# **Learning Journal - Unit 2**

Computer Science, University of the People

PSYC 1504-01 Introduction to Psychology - AY2024-T4

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**Part 1 – the structure and function of the nervous system**

The human nervous system is a complicated network of nerve cells that control all our movements and actions. This includes everything from the simplest automatic reflexes to our upper-level cognitive functions we humans enjoy. The network is mainly divided into two parts, the CNS (Central Nervous System) and the PNS (peripheral nervous system). The CNS contains the brain and spinal cord which together act as the main driving and processing controls for our bodies and sending, receiving, and processing data with and from the PNS. The PNS is in turn divided further into the somatic and automatic nervous systems. The somatic system oversees controlling our voluntary movements and relaying sensory data to the CNS. The automatic system is in charge of all the autonomous and non-voluntary actions in the body like heart rate, digestion, breathing, etc.

**Part 2 - Importance of Sleep in Psychology**

Sleep is a very important subject, especially in psychology since sleep is a vital part of our mental, emotional, and psychological processes. By learning about and studying sleep and how it affects us we can understand how the brain works such as, how memories are stored and work, how we regulate our emotions, and how we and our brains cope with the daily activities. Sleep is an important part of the nervous system and our mental state. During sleep our brains are “cleaned” of the daily accumulation of neurotoxins from the day, during this phase our memory consolidation occurs where our short-term memories are “stored” in the long-term and more stable storage. All of these actions and processes are critical for learning and higher cognitive functions. On top of this sleep helps us to regulate our mood, appetite, and overall energy for all our daily activities.

**Personal Experiences:**

In my personal life and over my 40 odd years, I have experienced sleep deprivation for multiple reasons and have felt the effects firsthand. During periods of lack of sleep or complete deprivation, like sleepless nights with a crying baby or a deadline at work that needs to be met, I felt physically weaker and sicker. When it came to studying a noticed a correlation of decline in my performance the less, I slept, where when I dii finally have a few good night’s sleep I felt more alert, and my performance improved again. I noticed also how my mood and emotions took a turn when I was tired, and sleep deprived compared to when I was sleeping well and regularly.

The experiences I felt in myself align all too well with the research and articles we have read. This just goes to show how truly important the continued study of sleep and its effects on our physical and mental well-being is crucial to understanding and improving our own mind sets. No matter if you are a student or a working professional, lack of sleep or complete deprivation can and will have a toll on your performance and daily life.

## References

* Learning Guides  
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