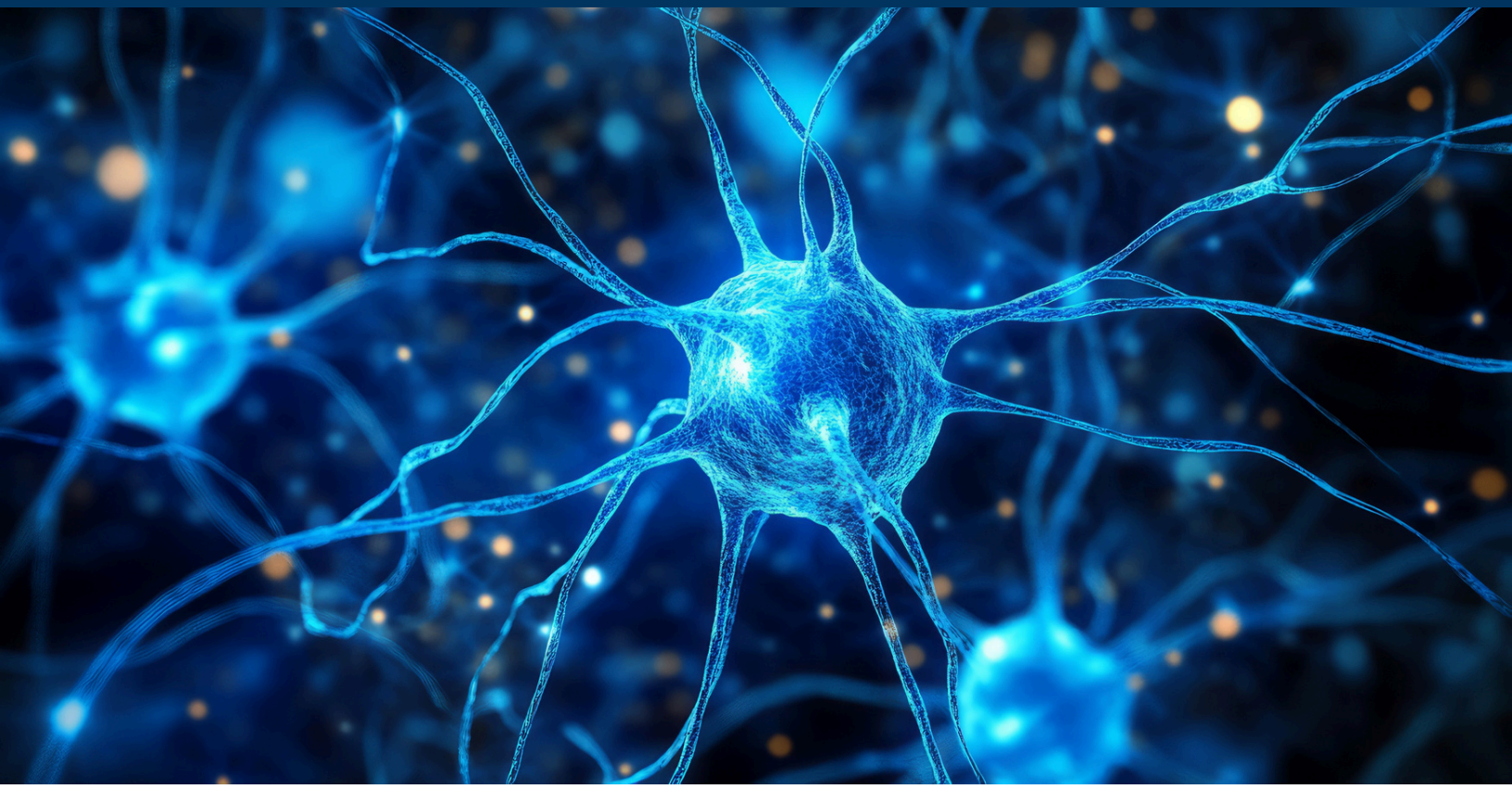


The Ten Commandments of Self-Brain Surgery™

By W. Lee Warren, MD

Hey, friend,

Are you ready to unlock your highest potential to achieve healing, hope, and higher performance in all areas of your life?

Throughout my 20+ years as a neurosurgeon and neuroscientist and my decades-long pursuit of understanding how faith and neuroscience combine, I've derived ten key principles that I now call the Ten Commandments of Self-Brain Surgery. They provide a framework to help you transform your life.

In the following pages, I list each commandment, followed by an explanation, supporting scripture, neuroscience nugget, and playlist of worship songs that relate. I recommend meditating on one commandment per day or week as you soak its truths and its implications for your life.

At the end of this PDF, you'll find all the commandments and supporting scriptures on a single page. You can print it and hang it somewhere where you'll see it often. And on the last page is a list of further resources and a link to the complete Self-Brain Surgery playlist.

Each commandment has its own chapter in my book, *The Life-Changing Art of Self-Brain Surgery* where we'll dive deeper, but the good news is that you can start changing your life with these ten commandments today!

Let's get after it!

W. Lee Warren, MD

"When we look inside, we wake up."

Ann Lamott, *Almost Everything*

"Be made new in the attitude of your minds."
Ephesians 4:23, NIV

Commandment 1

I must relentlessly refuse to participate in my own demise (no self-malpractice).

Explanation: Don't sabotage yourself with harmful thoughts, habits, or choices. Refuse to commit self-malpractice.

Scripture: "...offer your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice to God, a sacred offering that brings Him pleasure; this is your reasonable, essential worship." (Romans 12:1, VOICE)

Neuroscience Nugget: Chronic negative self-talk and harmful behaviors literally rewire neural circuits toward despair. By choosing life-giving thoughts and actions, you strengthen healthier brain networks through Hebb's Law ("neurons that fire together wire together").

Click here to listen to worship songs that relate to this commandment.

Commandment 2

I must believe that feelings are not facts; they are chemical events in my brain.

Explanation: Emotions are real, but they aren't always reliable guides to truth.

Scripture: "...test me and know my anxious thoughts." (Psalm 139:23, NIV)

Neuroscience Nugget: Feelings often arise from limbic surges (neurochemical storms from the amygdala). Via the thought biopsy technique, you can put your mind in charge of your brain and train your prefrontal cortex to reinterpret those signals,. This will help you learn to trust that feelings can be observed, tested, and reframed.

Click here to listen to worship songs that relate to this commandment.

Commandment 3

I must believe that most of my automatic thoughts are untrue.

Explanation: Your first thought isn't always the right thought. In fact, your automatic thoughts are false by a ratio of 5:1!

Scripture: "...take every thought captive to obey Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:5, ESV)

Neuroscience Nugget: Up to 80% of automatic thoughts are negative. This "negativity bias" is handy as a survival feature, but left unchecked it fuels anxiety and depression. Cognitive reframing (transplanting more accurate and true thoughts) activates new synaptic pathways, making healthier thoughts easier to access.

Click here to listen to worship songs that relate to this commandment.

Commandment 4

I must believe that my mind is in charge of my brain.

Explanation: You are not your brain. Your mind can direct your brain to change structurally, functionally, and instantly in response to healthier thoughts.

Scripture: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." (2 Timothy 1:7, NKJV)

Neuroscience Nugget: Top-down control is real. Practices like mindfulness, prayer, and focused attention increase prefrontal regulation over the amygdala, reducing fear and reactivity.

Click here to listen to worship songs that relate to this commandment.

Commandment 5

I must believe that Self-Brain Surgery™ is not a metaphor; it is the mechanism of transforming my life.

Explanation: Real change is structural and measurable in your brain.

Scripture: "Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." (Romans 12:2, NIV)

Neuroscience Nugget: Neuroplasticity rewires connections with every thought, habit, and practice. MRI studies show measurable changes in brain volume and connectivity after sustained mental training.

Click here to listen to worship songs that relate to this commandment.

Commandment 6

I must love tomorrow more than I hate how I feel right now.

Explanation: Short-term discomfort is worth long-term growth.

Scripture: "Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." (Matthew 6:34, NIV)

Neuroscience Nugget: Delayed gratification strengthens the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex, improving resilience and reducing impulsivity. Choosing tomorrow's benefit over today's pain reshapes reward circuits for endurance. Also, choosing unhealthy or addictive behaviors to numb ourselves or delay having to deal with things only produces a "tomorrow tax" that makes tomorrow more difficult. Self-brain surgeons choose to deal with our issues now.

Click here to listen to worship songs that relate to this commandment.

Commandment 7

I must stop making an operation out of everything.

Explanation: Not every challenge requires dramatic intervention; sometimes rest is the prescription.

Scripture: "…'In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it.'" (Isaiah 30:15, NIV)

Neuroscience Nugget: Overactivation of the stress response floods the body with cortisol, impairing memory and immunity. Rest, prayer, and stillness reset the parasympathetic nervous system, restoring calm and clarity.

Click here to listen to worship songs that relate to this commandment.

Commandment 8

I must not perpetuate generational thought or behavioral issues in my family, or start new ones.

Explanation: Break harmful cycles; build healthier legacies.

Scripture: "Be very careful, then, how you live, not as unwise but as wise." (Ephesians 5:15, NIV)

Neuroscience Nugget: Epigenetic studies show that trauma and stress patterns can be passed down biologically. But new behaviors and thought patterns can flip gene expression toward health, improved stress responses, and more resilience, breaking generational chains.

Click here to listen to worship songs that relate to this commandment.

Commandment 9

I must believe that I am getting better at what I'm doing.

Explanation: Growth is slow but certain when practiced.

Scripture: "…he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." (Philippians 1:6, NIV)

Neuroscience Nugget: Repeated practice strengthens myelin around neural pathways, speeding signal conduction. This is why skills, habits, and even mindsets get easier the more you practice them. (This works in reverse too-negative thinking and bad habits get easier over time unless we work to manage them)

Click here to listen to worship songs that relate to this commandment.

Commandment 10

I must believe that thoughts become things.

Explanation: What you repeatedly think shapes who you become. Everything real in your life-in the world-starts with a thought.

Scripture: "…What he thinks is what he really is." (Proverbs 23:7, GNT)

Neuroscience Nugget: Attention acts like a sculptor. What you focus on activates the salience network and directs resources there, making those thoughts more real and more likely to guide behavior and outcomes.

Click here to listen to worship songs that relate to this commandment.

The 10 Commandments of Self-Brain Surgery™

By W. Lee Warren, MD

1. I must relentlessly refuse to participate in my own demise (no self-malpractice).

"...offer your bodies as a living and holy sacrifice to God, a sacred offering that brings Him pleasure; this is your reasonable, essential worship." Romans 12:1, VOICE

2. I must believe that feelings are not facts, they are chemical events in my brain.

"...test me and know my anxious thoughts." Psalm 139:23, NIV

3. I must believe that most of my automatic thoughts are untrue.

"...take every thought captive to obey Christ," 2 Corinthians 10:5, ESV

4. I must believe that my mind is in charge of my brain.

"For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of power and of love and of a sound mind." 2 Timothy 1:7, NKJV

5. I must believe that Self-Brain Surgery is not a metaphor. It is the mechanism of transforming my life.

"Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Romans 12:2, NIV

6. I must love tomorrow more than I hate how I feel right now (no anesthesia).

"Therefore do not worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will worry about itself. Each day has enough trouble of its own." Matthew 6:34, NIV

7. I must stop making an operation out of everything.

"...'In repentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength, but you would have none of it.'" Isaiah 30:15, NIV

8. I must not perpetuate generational thought or behavioral issues in my family or start any new ones.

"Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise," Ephesians 5:15, NIV

9. I must believe that I am getting better at what I'm doing.

"being confident of this, that he who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus." Philippians 1:6, NIV

10. I must believe that thoughts become things.

"...What he thinks is what he really is." Proverbs 23:7, GNT

Hey, friend,

It's an honor to be your professor as you learn to take command of your thinking and transform life. As you practice Self-Brain Surgery, remember to keep my book, *The Life-Changing Art of Self-Brain Surgery*, nearby. It's your handbook, something you can return to again and again as you practice these skills.

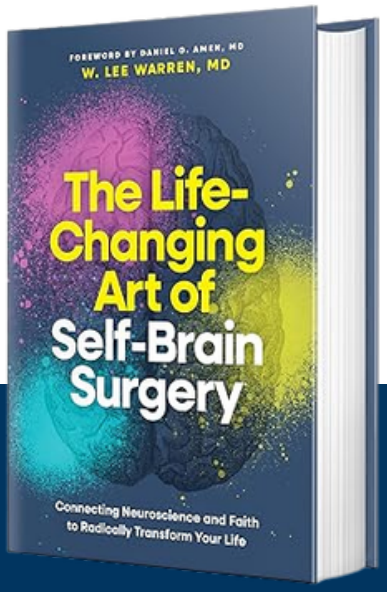
If you need reinforcement, the Self-Brain Surgery Letter and *The Dr. Lee Warren Podcast* are there to walk with and encourage you each week. Think of them as ongoing support as Self-Brain Surgery becomes part of how you live. And as you continue growing in this practice, we'll continue building new courses inside the School of Self-Brain Surgery to support you along the way.

I'm grateful you're here and proud of you for the work you are doing.

Dum spiro spero (While I breathe, I hope),

W. Lee Warren, MD

Self-Brain Surgery is a registered trademark of Dr. Lee Warren/Brain Mind Life LLC.



"I've been waiting for a book like this!
The perfect blend of science, therapy, and faith."
MAX LUCADO, *pastor and NYT bestselling author*