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**Angaben zur Veröffentlichung / Publication details:**

Michaelsen, Maren M., George B. Stefano, and Tobias Esch. 2023. "Exploring the details of body and mind that account for a healthy life in an uncertain world." *THE MIND: Bulletin on Mind-Body Medicine Research* 1 (1): 9. https://doi.org/10.61936/themind/202301315.

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THE MIND Bulletin on Mind-Body Medicine Research

Mind-Body Medicine Research Council

*The Mind-Body Medicine Research Council*

# Exploring the Details of Body and Mind That Account for a Healthy Life in an Uncertain World

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Pandemic, war, climate change, artificial intelligence – Our world and our lives are full of challenges that require a high level of psychological resistance and coping. Since the mind and the body are interconnected, it is important to develop, implement, evaluate and understand measures at both levels for a healthy and thriving society.

The Mind-Body Medicine Research Council (MBMRC) aims to analyze these aspects in their details. The MBMRC is hosted by the Institute for Integrative Health Care and Health Promotion (IGVF), Faculty of Health/School of Medicine at Witten/Herdecke University, Germany. The institute focuses its attention on improving primary health care and increasing the effectiveness of health promotion efforts for patients. While the implications of our research findings certainly contribute to improving health outcomes at the population level, our focus remains on the individual and their personal resources as well as the pathways through which protective (salutogenetic) factors – including, but not limited to, resilience, self-efficacy, self-care and -healing, and the motivation to improve one's personal health behaviors – can be activated and strengthened.

For this, we apply basic and applied sciences, from neurobiology to general health research, including integrative as well as Mind-Body Medicine (MBM). Tobias Esch, a university professor, researcher, and physician, serves as the institute's director and has founded the university's outpatient clinic in general medicine, thus closing the gap between rigorous research and patient-focused practice, and ensuring that the research conducted remains clinically relevant to patients.

Our research efforts are driven by a team of researchers and health care practitioners from a wide spectrum of disciplines who work closely and effectively with one another. Witnessing the successful fusion of research and practice at the institute has led us to pursue additional and similarly fruitful collaborations.

In this endeavor, we seek to uncover life processes involved in healthy living and longevity, including molecular and neurobiological aspects, as well as the applied sciences of MBM. In order to deepen and expand as well as for internationalization in this area, our institute has created the MBMRC composed of outstanding scientists and research affiliates, who contribute their respective expertise in specific and complementary ways to the institute.

The timeliness of this Council and its educational and research mission also may be ascertained by the stressful times we all find ourselves (pandemics, global warming etc.). Thus, as a body, the Council hopes to alleviate the associated stress of our time by generating knowledge in medical research and disseminating it to our communities. The mind, in particular, is the harvester of both internal and external stimuli, which can be harnessed for health and longevity.

**At the present time, the Council consists of the following members:**

Tobias Esch, M.D. (Co-Chair)
George B. Stefano, Ph.D. (Co-Chair)
Maren M. Michaelsen, Dr. rer. oec. (Project Lead)

**How to become a member of MBMRC**

As the MBMRC has just been founded, the number of members is yet small. In the future, the council aims to invite outstanding researchers in the field of mind-body medicine to become MBMRC members. Membership implies no fee.