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Personality, Mood Determined By Brain Shape

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New study found people with thicker outer cortex are more moody and neurotic. While people with thinner outer cortex are more open and agreeable. (Photo : Credit: YouTube via Buzz60)

A research team from Cambridge University has linked the shape of our brains to shaping our personalities. The study suggests that we become less moody, more responsible, agreeable and conscientious as time passes. These findings can help provide early diagnosis of severe anxiety and psychiatric disorders for years to come.

After examining human brain images from 507 people, they concluded that people that are moody, neurotic and have psychiatric disorders had thicker outer cortex and less folded brains. While those with curious, creative and open personalities showed the outer cortex to be thinner and more folded and have a greater surface area.

The human personalities were divided into five traits. This includes neuroticism, openness, extraversion/enthusiasm, agreeableness or altruism, and conscientiousness or self-control.

As the brain stretches it increases the surface area and the outer cortex becomes thinner. They called this as cortical stretching, where the human brain expand rapidly without

becoming too big for our skulls said Professor Antonio Terracciano, of Florida State University.

Researchers said that as we get older neuroticism decreases. We handle emotions better as time passes. Conscientiousness and agreeableness are more noticeable as we age, resulting to adults becoming more responsible.

According to [Sky News](#), Dr. Tara Swart, a Neuroscientist and MIT lecturer said the new Cambridge research support evidence that the right sort of brain training can create a physical and measurable benefit in the human brain.

"'Training' in this case means how we are brought up, educated, who we socialize with and also how much time we spend on mindfulness activities," she said.

She advised 12 minutes of mindfulness meditation a day or 30 minutes of mindfulness meditation three times a week to increase folds in the outer cortex. Yoga, walking in nature with no devices can enable it to work better.

According to [Daily Mail](#), the volunteers aged from 22 to 36 and had no history of psychiatric disorder or mental problems. In 20 years researchers said they would have to be tested again to complete the theory. The research was published in the journal Social Cognitive and Affective Neuroscience.