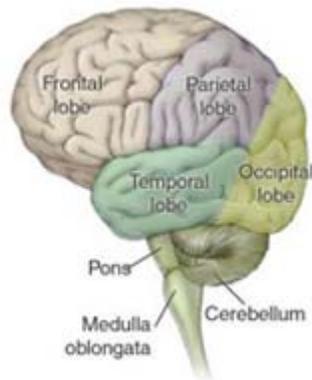


## Connections and Consciousness September 17, 2004



**Eric Kandel** and **Gerald Fischbach** of Columbia University were interviewed this past week by Charlie Rose on Public Television in the US. They are brilliant researchers who study how human beings learn. I was deeply moved by some of their findings which corroborated what I have been teaching over the years.

**When you learn something, anatomical changes take place in the brain.**

Imagine then, how complex a process *change* is. We invite teachers to look differently at what they have learned, at what they have been doing for years. We invite them to change not an attitude or a simple practice, but the very structure of their brain. Let us be patient! And let us be sure that what we are teaching is sound in terms of a future world in peace.

**Consciousness is the deepest problem in all of science.**

Charlie Rose made the comment: “How little we know about the process of learning!” Both of the professors agreed, with the caveat that their work is moving all of us to a new understanding of behavior and of what one called *the universality of biological processes*. What happens in the brain of a mouse teaches us about what is happening in our brain. We are certainly one as a human species; we are discovering how much we are one with the rest of creation.

**The “talking cure” is based on a theory of the mind and manifests the biology of psychotherapy.** How we communicate with one another, the principles of respect and affirmation, the challenge of learning tasks assuming confidence in the learner and in her ability – all evoke physical responses, anatomical changes in the brain. Again, it is not an *either/or* world that we live in, but a *both/and*. Hold the opposites.

I think of myself as a woman who uses her intuitive power to search for the most effective ways to teach and learn. It is consoling and exciting to find traces of my own ideas in the work of these hard working, visionary researchers.