

Brazil News



No. 214
25 DECEMBER 21

Editorializing

The Brain

The brain is like an internal combustion engine. It does miracles, but needs maintenance to function properly. If overworked or neglected, it can heat up, blow a gasket, or even shell out.

When our brain is overworked or neglected, it too can heat up, blow a gasket, or even shell out.

It can safely be said that a lot of people take better care of their motors than their brains. It isn't hard to figure out. When a motor overheats and shells out, it quits. Not the brain. It can heat up day after day, steam, make all kind of undefinable noises – and keep on going. And going. And going...

If in your local town (or congregation) the vehicles were in the same shape as people's mental stability, running a mechanic shop might be a thriving business. Who knows, there might be several shops on every block.

It used to be if one was driving down the road and the car began to sputter, and finally shudder to a stop, that even I, who make no pretence of being a mechanic, would open the hood and try to find the problem. Sometimes I even did.

Not anymore. Even people a lot more mechanically-minded than I don't bother to open the hood if the motor quits. They call an 800 number and wait for the tow truck. Instead of dragging out a toolbox full of every imaginable kind of tool, the mechanic approaches the car, attaches some sensors, punches a few keys on his laptop – and then nods his head. He knows exactly what the problem is. And fixes it. Well, not really, nothing is fixed anymore. The defective part is thrown into the junk and replaced by a new one.

Now for the brain. Never before has this "chip" been exposed to such an overload of information and expected to produce rational results. Is the "chip" defective? Did the Maker produce a product that somehow missed quality control?

Brazil ² News

Actually, there is nothing wrong with the chip. It was “designed” to process enormous amounts of data. King Solomon is proof of this. It is significant that he was a Jew.

Henry Kissinger, a German Jew, naturalized American, now 98 years old, served all presidents from Dwight D Eisenhower to Gerald Ford in different capacities. During his tenure as Secretary of State he became famous for his “shuttle diplomacy” in the Middle East. He worked tirelessly, “shuttling” between Jews and Arabs in an attempt to establish what I think can best be described as a “non-violent peace.” (I believe that down deep he knew there would never be a true peace between these Biblical belligerents). There were days in which he would shuttle between three or four nations and meet with their leaders for peace talks. To visit that many neighboring nations with modern transportation was not notable. What causes our jaw to drop is the fact that he was dealing with leaders of different cultures, different personalities, different languages and different political visions, more often than not, political adversaries. Some of this he acquired from briefings from his assessors and a great deal from previous encounters. Thus, in one day, he could meet with headstrong adversaries without coming across as partial.

When the Good Lord hands out IQs, he endows just a few with the mental resources of Solomon and Henry Kissinger. Fortunately. A high IQ has a tremendous destructive potential, as history repeatedly shows us

Alternate Wechsler IQ Classifications (after Groth-Marnat 2009)^[41]

Corresponding IQ Range	Classifications	More value-neutral terms
130+	Very superior	Upper extreme
120–129	Superior	Well above average
110–119	High average	High average
90–109	Average	Average
80–89	Low average	Low average
70–79	Borderline	Well below average
69 and below	Extremely low	Lower extreme

Just for curiosity sake, this chart shows us how intelligence quotients are rated. Without a doubt, men like Solomon and Kissinger find their place in the high end of the highest rating. Many Jews would be in the “high average” and some in the “well above average” classification. The rest of us should have the common sense to understand that we are probably not as smart as we think we are. If we can accept an “average” classification it means we probably aren’t too far off the mark – and have a retained at least a modicum of humility.

Brazil News

That said, we now direct our remarks to those who are in the “average” classification (hopefully, most of us). And return to our original comments on our brain.

It would seem that as our “knowledge increases” so would our capacity to deal with problems. Not only has knowledge increased exponentially, but the same is true for “time-saving” gadgets and appliances. In fact, if we know how to press buttons, we should have a lot of spare time on our hands and be able to relax most of the day.

We’ll switch to a sidling for a few comments on what it took to have a cup of coffee when we first moved to Brazil.

1) Go out in the woods and look for a suitable tree – preferably fallen and dry – cut into small enough sections to be drug home, cut into lengths suitable for our wood stove, split the larger pieces and store in a dry place (often not easy).

2) Go through the wood pile and find twigs and leaves suitable for kindling. Place in firebox, carefully arranged over a bit rumped paper, and light. Then begin feeding in smaller pieces of firewood and gradually increase size until a fire was blazing.

3) Heat a small container of water.

4) Place a reusable cloth filter in a one-liter can (larger, if more coffee desired) and fill with the desired amount of ground coffee. The sugar could be put in the can. Now the boiling water is poured into the strainer. The scalding coffee was ready to be served.

Time elapsed from time fire is lit until coffee ready to be served. At least 30 minutes, usually more.

Fast forward. In our study where Faith and I work we have a Saeco coffee maker. We have the option of punching the “Espresso” or the “Coffee” button. The correct amount of roasted coffee is measured out, ground and in 30 seconds we have a cup of piping hot coffee.

Would we go back to the old wood stove? No way!

What we have just described is not only true in the kitchen, but in the shop and on the farm. I think it is safe to say that in the last 50-75 years the time required to perform most of our tasks has been reduced at least 75 percent.

So why are we so busy? Why, with so many time-saving devices, don’t we have time for what we feel we need to do?

The answer is actually quite simple.

Instead of being our servants, we have become the servants of all this gadgetry. The more time we save, greater the opportunities we see to do more and more and more... That is when the circuitry of our brains starts to heat up and we begin to steam, make all kinds of undefinable noises, and do things expected of someone with an IQ of 69 or below.

I am not a psychiatrist, not a psychologist, and certainly not a specialist in how to keep a brain from heating up. But that doesn’t keep me from feeling alarmed by the amount of religious people who feel the need of professional counseling to make life tolerable.

(I here insert a disclaimer. I am perfectly aware that there are cases in which professional help is both necessary and useful, especially when the disturbance is of organic origin.)

What follows is personal opinion and can be ignored or discarded. No offense will be taken.

I believe, very unprofessionally, that in many cases overheating is the result of

frustration. Merriam-Webster's Unabridged Dictionary defines frustration as: "a deep chronic sense or condition of insecurity, discouragement, and dissatisfaction *arising from thwarted desires, inner conflicts, or other unresolved problems.*"

Thwarted desires. Let's run with this one.

We enjoy reading stories and books of people who had a dream and through hard work and persistence became successful, sometimes even surpassing their dreams. We may try to increment some of their techniques in our own situation. This may work, but often our efforts end in frustration.

There is nothing wrong with setting goals in life. Goals are good. However, the goals we set for ourselves may become stumbling blocks if they don't fit into the plan the Master has for our lives.

The motors in our tractors have been developed for maximum performance. Sometimes the owners, hoping to increase the power, turn up the fuel or install a turbo. It may work, and it may also shorten the life of the engine.

If, to reach our goals in life, we must turn up the fuel or install a turbo in our brain, there is a good chance that instead of resulting in success, it will induce a life of frustration.

Frustrations can be...

Financial. We all hope to have a stable, prosperous livelihood. That is a noble desire. We set goals, possibly for when we reach 30, or 40 or retirement age. But, when in spite of our best efforts (or misjudgments), it becomes clear these goals will not be met, we have a fertile field for a harvest of frustrations. These frustrations are capitalized when our spirit is contaminated with feelings of envy. We see others of our age group who seem to effortlessly accumulate what we, with blood, sweat and tears, are unable to attain. We have the options of:

- a) Growing bitter,
- b) Blaming others,
- c) Blaming God,

d) Recognizing that God has a plan for us, which can be synthesized in the oft ignored words of divine wisdom, that "Godliness with contentment is great gain."

Some of the happiest people I know are comfortably ensconced in the "Godliness with Contentment" regime. They are in the lower end of the financial scale in their neighborhood, but they understand that happiness is not dependent on \$\$\$.

Social. Not everyone craves social recognition. But for those who do, who feel they are being overlooked and not on the "Who's Who List," where they deserve to be, while others who don't warrant this distinction (by our calculations) are making headlines in the "society columns," this is a volatile source of frustration. The one who has the grace to look up, instead of down, will find wisdom in the words not to "think more highly of himself than he ought." Humility is the best lubricant to keep the gears of the mind running smoothly.

Our own household. We would like for our children to reflect who we are. When they fall short of the goals we have set for them, we become frustrated. We may torture ourselves by assuming all the blame, forgetting that there comes a time when our offspring must make their own decisions in life. Or we may exonerate ourselves and

castigate those we feel are bringing shame to our own image. The grace to recognize our own failures and humbly dedicate ourselves to mending fences can be a forceful antidote for feelings of frustration that want to swamp our mind.

Pressures of modern life. This one needs no further explanation. We all know exactly what we are talking about. How do we deal with the frustration of feeling we are getting further and further behind in what needs to be done?

I have a little app on my computer that shows up on my monitor with a keystroke. It can do wonders to keep one from being swept away by the tsunami of demands that modern life mercilessly drops on us. I began by listing *everything* that needs to be done, the easy task and the difficult ones, those that are only a day old and those I have ignored for weeks, or months.

For a list to work one must regard it as a challenge. The challenge is to mark off items as they are completed. It also means – and this is extremely important – that a special satisfaction accompany the marking-off of pushed-off tasks, those that are constantly being swept under the rug, where they fester feelings of frustration. As that list gets shorter and shorter, your frustrations will become less and less.

And so, if your mental radiator has a tendency to run in the red...

- 1) Stop blaming others,
- 2) Install an antivirus in your brain that detects the virus of jealousy in your heart,
- 3) If necessary, reset your goals in life and praise the Lord for what you already have,
- 4) Remember that 80 percent of earth's inhabitants consider you to be rich.
- 5) Remember that 10 percent of what you make belongs to the Lord (not 10 percent of what is left over after meeting all your obligations),
- 6) Don't miss an opportunity to be a Good Samaritan,
- 7) Don't expect professionals to solve problems that you have been unwilling to submit to the Heavenly Father,
- 8) Meditate on the words of Albert Einstein: "*You can never solve a problem with the same kind of thinking that created the problem in the first place,*"
- 9) If you really want to be free of your frustrations, you must become so tired of them that you are willing to follow Einstein's advice. ▲

WE QUOTE...

Leonardo da Vinci

The greatest deception men suffer is from their own opinions.

Unknown

A good conscience is a soft pillow.

Billboard

The road to success is always under construction.

Mark Twain

When in doubt tell the truth.

Unknown

Spend some time this weekend on home improvement. Improve your attitude toward your family.

Unknown

Marriage has no guarantees. If that is what you are looking for, go live with a car battery.

Confucius

Before you embark on a journey of revenge, dig two graves.

Unknown

Follow your heart, but take your brain with you.

Unknown

Sometimes you win, sometimes you learn.

Chinese proverb

When the winds of change blow, some people build walls and others build windmills.

Chinese proverb

Be not afraid of going slowly, be only afraid of standing still.

Unknown

Intelligence without ambition is like a bird without wings.

Unknown

If you want something you have never had, you must be willing to do something you have never done.

Unknown

The best thing about the future is that it comes one day at a time.

Editor of Brazil News (Found in BNews213)

When I was a youth some 60 decades ago, polio was a very real threat... (Various readers found this quite impressive. I replied that "time really flies.")

SUGGESTION

Some of us have begun using Telegram in addition to WhatsApp. In my opinion, it is a superior mode of communication. However, there are two problems: 1) Not enough people use it to where it is practical at this point, and 2) It has a serious security breach, which I accidentally ran across. I discussed this with Stephen Kramer, who is a member of our Tech Committee here in Brazil. He suggested switching to Cloud Veil Messenger. (www.cloudveil.org/messenger/)

The migration is simple. No data is lost and it becomes a very safe mode of communication. I highly recommend this switch.

FINALLY

The Brazil News site is beginning to function. We will constantly be adding more back editions. It is possible that this edition and no. 213 will only show up later this evening.

www.mybrazilnews.com

**BN wishes all readers a wonderful
Christmas and an unfrustrated New Year.**

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