

ARE YOU IN YOUR RIGHT MIND?

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Scientists have shown we are one person with a two-sided brain. Each half has its own way of knowing and perceiving reality. The right brain processes information in a rapid, spatial, and perceptual manner. The left brain processes in a different but equally complex verbal, analytical manner. The two sides can work together in a cooperative manner, with each half contributing its special talents. At other times the hemispheres work alone.

Each of us is a whole brain thinker. However, one side tends to take lead-thought or is dominant. The following "Lead-Thought Quiz" will help you to identify your dominant hemisphere. Choose the answer that best describes your response to these situations. There is no right or wrong answer. Your first reaction is best.

1. If asked to explain a difficult task, is it easier for you to
 - ___a. demonstrate the task?
 - ___b. verbally explain the task?
2. When given a problem to solve, do you look for a
 - ___a. way that worked previously?
 - ___b. new and different way?
3. When working a jigsaw puzzle, do you
 - ___a. want the picture in front of you?
 - ___b. just begin putting the puzzle together?
4. Do you
 - ___a. make lists of what you need to do and follow these lists carefully?
 - ___b. plan as you go?
5. If there is no clock available, do you
 - ___a. lose track of time?
 - ___b. to closely guess the time?
6. Is it easier for you to remember
 - ___a. faces?
 - ___b. names?
7. Do you tend to
 - ___a. complete one project before starting another?
 - ___b. have many projects started at the same time?
8. When talking to a friend or family member, do you
 - ___a. listen to the words they are speaking?
 - ___b. watch their body language?
9. When someone drops in unexpectedly or your plans are changed on short notice, do you
 - ___a. enjoy the surprise and "go with the flow"?
 - ___b. find it difficult to adjust to the change?
10. When packing for a vacation or trip, do you
 - ___a. make lists of what you will take and pack your suitcase and the car the night before?
 - ___b. get up the morning you are to leave and throw everything you might need into the suitcase?
11. When given a project or assignment, do you
 - ___a. get it done early?
 - ___b. wait until the last minute, possibly not getting it completed on time?
12. Do you enjoy
 - ___a. coming up with new ideas and promoting those ideas?
 - ___b. following through with the details on a project?
13. When working on a project or studying, do you
 - ___a. lock yourself in a quiet room with no distractions?
 - ___b. like to have a TV or radio playing and have a snack available?
14. At the end of the day, do you
 - ___a. clean up your work area at home or the office so you can come back to a neat work area?
 - ___b. leave everything where it is so you can pick up where you left off?
15. Which has more value to you—
 - ___a. facts, information, data?
 - ___b. intuition, "it feels right"?
16. When given a difficult problem to solve, do you know the answer but are unable to explain
 - ___a. never or seldom?
 - ___b. frequently?
17. Although your desk drawers, closets, or kitchen cabinets may be messy, do you
 - ___a. have a particular place for things?
 - ___b. put things any place in order to get them out of sight?

18. Do you like instructions to be given
 ___a. by demonstration?
 ___b. verbal or written instruction?
19. Do you hide your feelings
 ___a. easily, or
 ___b. are they "written all over your face"?
20. When asked to hang a picture on the wall, would you
 ___a. use several tools such as a hammer, level, tape measure?
 ___b. "eye ball it" and say it looks ok?
21. If offered an opportunity that would require a risk of money, reputation, or time, would you
 ___a. "jump at the chance"?
 ___b. probably say "no thank-you"?
22. When cooking or completing a project, would you
 ___a. follow the directions exactly?
 ___b. adjust as you go, fitting the project to your needs or the recipe to what is in the pantry?
23. When asking for directions to a location that you have never visited, do you prefer to be given
 ___a. street names and route numbers?
 ___b. the above plus landmarks?
24. When watching a sad movie, do you
 ___a. find yourself identifying with the characters and crying?
 ___b. stay detached from the movie?
25. If asked to explain the plot of a movie, do you
 ___a. go into detail?
 ___b. give a condensed version?

Circle your answer for each question:

Question	Column A	Column B
1	A	B
2	B	A
3	A	B
4	B	A
5	A	B
6	A	B
7	B	A
8	B	A
9	A	B
10	B	A
11	B	A
12	A	B
13	B	A
14	B	A
15	B	A
16	B	A
17	B	A
18	A	B
19	B	A
20	B	A
21	A	B
22	B	A
23	B	A
24	A	B
25	B	A

Count the number of answers for each column.

If most of your answers fall in **Column A**, you tend to process more right brain. If more answers fall in **Column B**, you process more left brain.

To stimulate the *right hemisphere*, try the following:

- Doodle, draw, or print.
- Sing, joke, daydream, recall memories more.
- Stroll, take an afternoon drive, or plan more unstructured activities.
- Practice positive self-talk, watch body language, laugh, give or receive hugs, notice aromas, colors, and emotions.
- Feel another's point of view and make eye contact.
- Move, play, or participate in recreational activities.

To stimulate the *left hemisphere*, try the following:

- Work math or crossword puzzles, write, or take notes.
- Ask questions and make puns.
- Participate in calisthenics and other structured activities.
- Evaluate, analyze body language, set goals, and make more presentations.
- Compare information. Judge. Write a memo to describe your anger, concern, or a problem.
- Review agendas and lists. Follow a strict time schedule when making decisions.

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