



Debbie Edmunds, MA, LPC-S

Get it in gear with Psychotherapy

H.O.P.E. Psychotherapy of Houston, PLLC

www.HopePsychotherapyOfHouston.com

My heart is a hotbed of emotions: Sorry to burst your ventricles.

It sure is romantic to believe our heart is the seat of our emotions. Even the Tin Man from the Wizard of Oz said, "Now I know I've got a heart... 'Cause it's breaking." He was expressing his sadness that Dorothy would no longer be in his life and his statement was much more eloquent than simply saying, "I'm sad."

However, what he didn't know and what many others don't know is that our emotions come from biochemical reactions in our brains and body. You have a region in your brain called the Amygdala and the Amygdala is responsible for your emotional responses among other functions.

This is not meant to be a science or biology lesson so I'll get to the point. In order to care for your emotions and to self-soothe in a healthy manner you must care for the health of your brain and body.

Consider that when you are stressed your body produces Cortisol (I'm sorry, but there is a little more science) that involves your brain and Adrenal Glands that sit on top of your Kidneys. Too much Cortisol can be a very bad thing, and if you don't have healthy coping strategies can be lethal.

*As the body responds to this cumulative stress, it goes through three stages of response.

(1) The first stage is REACTION. The body experiences the symptoms from the trauma, infection; heat, cold, chemical irritation, etc. The endocrine system responds with the release of Cortisol and other hormones to compensate for the trauma. The heart beats faster, the blood pressure rises, the pupils dilate,

(2) The second stage is ADAPTATION. After the adrenal glands have enlarged and released large quantities of adrenal cortical hormones, the symptoms disappear and the individual feels good, has energy, and is able to function in the presence of the stresses he/she is under.

(3) The third stage is EXHAUSTION. After an extended period in stage two, the body's reserves of nutritional elements (raw materials) and resilience becomes depleted. The symptoms return and there is now no relief. The individual may collapse physically, suffer a nervous breakdown, become dysfunctional and/or experience an organ or body system failure (heart attack, stroke, etc.)

(4) An optional fourth stage is DEATH. If the stresses continue after stage three is

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17510 Huffmeister Rd., #103

Cypress, TX 77429

281-373-5200 ofc. 281-373-5202



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reached and the body is no longer able to adapt, and rest, regeneration, and healing do not occur, the consequence is death. It is important to recognize that an individual in this cycle short of stage four can reverse the consequences of stress by removing themselves from the stressful situation and giving themselves the rest, peace of mind, and nutritional support that is necessary to restore the body's reserves.

Resource: <http://www.advance-health.com/cortisol.html>

Need I say more? If you feel you have ongoing intense, uncomfortable and even negative emotions you can see how important it can be to manage them in a healthy manner.

Take charge and get help if you feel in a constant state of stress. Psychotherapy can teach you how to cope and to better manage the stressors of daily life. Don't wait until you are experiencing the negative effects of prolonged stress. See a psychotherapist today!