All about human mind

Khondoker Sabbir Ahmed Kawser

THE study of human abilities, faculties or powers of the mind have been a matter of great interest for centuries, not only to the ordinary man who wishes to explain his own behaviour and that of others but also to the philosophers, psychologists and educationists. Early theories of mind held that human beings were made up of two different substances, mind and matter.

Mind was a substance present in a person, but it took up no space and could not be weighed, seen, or touched. The mind was divided into several faculties, such as memory, reason, and will. Some people thought that the mind, like the muscles, developed through exercise. Thus, the way to strengthen the mind was to give the faculties work to do. Matter was something that could be felt and seen. Matter had weight and occupied space. Psychologists, psychiatrists, and philosophers have held many views on the nature of the mind. During the 1800's, psychologists began to try out some ideas on the nature of mind. Some psychologists went so far as to suggest that perhaps everything a person did could be explained in terms of the body, without using such ideas as mind or consciousness at all. These psychologists held that actual physical movements of the brain and central nervous system could account for all the events we speak of as 'mental', if only we knew enough about them. The person who spoke of 'mind' or 'consciousness', according to this view, was simply an animal impelled through experiences and habits.

This animal had built up certain associations in its nervous system, to make specific sounds on specific occasions.Some psychologists began to ask why it was, if mind and matter were separate substances, that illness or drugs or a blow on the head could so greatly disturb a person's mind seemed to fail as people grew very old.

Another theory states that mind is the foundation and source of thinking, feeling, and willing. This foundation is distinct from the acts which it produces. The mind is the ultimate source of feelings, thoughts, images, and sensations. The thoughts are the mental activities. The soul is an even broader concept. It is the source of both mental and other life activities, such as walking and breathing.

Perhaps mind, like matter, is just something that happens, and is not a separate, identifiable thing, states another theory. Most people believe that a practical separation between mind and body is impossible. The mind can move the body, as when people decide to flex their muscles. Almost any human reaction has both physical and mental sides, so that people smile with pleasure, quiver with fear, or frown in anger. Doctors tell us that mental states can actually produce ulcers, kidney trouble, heart disease, and other diseases. The body also affects the mind. It is also known that certain glands have a profound effect upon attitudes, behaviour and emotions.

(Khondoker Sabbir Ahmed Kawser is an educationist & free-lance writer)



"ASK UNCLE LOUIE TO DO THAT TRICK WHERE HE PULLS A SILVER DOLLAR OUT OF YOUR EAR. GET HIM TO REPEAT IT 60,000 TIMES AND YOU CAN GO TO COLLEGE!"



"Class, I've got a lot of material to cover, so to save time I won't be using vowels today. Nw lts bgn, pls trn t pg 122."