Applying Neuroscience to Self-Improvement  
Independent Study with Jim Hickman  
(hickmanjim8@gmail.com)  
The Wisdom Graduate School of Ubiquity University

“Neurons that fire together, wire together.” (Carla Shatz, Stanford University)

Contemporary neuroscience is emerging as an essential ingredient in understanding human development, including our capacity for greater happiness and wisdom. In the past decade the study of the brain and its relationship to human experience has moved forward with more vigor and enthusiasm than any other scientific field. In fact, science has discovered more about the brain in the last 25 years than in all of previous human history.

Increasingly, this understanding is being applied today in psychotherapy, leadership development, workplace satisfaction, the healing arts, as well as in general individual well-being. In this course, we will explore the history of neuroscience, the current insights and discoveries emerging from this discipline, and its practical uses for improving our own daily life experience.

Along with knowledge of our brain’s operating system, a fundamental component in the effective use of its capacities is Personal Practice -- the conscious, consistent and intentional repetition of carefully chosen thoughts and actions for the explicit purpose of building new neural pathways that become the basis for behavioral changes and improvements in our lives. In this course, we will explore a variety of foundational practices for use in developing cognitive, emotional and spiritual skills that make us more effective and comfortable in an increasingly complex and challenging world. These practices include kindness, empathy, compassion, gratitude, and the experience of happiness.

Required Texts:
2. Your Mind at Work, By Jeremy Hunter, Mindful Magazine, April 2013
3. Contemporary Neuroscience: A Short History of Psychology and the Brain – an article by Stanley Krippner and Alan Combs (available upon request)
4. Neuropsychology of Dreams and Dreaming – an article by Stanley Krippner & Allan Combs (available upon request) 

Two Required from the following list:
Weekly topics for study and discussions

This independent study course will be an 8-week online interaction between Jim Hickman and the student(s) along with several guest faculty. Each week will focus on the knowledge gained from the readings and the experiences that arise from applying this knowledge to daily life. Students will be encouraged to keep a journal of each week’s highlights of learning and experience.

The course will consist of one live (via Skype) 90-minute discussion at the beginning of each week that focuses on the previous week’s reading assignment and one 60-minute discussion mid-week to discuss the application of the learning and Practice to daily life.

The following design illustrates a possible course path toward the overall study of neuroscience and Personal Practice. Individual students may discuss some adjustments in the topics to focus more on one particular topic during weeks 4&5 and 6&7. Weeks 1-3 are required.

1. Neuroplasticity and the Power of Practice with Dr. Will Taegel
   a. The Triune Brain Model - several UTubes on Triune Brain (Triune Brain for Web; etc.)
   b. Transform Your Mind, Change Your Brain – Utube with Richie Davidson
      https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7tRdDqXgsj0
   d. Neuroplasticity: How to Rewire our Brains with Neuroplasticity (5:44 min); Ruth Buczynski UTube (with Dan Siegel); advertises NICABM brain series
   e. “The Elements of Practice” – essay by Jim Hickman

   **Resources:**
   The Mindful Brain: Reflection and Attunement in the Cultivation of Well-Being – Dr. Dan Siegel, W.W. Norton, 2007
   The Life We Are Given – Michael Murphy & George Leonard, Jeremy Tarcher/Putnam Books, 1995

2. History of Neuroscience with Dr. Stanley Krippner
   a. *Contemporary Neuroscience: A Short History of Psychology & the Brain* – an article by Stanley Krippner & Allan Combs
b. *Neuropsychology of Dreams and Dreaming* – an article by Stanley Krippner & Allan Combs

### 3. Practical Neuroscience

b. *Just One Thing: Developing a Buddha Brain One Practice at a Time,* Rick Hanson, New Harbinger Publications, 2011

### 4. Self-Awareness is Key to Self-Empowerment with Caroline Myss


### 5. Bringing Mindfulness to the Workplace with Barbara L. Schultz

   [http://www.aboutmeditation.com/search-inside-yourself-google-course-on-emotional-intelligence/#.USD3PHFstKo.email](http://www.aboutmeditation.com/search-inside-yourself-google-course-on-emotional-intelligence/#.USD3PHFstKo.email)
c. *Your Brain at Work,* David Rock, Google Tech Talk, 2009, YouTube
   [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XeJSXfXep4M](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XeJSXfXep4M)

### 6. Believing, Thinking, Subliminal Programming and the Unconscious

“If You Believe You Can or You Believe You Can’t, You are Right”


### 7. The Brain, the Heart, and Emotional Intelligence

b. *Heart–Brain Neurodynamics: The Making of Emotions - Rollin McCraty, Ph.D.*
downloadable e-book, Institute of HeartMath
   [http://store.heartmath.org/scientific-monographs/heart-brain-neurodynamics](http://store.heartmath.org/scientific-monographs/heart-brain-neurodynamics)
   [http://store.heartmath.org/scientific-monographs/appreciative-heart](http://store.heartmath.org/scientific-monographs/appreciative-heart)
8. Review of what we have learned and how it has affected our lives with Dr. Will Taegel

Suggested Resources
11. Coaching with the Brain in Mind, David Rock, Wiley, 2009
12. Managing with the Brain in Mind (pdf), David Rock (available upon request)
14. Helping Managers Lead Change with the Brain in Mind, David Rock and Mary Joe Emde, April 17, 2012
15. Introduction to Neuroscience – Utubes
   b. Mirror Neurons (UTube Dan Siegel: On Understanding the Brain)
   c. On How You Can Change Your Brain - Dan Siegel (4 min)

9. Biographies of Faculty and Guests

Course Leader and Facilitator of Personal Practice - Jim Hickman

Jim Hickman spent 30 years in the international business and non-profit sectors, stimulating economic and cultural relations between the United States, Europe, and the countries of the former Soviet Union. Since 2005, he has lived in semi-retreat in Bolivia with his family. This period has been focused on his contemplative practice that has been enriched through his personal study of quantum physics, neuroscience, epigenetics, and the nature of reality.
In the 1970's and '80's, Jim was a leader in the "citizen diplomacy" movement that spawned hundreds of citizen exchanges between the United States and the Soviet Union in efforts to overcome the fears and misperceptions between the two cultures. He spent the 1990's as a telecommunications executive, co-founding the Russian long-distance company, Rustel, in 1992 and serving as its President from 1992-1997. From 1989-1992, Hickman was CEO of AJ Ventures, Inc., a US company that established commercial enterprises in the Soviet Union and post-Soviet Russia. In 1993, as Vice President of the Gorbachev Foundation, he worked with President Gorbachev (and James Garrison) on the Foundation's international programs. Hickman served as the Director of Programs and Business Affairs for State of the World Forum from 2000-2004 before joining the Forum's Board of Directors.

He co-founded, with James Garrison, Mosaic Networks in 2003 as a consulting firm with a special interest in socially responsible investments. They worked with Russian investors to build Polarnet, a start-up telecom company planning to install a digital cable to unite the Asian east coast with the European west coast via the Arctic Circle. From 1996-2011, he served on the Executive Committee of the Citizens Democracy Corps (www.cdc.org), promoting and developing enterprises and NGO's in emerging and transitional economies.

In 2007, Jim joined the Board of Wisdom University and assisted Jim Garrision in its transition into The Wisdom Graduate School of Ubiquity University. He is currently COO of Ubiquity University and Chairperson of the Board of Directors.

Jim wrote the Harper-Collins book, Your Y2K Personal Protection Plan, a citizens’ guide to home and business preparedness for large-scale infrastructure breakdowns due to natural or human-made disasters. As a certified instructor from the Institute of HeartMath, he is skilled in teaching emotional preparedness tools for emergency and high-stress situations. Jim has written numerous articles for such publications as the Wall Street Journal Europe, the Moscow Times, and Inc., Magazine. He received his Masters Degree in Psychology from Sonoma State College and is currently writing two books – Successful Living in Turbulent Times and The Illusion of Reality. He lives in Tiquipaya, Bolivia with his wife, Marcela, their seven-year old son, Daniel, and Aurora, a three-year old golden retriever.

**Wisdom School of Graduate Study Core Faculty - Dr. Will Taegel**

**Dr. Will Taegel** brings an integral approach to his work in education as the Dean of the Wisdom School of Graduate Study of Ubiquity University. He weds his Native American background and traditional training in shamanic circles with his 30 year practice of psychotherapy, including a stint as Chair of the Texas State Board of Examiners in Psychotherapy. He balances his academic interest in evolution and trauma with the spiritual practice of rain water collection, solar and wind energy, and environmental restoration. Dr. Taegel is the author of 8 books and numerous professional articles. He was among the first researchers to connect clinical and cultural disturbance with human estrangement from the sacred core of Nature and, in that regard, to build a number of ongoing eco-spiritual communities and is the co-founder, with Judith Yost, of an eco-spiritual, integral practice community called the Earthtribe. His first doctorate, a D.Min., focused on systems therapy, and his recent Ph.D. concentrated on integrating ancient wisdom with the science of fields. His recent book, **THE MOTHER TONGUE: Intimacy in the Eco-fields**, has a five star rating on Amazon.
Week 2: History of Neuroscience with Dr. Stanley Krippner
(http://stanleykrippner.weebly.com/index.html)

Dr. Stanley Krippner, Ph.D., professor of psychology at Saybrook University, San Francisco, is a Fellow in four APA divisions, and past-president of two divisions (30 and 32). Formerly, he was director of the Kent State University Child Study Center, Kent OH, and the Maimonides Medical Center Dream Research Laboratory, in Brooklyn NY. He is co-author of Extraordinary Dreams (SUNY, 2002), The Mythic Path, 3rd ed. (Energy Psychology Press, 2006), and Haunted by Combat: Understanding PTSD in War Veterans (Greenwood, 2007), and co-editor of Healing Tales (Puente, 2007), The Psychological Impact of War on Civilians: An International Perspective (Greenwood, 2003), Varieties of Anomalous Experience: Examining the Scientific Evidence (APA, 2000), and many other books. Stanley has conducted workshops and seminars on dreams and/or hypnosis in Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Ecuador, Finland, France, Germany, Great Britain, Italy, Japan, Lithuania, Mexico, the Netherlands, Panama, the Philippines, Portugal, Puerto Rico, Russia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Venezuela, and at the last four congresses of the Interamerican Psychological Association. He is a member of the editorial board for the Journal of Indian Psychology and Revista Argentina de Psicologia Paranormal, and the advisory board for InternationalSchool for Psychotherapy, Counseling, and Group Leadership (St. Petersburg) and the Czech Unitaria (Prague). He holds faculty appointments at the Universidade Holística Internacional (Brasilia) and the Instituto de Medicina y Tecnologia Avanzada de la Conducta (Ciudad Juarez). He has given invited addresses for the Chinese Academy of Sciences, the Russian Academy of Pedagogical Sciences, and the School for Diplomatic Studies, Montevideo, Uruguay. He is a Fellow of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion, and has published cross-cultural studies on spiritual content in dreams.

Week 4: Self-Awareness is Key to Self-Empowerment with Caroline Myss (www.myss.com)

Caroline Myss is a five-time New York Times bestselling author and internationally renowned speaker in the fields of human consciousness, spirituality and mysticism, health, energy medicine, and the science of medical intuition. She served on the Board of Directors of Wisdom University from 2005-2013 and is a founding Board member of its successor, the Wisdom Educational Foundation.

Caroline began her career as a medical intuitive in 1984 when she met C. Norman Shealy, M.D., Ph.D., a Harvard trained neurosurgeon with an interest in the science of medical intuition. They began a colleagueship that continues to this day. During their early years together, Norm helped Caroline to develop her skills by having her conduct health readings on his patients. During this time, Caroline developed the field of Energy Anatomy, a science that partners specific emotional/psychological/physical/spiritual stress patterns with the specific diseases these patterns create or influence. This analysis proved so accurate that it became the subject of a book co-written by Caroline and Norm, The Creation of Health. In 1996, Caroline compiled her medical intuitive experience with her work in the field of human consciousness for the book, Anatomy of the Spirit, a New York Times bestseller published in 18 languages. Her next book, Why People Don’t Heal and How They Can also became a New York Times bestseller, as did her fifth book, Sacred Contracts. In 2003, Caroline founded CMED (Caroline Myss Education), her own educational institute. The Institute draws students from 19 nations and across the United States. In 2004, her sixth book, Invisible Acts of Power, again was a New York Times bestseller as was Entering the Castle: Spiritual Direction for Dialoging With Your Soul, published in 2007. Caroline’s latest book, DEFY GRAVITY, was released in October 2009, a book exploring the mystical phenomenon of healing that transcends reason.
Most recently Caroline has joined forces with Archetypeme.com, a state-of-the-art web company that is dedicated to creating a global community through by helping people connect to each other through their individual archetypes. With her newest book, Archetypes: Who Are You?, Caroline brings archetypes into the mainstream, introducing the public to how they can identify their personal archetypes and the life experiences these universal patterns bring into their lives. Archetypeme.com is a natural companion to the vision of Caroline's new book in that this web site strives to create a global community in which people sharing mutual interests and experiences can connect with each other.

Week 5: Bringing Mindfulness to the Workplace with Barbara L. Schultz

Barbara L. Schultz is a seasoned Organization Development and Communications Consultant and Leadership Coach who guides corporate executives and entrepreneurs in navigating both developmental and organizational change. She has an active coaching business, working with individuals to improve their professional and personal lives. Her background includes a BA in Journalism from UC Berkeley, an MA in Organizational Leadership from The Center for Leadership Studies, professional experience in somatic disciplines and therapeutic bodywork, extensive study and practice of Tibetan Buddhist meditation and other awareness trainings, and an ongoing passion for incorporating the emergent discoveries of neuroscience into the creation of wiser workplace communication and more conscious working environments.