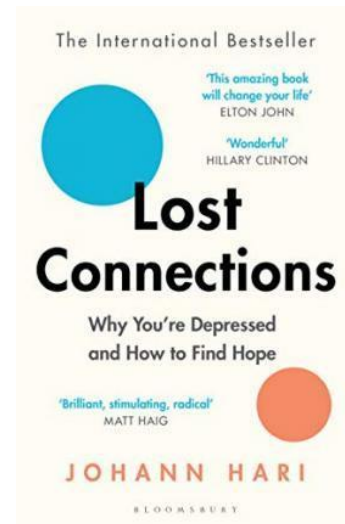


The book that made me grateful for what I do as a profession (part eight)

This week I will address Johann Hari's eighth cause "*The role of genes and brain changes*".

The eight causes Hari uncovered are:

1. Disconnection from meaningful work
2. Disconnection from other people
3. Disconnection from meaningful values
4. Disconnection from childhood trauma
5. Disconnection from status and respect
6. Disconnection from the natural world
7. Disconnection from a hopeful and secure future
8. The role of genes and brain changes



8. The role of genes and brain changes

Did you know that only 37% of depression is inherited? This increases to 30-40% for severe anxiety. Hari contrasts this, saying that how tall we are is 90% inherited from our parents.

Hari believes that the brain can be changed by changing our natural environment and how we programme our brain. He gives the example that learning the map of London will change your brain, as will being lonely, isolated, or grossly materialistic.

Last July, as a practice we decided to send out our fee disclosure statements, ongoing fee arrangement correspondence and various fee confirmations from the several platforms who required "their own form". This was in my opinion a tedious, unproductive, and frustrating process, not only in the preparation of the forms, but because many of the platform providers own electronic forms were overly and unnecessarily complicated for us and for our clients.

We adopted the process of sending out the vast amounts of forms to our clients via email, and then I would follow up with a phone call. Suffice to say I really resented this arduous task that was in reality only to appease the regulator.

I remember calling a client, and I was obviously sounding a bit short. In her words: "How about a please and a thank you James!". Wow that knocked me, and after some serious reflection I made the choice to change my attitude and approach to the task and challenge myself to add at least one bit of value to my clients' lives each time I made that follow-up phone call.

I went from being quite depressed to being focused and jolly. Hari puts this down to the fact that the brain is always changing to the signals from the world.

So, I suppose what I am saying is that we have a choice.

What are your thoughts?