



**A TAXI DRIVER'S TIMELY COMMENT ON BRAIN PLASTICITY
PATRICK TOMLINSON (2014)**

Patrick Tomlinson Brief Bio: The primary goal of Patrick's work is the development of people and organizations. Throughout his career, he has identified development to be the driving force related to positive outcomes - for everyone, service users, professionals, and organizations.

His experience spans from 1985 in the field of trauma and attachment informed services. He began as a residential care worker and has since been a team leader, senior manager, Director, CEO, consultant, and mentor. He is the author/co-author/editor of numerous papers and books. He is a qualified clinician, strategic leader, and manager. Working in many countries, he has helped develop therapeutic models that have gained national and international recognition.

In 2008 he created Patrick Tomlinson Associates to provide services focused on development for people and organizations. The following services are provided,

- ✓ Therapeutic Model Development
- ✓ Developmental Mentoring, Consultancy and Clinical Supervision
- ✓ Personal and Professional Development Assessment for Staff Selection and Development

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Patrick Tomlinson Associates Group (Private) - Facebook
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Since I started writing blogs a few months ago I have realized that there are some things worth writing about that may just be like a mini-blog – of which this is one.

I was recently travelling by taxi to give a talk in Sydney on childhood trauma and recovery from it. I'm never certain how I will begin a talk and usually just see whatever occurs at the time. The taxi driver was a man in his mid-20s from Nepal who had been living in Australia for 3-4 years. During the two weeks I was in Australia – I heard some fascinating stories and interesting views of many taxi drivers, from Pakistan, India, Kazakhstan, Iran, Greece and Turkey, among others. Occasionally we sat in silence for most of a journey, but generally, a conversation ensued.

The Nepalese driver and I were talking about different weather climates. How it could be extremely hot during Sydney summers, cold but not too cold in the winter. He said that Nepal had a moderate climate, warm most of the year-round. I mentioned Ireland, maybe unfairly, where I said they have a few warm sunny days a year and it rains a lot of the time. I had recently been told by an Irish friend that it had been raining every day for 2 months! However, I said people get used to what is normal for them and probably don't mind so much.

Just before I got out of the car the taxi driver said, 'the human being is like rubber'. An excellent and timely observation on the plasticity of the human brain, which I would soon be talking about - concerning the potential for recovery from trauma. Possibly, it was also a reflection on how immigrants might adjust to their new environments. It also showed me that just by listening and paying attention, we can be provided with insights and gifts when we least expect them! Maybe those are the best kind of gifts. His comment helped get my talk off to a good start.