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RESILIENCE BUILDING AFTER ANY CARDIAC EVENT

The stress reaction is our system's way of dealing with all forms of threat, danger or demand. The frustrating thing for us is that it is a "Primal Brain" (Mid-Brain) reaction, and that means it is beyond normal logic, and involves a part of the brain that doesn't hear words, so we can't tell ourselves to "calm down", or "kick ourselves out of it!" After any Cardiac Event the primal brain feels vulnerable, and will "try to help us" by increasing stress hormones so we can "Fight" or "Fly away", but the reaction isn't necessarily helpful at all.

The Primal Brain thinks it's helping us. It is our ancient brain, and only asks two questions; "Do we kill it or do we run away from it?" It doesn't ask for a chat or a cuddle – we must actually "click" our self out of the primal brain for the system to relax and unwind before logical thought begins again. It is designed to help but it's still looking for sabre tooth tigers! We need to actually "trick/fool" it into relaxing the adrenal overload that it creates, as it will pump up our adrenals to run or fight with vigour. It is trying to help, and so relaxing muscles and giving it a paradoxical message tends to be the best way to manage and control it.

The best "paradoxical message" to bio-feed-back into the Primal brain is the message of "Smile-Strength-Power-Relaxation". Just relaxing the forty facial muscles by a smile will stop the adrenals over-revving, and so a fake smile is often the best starting point to deal with anxiety-depression or burnout. Pulling tension sends a baffling message to the primal brain, as it has got you ready for fight or flight, and a smile is the opposite message. (Refer below the "5 P's")

To build resilience we are looking for what has been called the "optimal battle conditions" in the military. This means we are in the best place to give the inner message to the Primal Brain - "we will win – its OK - relax and advance".

1. Advancing on any creative/celebratory tasks we can do.
2. Good communications – hearing those we care about, and feeling "heard".
3. Physically fit to fight or fly....following the Physio's advice daily.
4. Right food and plenty of clean fluids at the right times through the day.
5. Acceptance of our changed situation, focus with any positivity forward.
6. Overall building back good general health.
7. Sleeping well each night.
8. Confident of our team and the staff/family around us.
9. In control of the details around us that matter by good decisions.
10. Feeling well supported and resourced for the tasks ahead.

All that can foster these things will build coping power in the team we have with us. CEBT is the tool to use to deal with any dysfunctional people who are starting to rent space in our heads! (Below)

We want to eliminate or reduce the opposite things to the ten things above, for they guarantee defeat.

Authors to Read. Jim Collins, Michael Watkins, Chin Ning Chu, Sun Tzu, Musashi, Frankl....

www.drstress.co.nz 30 September 2019

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ACTION PLAN - SURVIVAL GUIDE - THE "5 Ps"

1. **Win the daily battle for the mind.** Transform your demands into recharges. In psychology this is termed, "cognitive reframing"; the mental process whereby we take a thing from the demands side of the stress ledger and place it on the recharge side. **CEBT** must be applied into each anxiety causing situation – with humour and relaxation of neck, shoulders, face muscles, as relaxation of muscles alone will open up "re-programming" of M-B Reactions!
2. Avoid proximity with the Difficult Personalities out there! Remember the old adage – "if you want to live forever – marry one of these – you won't live forever – it will just feel like it!" CEBT applied again with them – keep smiling and keep your back to the wall – "Smile and Wave" – and keep moving!
3. **POUR! Dynamic physicality four times a week** – "flight type" exercise calmly in am, or gym, yoga, pilates, swim, or the Don Oliver very slow, light, upper body "fight type" weights program after dinner. Take at least 20-40 minutes to physically pour out any excess adrenal power and send the age appropriate message of, "Strength, Power, and 'no rush' Relaxation" to the Mid-Brain – McEwan principle of "equal knackeredness". (Cardiac-Physio Guided!!!)
4. **PULL! Regularly throughout the day pull tension** from the places tension builds (neck, shoulders, forearms/hands, and jaw). Every hour take FIFTEEN SECONDS away from the public, then, pull your shoulders down, stretch your finger wide apart, and yawn for four seconds, then do three shoulder rolls forward and then backwards, then back into the fray!
5. **PUMP!** Eat a good first meal; it may be the only meal you get on a busy day until the end, so make it full of goodness. Tea and toast will simply ensure you go "fuzzy" later in the day! A mixed grill, or pre-soaked whole grain rolled oats may serve you best. The first meal of the day is what your body burns through the day. If you are running on empty, expect M-B to panic! Also, keep your fluid intake up through the day between any meals. **PEE** your way thru the day!!! Eat foods that you know are safe for your genetic inheritance and life style/demands. (Proteins Pump: Carbo Calm. If in doubt about liver status, check it – "racist eating" – eliminate white carbs – more "ancient" foods.)
6. **Take your breaks** through the day, and one day off each week tech-free! Moses was right! If you do not rest and recharge you will lose the plot or your health, or (happy days) lose both! People who believe they can "work through" will lose their temper at least, their health, and relationships at worst! 1:7 days, 1:12 weeks off !!!
7. **POSITION.** Be hungry for rest-recharge of your serotonin batteries, with activities and/or people you love. Use Serotonin boosting activities whenever you have 20-40 minutes. Create, Celebrate, Show Love, Worship, Yahoo, Affirm Values and focus forward to the positive project list.

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COGNITIVE EMOTIVE TOOL FOR MENTAL CALMING

When any major shock/change has occurred many images, thoughts, doubts, fears, and smells are remembered and replayed by the both parts of the brain, as well as the biological surges of the primal brain through the adrenals, and each can feed off each other. Our target after any major change/trauma event is to identify what our system is doing and then target our strategy to calm the system, and build power and mastery back. Our focus is forward. We cannot change the event, only adjust intelligently to it, in both parts of our brain.

The basic Cognitive-Emotive Behavioural Technique (CEBT going right back to St Paul in the first century, or even to Solomon 1000 BC) may assist you to plan to deal with a specific behaviour or thinking pattern that is de-stabilizing you. We need to identify the time-sequence/hierarchy of thoughts to target. We start from the event, and thoughts associated with it, then the feelings and any childhood or previous "soft-ware errors" on our hard drive that have been triggered by the change/trauma. If there are significant pre-trauma events that were themselves traumas, and we haven't ever dealt with them, we will need to develop a sequence of CEBT type interventions over time, and clear away each "bit of soft-ware error", and it is best done with professional help.

Firstly identify the visual and other memories that are distressing, the associated thoughts and blaming statements. Remember the "Mental Skills" principle; Humour and Physiological relaxation **alone** relax the Primal Brain, **then, and only then** can we work with the cognitive part of the brain, (Tool = a "knowing Smile" Sandwich after relaxation has opened the channel).

Once you have your "hit list" of symptoms, ask the following questions of each.

1. **WHAT LABEL CAN I USE TO PUT THE MEMORY/THOUGHT/SITUATION INTO A PROFESSIONAL BOX?** (Obtain emotional distance – event : yourself).

You label it as a "thing" rather than accepting it as an integral and permanent part of yourself, for it is not! It is a thing that happened – you move onwards – aim = stronger as a result.

2. **TELL YOURSELF THE TRUTH.** (Sitting with the big picture/consequences/truths).

"The truth is...." Think of statements that powerfully express the truths about this event, then affirm that you will walk your genuine and freely chosen life path with power! Focus forward. Make these statements strong and absolutely truthful – "This is my chemistry....", "That was awful, but once it occurred we did what we could", "The truth in this is.....". "My Primal Brain is trying to help me...." "I believe....." etc.

3. **TAKE ANY IMMEDIATE ACTION TO REINFORCE THE TRUTH.** (Grounding tools)

Identify any action to **immediately** take to reinforce your true and chosen path in life rather than any previous reaction which reflected any useless past program or choices. Trauma changes our values – affirm the positive values changes.

Then - Worship, pray, exercise, relax, distract, breathe out, shoulder rolls, hug a loved one, distract yourself with a creative/expressive action that reflects you truly. Also - tap a toy/ring/key-ring, bracelet, pendant (grounding tool) – with a smile to remember what matters in the light of death and the shock of confronting our mortality.

EXPERIMENT with these steps and test yourself in all problematic situations. End with physicality and creative celebration or worship in which you acknowledge the truth and celebrate your embracing of it, relaxing into it.

Review with your counsellor, mentor, coach, or friend. Build strength in this by daily feeding upon activities and reading/research that will build your hold on the truth that will always set you free from all deception, "bull", false priorities, and blindness to consequences of wrongful actions. Develop new Protocols for the rest of your life.

Also, daily build the message of "Strength-Power-Relaxation" by both "flight" and "fight" exercises – but in a slow, relaxed and affirming way. BAFFLE the Mid-Brain into relaxation.