



Enhancing the  
Body / Brain  
Connection

The Inner Dance of Success

By: Deborah Vogel

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## Chapter One

My name is Deborah Vogel. I have been involved in dance all my life, first as a dancer and performer and then as a teacher. I continue to be active in the performing arts, teaching dancers, musicians, actors, and vocalists how to enhance their performances. My fascination with the body/brain connection started when I moved into dance medicine as a neuromuscular educator and movement analyst and started to recognize how often dancers sabotage their own performances and efforts.

Interest in—and controversy about—the mind/body connection has been around for decades, if not centuries. In China and India, holistic practices are still used today. These holistic practices, which date back some 5,000 years, focus on the connection between nature, the physical body, and emotional health.

Western medicine is also researching the brain/body connection. In 1975, Dr. Robert Ader coined the term psychoneuroimmunology (PNI). It is the study of the relationships between psychological processes and the nervous and immune systems of the body. Exciting research in quantum physics as well as in PNI is helping to explain the exquisite relationship between our thoughts, our emotions, and our actions.

Dr. Candace Pert discovered neuropeptides, which are chemical messengers that the brain sends into the body in response to our thoughts. As the movie *What the Bleep Do We Know!?* describes, every thought, idea, or belief has a neurochemical response in the body. Science and medicine are confirming the clear link that exists between your thoughts and what happens in response to your thoughts, both in your body and in your actions.

This book will explore the science of optimal performance as it relates to your mental and physical health and will provide practical tools to enhance your physical technique and mental preparation for successful auditioning and performing.

How many of you would agree that your thoughts influence your body and behavior? Your mind sets the stage for the action, and your body responds by following the script!

*Einstein's definition of insanity: doing the same thing over and over again  
and expecting different results*

We are creatures of habit. Think about your personal pattern first thing in the morning. Are you a person who wakes up fully rested and raring to go five minutes before the alarm rings? Or, do you have the habit of cursing the alarm clock as you hit the snooze button? Do you then roll over to grab ten more minutes of the worst rest imaginable before that snooze alarm goes off again and again? Do you suppose that how you wake up has an influence to how you feel as you start your day? I would assert that our mind sets the stage for everything we do. This is the stage upon which we base our reality.

Perhaps Shakespeare was right when he said, "All the world's a stage, and all the men and women merely players: They have their exits and their entrances; and one man in his time plays many parts . . ." Indeed, we do play many parts over our lifetime, as well as on a daily basis. Some of you reading this book are dancers, dance teachers, mothers, and businesswomen. How do these roles get defined? I would suggest they begin in the mind. Every thought, word you speak, and action you take begins in the mind.

Are there new roles you want to add to your life? Would you like more financial abundance, or improved health and fitness? Is a strong, loving relationship with a partner important to you? These things are within your reach. Once you understand and experience the importance and power of the mind/body connection, you can use these principles to improve your confidence and success in your chosen career field as well as in other areas of your life.

In this book I am going to teach you to shift your thought patterns and create new beliefs. After all, a belief is simply a thought you think over and over again—until it becomes a belief. Henry Ford said, "Whether you believe you can or you can't, you are right!"