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Brain, Mind, and Consciousness: A Deep Knowing

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The human brain is the most complex object in the known universe, and the study of its structure and function is one of the most exciting fields in contemporary science. Despite many discoveries, a multitude of great mysteries remain - including understanding brain processes involved in memory, perception, mental illness, and arguably the greatest unanswered question in all of science: how are consciousness and mind related to processes within the brain? Or more broadly: how do we as conscious beings relate to the rest of what we call physical reality? In addressing questions concerning the nature of mind, one necessarily encounters the boundary between biophysical science and concepts of spirit and soul. How can contemporary science further the empirical exploration of this important interface? Participants will develop an understanding of the biology of the brain and what neuroscience has to say about consciousness, the effects of drugs on the brain and mind, and the emerging dialogue between neuroscience and the contemplative-meditative traditions. In addition, we will gain wisdom about consciousness through the experiential route of meditation. This workshop is of interest and value to anyone, including health professionals from all clinical areas who wish to deeply investigate the mind-body connection.

Continuing Education credit for psychologists, MFTs, LCSWs, and nurses.

David Presti, PhD, teaches neurobiology, psychology, and cognitive science at the University of California in Berkeley, and worked for many years in the clinical treatment of addiction at the San Francisco VA Medical Center.

Kristi Panik, MD, is a psychiatrist in private practice and on the clinical staff of the University Student Health Services at UC Berkeley.