QUOTES FROM "**IN THE REALM OF HUNGRY GHOSTS" –GABOR MATE**

GABOR MATE IS RELATIVELY UNKNOWN OR DISREGARDED IN THE MEDICAL TREATMENT WORLD, BUT WELL KNOWN AMONG THE ADDICTS IN ONE OF THE WORST DISTRICTS IN VANCOUVER. HE IS A MEDICAL SCIENTISTS AS WELL AS A PRACTICING DOCTOR: HE WORKED WITH ADDICTS MOST OF HIS LIFE. THE FOLLOWING EXCERPTS ARE FROM HIS GROUND BREAKING BOOK, "**IN THE REALM OF HUNGRY GHOSTS"**

WHILE IT IS NOT POSSIBLE TO GIVE YOU A COMPLETE PICTURE OF HIS VIEWS, HERE'S A SAMPLING:

**CH 17** EXCERPTS FROM HUNGRY GHOSTS:

a/ **P189- Dr. Vincent Felitti** was chief investigator in a landmark study of over seventeen thousand middle-class Americans for Kaiser Permanente and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control. **"The basic cause of addiction is predominantly experience-dependent during childhood, and not substance-dependent**…"

b/ **P194-** Daniel Siegel writes in The Developing Mind, **For the infant and young child, attachment relationships are the major environmental factors that shape the development of the brain during its period of maximal growth**.…

c/ **P195-** How does this pertain to brain development? **Repeatedly firing nerve patterns become wired into the brain and will form part of a person's habitual responses to the world. In the words of the great Canadian neuroscientist Donald Hebb, "cells that fire together, wire together**."

The infants of stressed or depressed parents are likely to encode negative emotional patterns in their brains. **The long-term effect of parental mood on the biology of the child's brain is illustrated by several studies showing that concentrations of the stress hormone cortisol are elevated in the children of clinically depressed mothers.**

At age three, the highest cortisol levels were found in those children whose mothers had been depressed during the child's first year of life, rather than later. (M. R. Gunnar and B. Donzella, "Social Regulation of the Cortisol Levels in Early Human Development," Psychoneuroendocrinology 27( 1–2) (January–February 2002): 199–220).

Thus we see that the brain is "experience-dependent." Good experiences lead to healthy brain development, while the absence of good experiences or the presence of bad ones distorts development in essential brain structures.

d/ **P196-** We know that the majority of chronically hard-core substance-dependent adults lived, as infants and children, under conditions of severe adversity that left an indelible stamp on their development. Their predisposition to addiction was programmed in their early years. Their brains never had a chance.

**CH 18 HUNGRY GHOSTS**

a/ **P198-** We know from animal studies that social-emotional stimulation is necessary for the growth of the nerve endings that release dopamine and for the growth of receptors to which dopamine needs to bind in order to do its work.

b/ **P109-** So the presence of consistent parental contact in infancy is one factor in the normal development of the brain's neurotransmitter systems; the absence of it makes the child more vulnerable to "needing" drugs of abuse later on to supplement what her own brain is lacking.

c/ **P209-** Grasping the powerful impact of the early environment on brain development may leave us feeling hopelessly gloomy about recovery from addiction. It so happens that there are solid reasons not to despair. Our brains are resilient organs: some important circuits continue to develop throughout our entire lives, and they may do so even in the case of a hard-core drug addict whose brain "never had a chance" in childhood. That's the good news, on the physical level. Even more encouraging, we will find later that we have something in or about us that transcends the firing and wiring of neurons and the actions of chemicals.

**The mind may reside mostly in the brain, but it is much more than the sum total of the automatic neurological programs rooted in our pasts. And there is something else in us and about us: it is called by many names, spirit being the most democratic and least denominational or divisive in a religious sense**.