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mental *NOTES*

KNOWLEDGE LEADS TO CHANGE

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**The Brain That
Changes Itself**

**Scattered Minds:
Understanding
ADHD**

**Can You
Control
Forgetting?**

**Work Affects
Your
Mental Health**

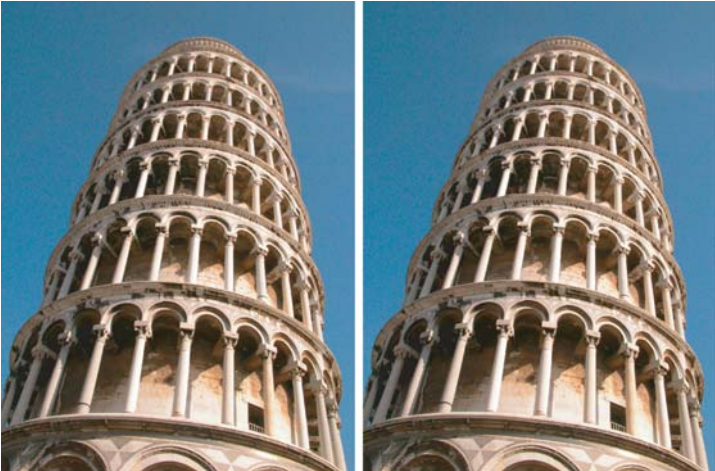
**How We Think
is Related to
How We Feel**

**The Capacity of
Human Memory**

Impact of Parent-Infant Interactions on the Brain

The “Leaning Tower Illusion”

These two pictures of the Leaning Tower of Pisa look as if they have been photographed from a different angle, but in fact they are identical. This is an example of a visual rather than optical illusion, because the trick is in the mind, not in the light. Why does it happen? Normally, when two identical towers rise up, their images converge due to perspective. Our brains have learnt to compensate for the perspective distortion with the result that we see the towers correctly as identical. However when the image contains towers that do not converge but are instead parallel, as in the Pisa towers, the visual system, because it applies the same perspective correction, sees them as diverging.



The “Leaning Tower Illusion” won the 2007 Best Vision Illusion Contest organized by the Neural Correlate Society, in an award ceremony held in Sarasota, Florida. The illusion was discovered by Professor Frederick Kingdom in collaboration with Dr. Elena Gheorghiu and Ali Yoonessi at the McGill Vision Research Unit in the Department of Ophthalmology, McGill University. They discovered the illusion quite by accident while carrying out research into human vision funded by the Canadian Institute of Health Research.