**Implicit and Explicit Memories**



**Explicit memories**

You tap into your explicit memories when you deliberately recall things you have learned or experienced. Recalling the name of a person you’ve met before is likely to need an explicit memory search, similar to what year something happened, the 7 time table, the number plate of your car, what you ate yesterday. Repetition of explicit memory leads to a consolidation and learning. Today’s explicit memory can become an implicit memory in the future, especially if repeated.

**Implicit memories**

Implicit memories are hidden but none the less influence decisions the brain makes including what we think and how we behave. These hidden memories are one of the main types of long term memory. Implicit memory is used when you successfully perform daily tasks, like how you tie your shoes or ride your bicycle. You can do these tasks without even thinking about them.

Implicit memory can be very powerful. As a child, for example, you may have had a tradition of going to the movies and buying popcorn. You may not have even liked popcorn very much, but because going to the movies was such a pleasant experience, of being with whanau, your implicit memory extends the pleasure to your feelings also to liking popcorn. This still occurs when you are an adult. You get more than simple pleasure from the taste of popcorn alone, you unconsciously experience a physiological link to your happy childhood. Your physical and emotional response is triggered by an implicit memory that lies outside your conscious awareness.

Sometimes though your implicit memories can be of something unhappy and these can cause, negative rather than positive physiological, emotional and immune system responses. You may feel frightened, angry and helpless. Your experience with chronic pain can result in implicit memories being created and stored. These implicit memories can trigger physical reactions, muscle tension, feelings of you being about to explode or saying or doing things you later regret when the memory is triggered. These reactions often happen without you being aware of the trigger