you can use that some day?" As several women raised their hands others laughed as they recognized themselves.

"How many of you approach a yellow light at the intersection and say, 'I'd better slow down.' How many say, 'Go for it.'"

Women attending Spring Homemakers Day at Hartman Center in Milroy, Mifflin County, spent much of the morning laughing and nodding as they saw themselves through the stories and characteristics emphasized by speaker Jane Mecum. As Extension Family Living Agent serving Perry and Juniata counties, Jane's talk, "You're Driving Me Crazy," centered on the tendency in each of us to be right brained or left brained, with a final emphasis on communication.

"What we're talking about is functioning from the right or from the left. We all have a dominant side. Let's give you some examples of how you function from the right or from the left.

"For example, all of you, I hope, brushed your teeth this morning. Those of you who are from the left side picked the tube up and began squeezing from the bottom. That is an organized fashion. You're living in a sense of

physics. What you squeeze from the bottom moves to the middle, gently goes to the top and on to your toothbrush. Life is perfect.

"However, those of you who are right brained grab the toothpaste in the middle and squeeze. You just want the toothpaste out. That's your goal."

Spring yard work offers its own examples. The left-brained person mows a certain way on a certain day as the tulips that were planted systematically bloom beautifully. The right-brained person is just thankful to get the lawn mowed.

As Mecum complimented right-brained people on their need to be organized, she said problems can arise when they feel the need to organize you! And you're functioning from the "When I feel like it" right side of the brain.

To be fair, Mecum stated that right-brained people are organized, but in their own way. "Their organization consists of stacks — and you know who you are!" Mecum joked. Those stacks are proof that the right-brained person just can't throw anything out!

Mecum went on. "How many of you have husbands who have their tools organized from the long screwdriver right down to the tiny one — in order! And if you use one of those screwdrivers and put it back just a tad bit different, he knows it."

In decision making, while left brainers gather all the facts to make an informed decision, they also have a tendency to be less flexible. A right-brained person can see both sides of an issue.

When relating to children, Mecum warns that most children function from the right side of the brain and that we need patience and understanding. Take time to listen to them, Mecum says. They are not spinning a long yarn just to annoy you or to waste your time, they are just expressing their "little right brains".

A person functioning from the right side of the brain tends to be very creative, agreeable, and loves attention. They are fun-loving talkers who are outgoing and love to do more than one thing at a time.

Professionally, left brainers tend to be accountants, researchers, lawyers, and secondary teachers who teach facts. Right brainers become artists, dancers, writers,

and elementary teachers who creatively make learning fun for younger children.

While the right brainers can cry so very easily, many times the left ones are criticized for not expressing emotions. "Perhaps," Mecum adds, "she is crying in a different way. A lot of times we don't understand how they do express their feelings. It's very internal".

So how does this apply to family life? The answer is easy to understand, but harder to put into practice.

First, understand which type of person you are, your spouse is, and your children are. Then communicate, compromise, and cooperate.

Mecum suggests that 85 to 90% of right brainers marry a left brain-

er because "you need some organization is your life". Although we all can function from either side at any given time, we're born favoring one side or the other. The important thing is to allow the other person to express their side. An overly rigid left brainer can kill the creativity of a right brainer — even causing severe personal problems, Mecum offers.

No matter which side a person functions from, and no matter how much you love your spouse, it is the little things, like squeezing the toothpaste, that annoy and create spats in family life.

"As long as you're both willing to give in a little," Mecum concludes, "that's the key. Be willing to understand and not to be too concrete. Communication is the key."

Homestead Notes

Left-Brain And Right-Brain Characteristics

Are you so organized that you drive your spouse crazy? Are the drawers "stuffed" with anything and everything? If either of these statements describes you, don't worry you're just right brained or left brained! It will save a few grey hairs and maybe a wrinkle or two, if you understand which you are and which the rest of the family may be. The following are some characteristics of each:

LEFT BRAIN DOMINANCE

1. A need to be organized! Clear off the desk, kitchen counter, or anything else in the house. Everything has a place.
2. A need to organized you!
3. Enjoys rules and then of course follows all the rules. Deadlines are a must.
4. Bases all decisions on facts. No maybes here.
5. Generally not flexible and feels the need to stand firm on a decision.
6. Bottom line people. Cut through the fancy description and just get to the end.
7. Usually conservative in nature.
8. Wants things to be in sequence and not out of order.

RIGHT BRAIN DOMINANCE

1. It has been said they "march to the beat of their own drum".
2. Decisions are generally based on a "feels right" attitude.
3. Loves piles; their piles are organized in a special fashion. If you ask them for anything, only they can find it - in their piles. Try and find the wood top of their desk or an empty kitchen chair.
4. Very creative. Minds are always working toward creative endeavors.
5. Generally agreeable, and loves to be around people. Often will be spontaneous.
6. Most of these people will marry the opposite brain dominance to help bring order to their own lives.
7. They will buy almost anything! A salesman dream.
8. Simply can't throw anything away. Last year's Woman's Day or Mechanic can be found some where in the house — ask them to find it and they can.

We all have a little right and a little left brain working all the time. But, there are some people, and you know who you are, that are strictly right or left brained. If there is a child in the family that seems different or you have a spouse that you can't understand why they behave a certain way, perhaps they are brain dominated differently than you. It is important to understand these differences and not try to change them — after all, that is what makes them special. Appreciate what each family member brings to the family. Learn to cooperative and negotiate any differences. Remember, YOU ARE TERRIFIC!



Have You Heard?

By Doris Thomas
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WARMING PRECOOKED FOODS

* Always cover precooked foods with microwave-safe plastic wrap, waxed paper or a glass lid. This will keep moisture in the food and provide even cooking.

* Heat leftovers and precooked foods to at least 160 degrees F. If you do not have a temperature probe, heat the food until it is very hot to the touch and steaming.

* Use caution when warming baby food. Stir toddler foods thoroughly and taste-test them yourself for child-safe temperatures. Shake milk or formula in a bottle before tasting as it can become extremely hot.

WHAT UTENSILS, WRAPS AND COOKWARE CAN SAFELY BE USED?

Glass and glass ceramic cookware are safe for microwave cooking. But what about other materials? Use only those containers and products that have been approved for microwave use. These items are designed to withstand the high temperatures possible when cooking foods that have a high fat or sugar content.

Avoid the use of cold storage containers such as margarine tubs, whipped topping bowls and cottage cheese cartons. They have not been approved for microwaving.

The high heat of the microwave can cause chemicals to transfer into the food.

Waxed paper is safe. Other paper goods such as paper towels, plates and napkins have not been tested for use in microwave cooking. If you use paper bowls and plates, for optimal safety, use only plain white paper goods. Never use brown grocery bags or newspapers. These contain recycled materials and metals which could start a fire.

Avoid letting plastic wrap touch foods during microwaving. It is okay to cover utensils with plastic wrap, but unless the wrap is a heavy-duty type, it could melt in contact with hot foods.

Oven cooking bags are safe for use in the microwave. They are made from a very tough nylon material. Oven bags also promote even cooking, which helps meat reach safe temperatures throughout.

You should be aware that there may be a problem with some metallic package materials designed to brown microwave foods.

These heat "susceptors," thin films metallized with aluminum, usually laminated with adhesive onto paperboard, absorb microwave energy to produce tempera-

tures hot enough to "brown" or "crisp" foods.

You find them in microwave popcorn bags, cardboard pizza crisping platforms and in packages of microwave French fries, fish sticks, and Belgian waffles.

While the components of heat susceptors were originally approved by the Food and Drug administration, that okay was based on usage at temperatures below 300 degrees F.

FDA is now concerned that some of the products are reaching 500 degrees F. This could mean that package components are breaking down and migrating into the food itself.

For that reason FDA is asking the industry and the scientific community for data and other information to demonstrate the safe use of these components in heat susceptor packaging.

Until a final determination from safety results is made, you can protect yourself by following these guidelines:

Follow package directions when heating microwaveable food with special browning or crisping devices in the package. Never try to reuse these special browning devices.

Do not eat food from a package that becomes "charred" in cooking. Handle carefully, they become very hot to the touch and could cause burns.

Never reuse trays and containers provided with microwave convenience products. They have been designed for one-time use with that specific food only.