

Limbic Retraining - Part 1

Limbic Retraining - What is it and Why?

Many symptoms that occur in chronic illness occur for a few reasons (Often after the main trigger is gone and the body should be recovered)

- Your nervous system is wired to protect you and has created pathways that send alarms through the limbic system.
 - And these are often triggered at the subconscious level
- These alarm signals then alert the cells to release cortisol as well as tell the mast cells to release histamine → which then cause symptoms that continue to impact you.

DNRS - What it is and why

Over time - with recurrent insults, threats and stress - the nervous system gets stuck in the SNS → these pathways start to run constantly → and we get into a vicious cycle.

DNRS helps us to identify those impaired pathways, and works to replace them with healthier pathways that do not alarm the immune system/nervous system.

This decreases the reactivity that continues to cause symptoms and more and more sensitivities/reactions.

DNRS

Dynamic Neural Retraining System

- Created by Annie Hopper
- <https://retrainingthebrain.com/>

There are 2 other programs as well (of the 3 we recommend)

Gupta

<https://guptaprogram.com/>

Primal Trust

www.primaltrust.org

Most encompassing program

DNRS

Significant improvement in 1st 3 months - improved and sustained at 12 months
<1:1000 that it was by chance.

Less fear, more emotionally steady, emotional well being. More joy. Over 95% improvement
Cognitive - over 80% improved
Social connection >85%
Work/study >80%
Daily function >90%

Common Conditions for DNRS

MCS, CFS, PTSD, POTS, MCAS

Neurological disorders

Fibromyalgia

Lyme Disease, Long COVID

Food sensitivities/allergies, IBS

Mental health - anxiety, depression

Chronic pain, migraines

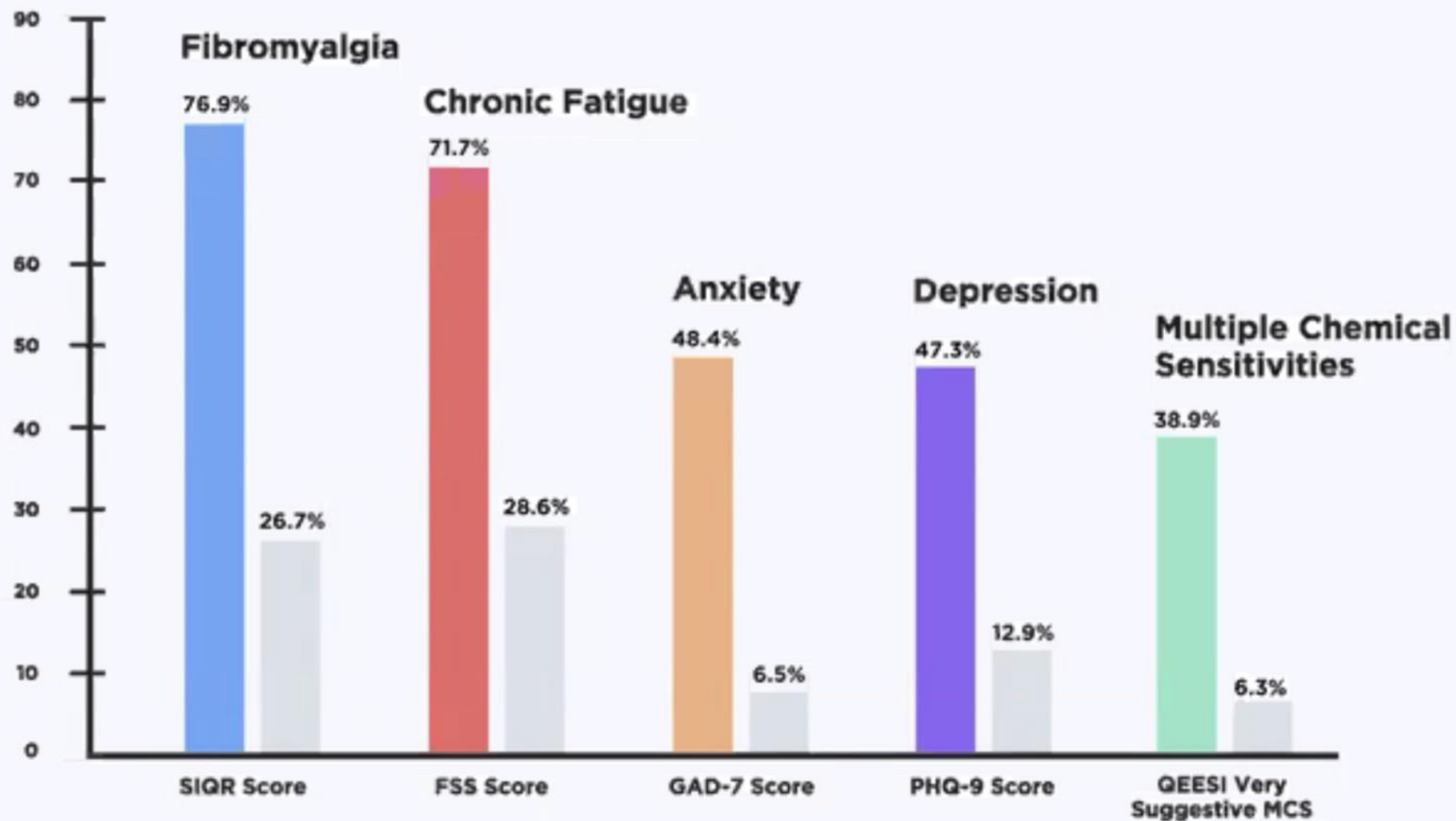
Electrical hypersensitivity syndrome

CIRS, mold

Sensory sensitivities

Adrenal insufficiency

Dysautonomia



DNRS Integrates

CBT, Cognitive restructuring
Mindfulness
Emotional restructuring
Neuro-linguistic programming (NLP)
Incremental training
Behavior modification therapy
Attention focusing
Emotional distancing
Attention distraction
Cognitive reappraisals/reframing

Tips

Support helps consistency
Consider forum/coach/buddy
Support here
Share a laugh

Avoid negative
Brain does not distinguish self from non-self
Brain doesn't know the difference between what is happening
elsewhere and to me

Tips for DNRS Success

1. Be consistent - Recommend minimum of 6 months
 - a. Motivation will increase as you start to heal
2. Consider a new focus

Don't focus on symptoms but brain's involvement and possible link with symptoms
1. Adopt a beginners mind!
 - a. Be excited and positive about this
 - b. Try not to constantly link things learned - or fall back on that.

You have the power to interrupt the brain's maladaptive stress response.

Pillar 1

Recognize the link between your brain and your condition

Your symptoms and condition are NOT your fault

Maladaptive stress response caused by physical, emotional, and psychological traumas over time.

Your brain - is a pattern recognition organ

It creates associations with stimuli and sorts stimuli into patterns it recognizes.







Autonomic Nervous system

Stress -

ANS - controls involuntary functions - breathing, heartbeat and digestions

Comprised of the SNS and PSNS

SNS - acts like gas pedal in the car. Reacts to stress/potential threats - accelerating F/F/F response. Anxious, afraid, digestion slows, blood to muscles, HR up.

Stress passes:

PSNS is the brake - then to rest and digest. Reduce HR, mobilize digestion, relax.

PARASYMPATHETIC

SYMPATHETIC



Vagus nerve

- Longest cranial nerve in the body affects SNS and PSNS
 - But main branch of the PSNS
- Brain body feedback loop.
 - Carries message between brain/gut and other internal organs.
 - Messages of Levels of safety to the body through the vagus nerve.
- Helps regulate inflammation and stress response
- Balances fight or flight response
- Can misinterpret potential threats
 - Overactivation F/F/F
 - Increased inflammation
 - Gut dysregulation
 - Detox challenges

Vagus Nerve

Vagus nerve sends levels of safety.

When brain encounters stress signal - stress hormones to the gut → produce inflammation in prep for F/F/F

Fear - stuns the vagus which increases the SNS.

Leads to high serotonin in the gut → GI issues

Nerves in esophagus - trouble swallowing.

Unable to detox/supplements or drugs - cytochrome p450 system affected by vagus

Toxic stress

Hypothalamus ->chemical message to the pituitary glands → chemical signals to the adrenal glands → cortisol, adrenaline, and norepinephrine.

These initiate a F/F/F stress response.

This is the HPA Axis

Helps us respond to stressful situations. But under chronic stress - becomes overactive. High levels of stress hormones have downstream effects - immune system dysfunction and hormonal dysregulation.

Linked to many chronic illnesses.

Limbic System Impairment

Regardless of severity, length of time, LSI is common
Less and less stimuli needed to provoke.

DNRS can:

Decrease survival signals

Reduce levels of stress hormones released

Increase sense well-being

Neuroplasticity

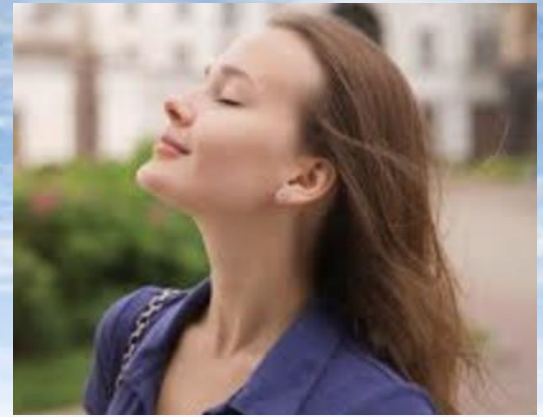
With intentional focus -
We can change brain structure and function.

We can direct connections and the way it is organized.

Way brain changes - especially in relation to trauma - can cause negative changes and reactions.

So the cause...is also the way out.
We can change it for the positive.









DNRS

Carefully designs set exercises and applications - help create new synaptic connections and new neural pathways to regulate an unconscious maladaptive stress response.

Create new neural pathways: (FAR) - 3 key concepts of learning this

1. Focus
2. Association
3. Repetition

Focus

What you repeatedly pay attention to moment to moment will have a significant influence on the neural networks in your brain and ultimately your life experience.

Walk outside - look for green trees and children playing

Or

Dark clouds and noise of traffic

What you decide to pay attention to, what you decide to think about, and what you chose to focus on will greatly affect your experience.



What impacts how we see things/how we react?

Frontal brain - does give us specific thoughts on things.

Limbic system - often the first to react before conscious brain

- Happens very quickly
- Happens subconsciously
- Based on previous experiences (scanning and looking for previous information to base the response on)
- Often the conscious brain doesn't link it together (the trigger and the cause/symptoms)

Limbic system

Thalamus - messenger - controlling emotional tone

Singular cortex - director - focuses on internal and external threats to the body until they are corrected.

Amygdala - reactor - responds to threat with F/F/F stress response

Hypothalamus - chemist - Helps regulate body functions - appetite, temp, release hormones

Hippocampus - memory keeper. Remembers and stores threat for future protection

Limbic System

- Scanning constantly for threats (internal and external environment)
- If it senses any threat - mobilizes into protective response
- Checks for any previous associations to the threat
- Assigns emotion to the threat - and if new stimuli threatening - activates the F/F/F stress response.
 - This bypasses the thinking part of the brain!

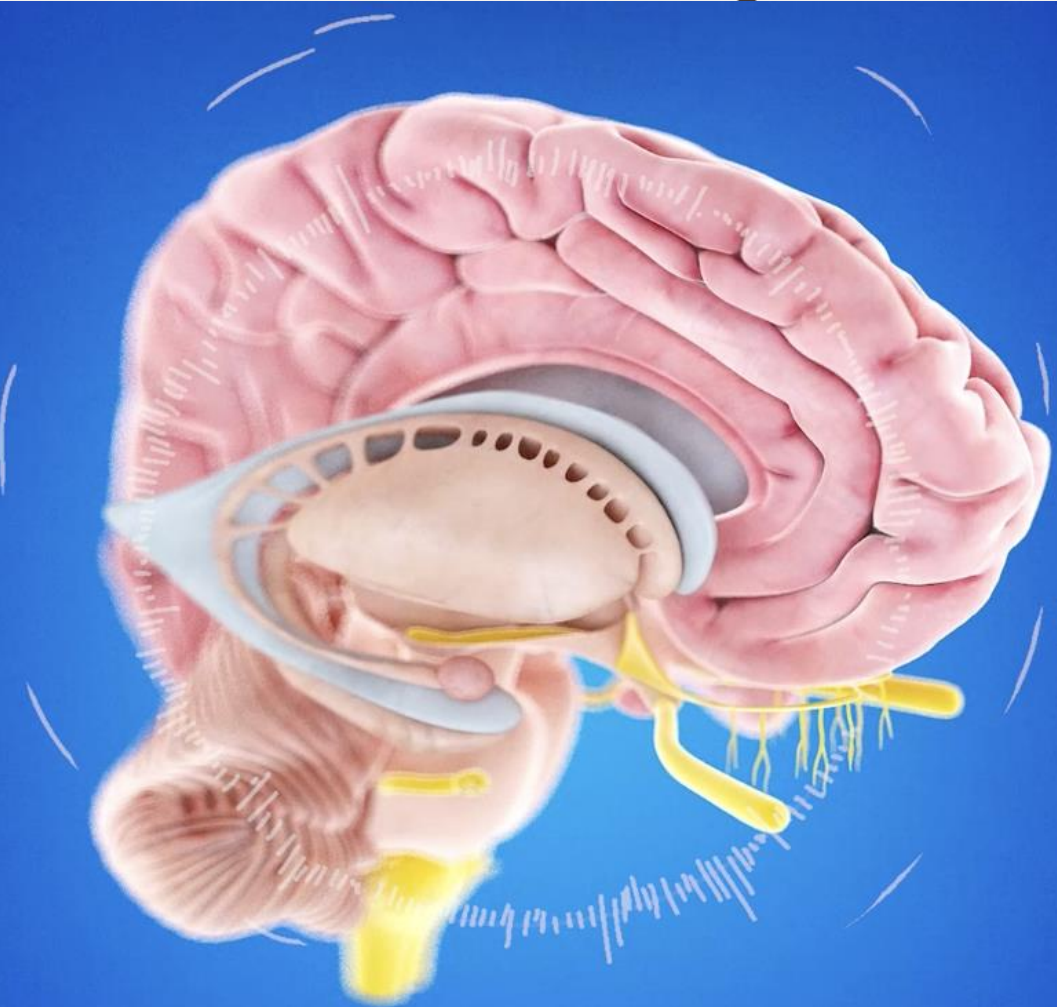
To alert the systems and cells to protect themselves. So fast - conscious doesn't process it

Impaired Limbic system

- If we experience a chronic or amplified stress response - the brain's limbic system can become stuck in F/F/F response and become impaired
- Limbic system impairment - central sensitization syndrome
 - Brain and body remain on high alert
 - Can continue to react long after an initial injury is addressed and threat is gone.
 - Lose the ability to accurately evaluate signs of threat - a person experiences life through a lens of constant threat



- ▶ Brain sends false alarm signals
- ▶ Misinterprets and categorizes non-threatening signals as “threatening”
- ▶ Mobilizes the body into “*Fight, Flight or Freeze*” stress response
- ▶ This stress response gets stuck in the “on” position 24/7



Why DNRS helps

DNRS is intended to address limbic system impairment

Based on self directed neuroplasticity, focuses on regulating the threat mechanism - within the limbic brain and shifts away from the body/symptoms/ and environment (real or potential threat) and time (past present future trauma)/

We can learn to notice and interrupt these patterns.

Helps: regulate the threat mechanism, normalize the stress response, decrease symptoms, increase energy and well-being.

Causes of limbic system impairment

Can be one or many traumas

- Physical - virus, bacteria, chemical, physical injury
- Psychological
 - Emotional - ACE's

Often these are occurring and then the perfect storm comes

- COVID with chronic mold
- Tick bite followed by surgery
- Divorced - move - high VOCs
- Prolonged anxiety, stress, fear.
- Childhood trauma, recent loss, virus...

Exercise

Make a list of the elements you believe contributed to your perfect storm

Physical

Emotional

Psychological

Was the onset of your condition/increase in symptoms gradual or more sudden in nature?

2 Facts

1. Many forms of stimuli are unhealthy and can negatively affect the body and the brain
 - a. Environmental exposures
 - b. Physical injury
 - c. Illness - viruses, bacteria, parasites
 - d. Emotional and psychological trauma
 - i. Large or small, chronic stress
2. With limbic system impairment - the brain gets stuck in F/F/F, even when the threat is no longer present.
 - a. It may categorize non-threatening amounts of stimuli as threatening - keeping it in a chronic state of survival.

Example - MCS

Avoiding chemicals may be a good response.

But LSI - the smallest amount tells you that it is dangerous and life threatening.

You can do complete avoidance - or you can try to treat and tolerate more - less signals to small threats.

Focus on rewiring the impaired brain. Leads to choice and freedom.

Recover - will still detect toxins. Goal - place of choice and not driven by fear or avoidance. But a conscious decision to avoid.

Limbic System Impairment

May start to avoid more and more stimuli.

This can lead to increased fear that may reinforce the impairment itself.

Finding the balance of doing your best to live healthy, decrease toxins.

But not worry about the ones outside of your control - not having them stimulate you into a pattern/reaction.

Physical symptoms LSI

Any common dysfunction in the body including”

CV

Resp

Digestive

Urinary and endocrine

Skin, muscular, nervous, reproductive, skeletal and immune systems

Any symptom is possible.

Most common - histamine related as histamine is released in response to threat.

Physical Symptoms LSI

Fatigue, brain fog, chronic pain

Sensitivity to foods, light, sound, smell, pain, EMF

Systemic inflammation, chronic infections

Allergies/sensitivities, loss voice

Insomnia

Digestive issues

Migraines/headaches, numbness and tingling

Racing heart, exaggerated startle response

Loss libido

Rashes, hair loss, skin flushing

Temperature dysregulation, exercise intolerance

Emotional Symptoms

Fear, anxiety, depression
Inability to access positive emotions
Hopelessness
Mood swings
Lack of feeling trust
Lack of feeling bonded
Over-reacting (Anger, rage)
Unexplained crying
Flat affect
Under-reacting (Freeze)

Psychological Symptoms

Exaggerated negativity bias

Intrusive negative thoughts and emotions

Recurrent unwanted memories of traumatic events and reliving them as if they were happening now

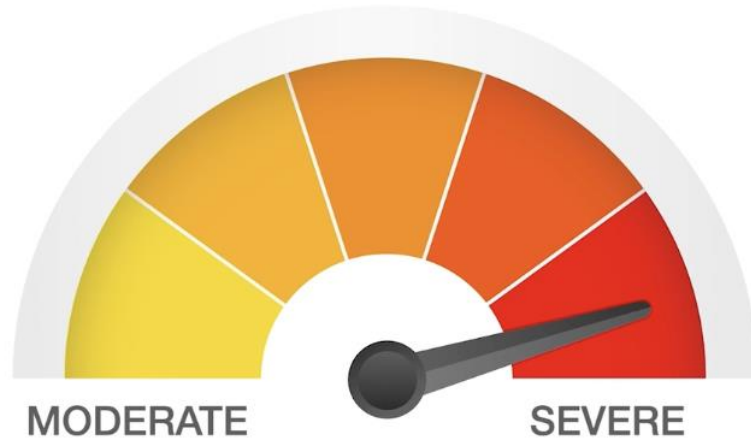
Suicidal ideation

Preoccupation with real and perceived threat

Exaggerated focus on safety and survival

Rumination

Disassociation



Low grade anxiety

Mild pain

Minor sensory sensitivities

Ability to work, eat,
function, etc.

High-grade anxiety

Severe, chronic pain

Major sensory sensitivities

Inability to work, eat most foods,
function, etc.



Limbic System Impairment

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Association

Focus on a word
CAT

What associations - images, feelings or words come to mind?
Write down the first things that pop into your head
Some may have positive associations. Warm companion
Others may not have positive associations. Aloof

Past experiences affect those first thoughts we have - which then guide our emotions, mood, and even inflammation created.

How to shift

To change those initial thoughts - you would need to focus on positive experiences with cats. You would need to focus on and repeat these experiences multiple times so the new associations become the new default/dominant pattern.

Let go of fear associations you have with certain stimuli
Which can include people....

Let go of the language you have associate with symptoms or illness.



Illness

Stuck in chronic F/F/F

Language focused on symptoms or conditions which reinforce neural networks that keep you personally identified with illness.

These words keep us stuck in negative association with illness - harder to rewire the brain.

If you continue to talk about illness - you provide evidence that you are still focusing on the symptoms themselves rather than the brain's link to those symptoms.

Two requests

1. Refrain from discussing symptoms, illness or trauma.
2. Use the word ITs to describe symptoms or conditions.

Using the neutral word - sends a message to the brain not to take ownership of the symptoms/illness.

Keeping these commitments will help regulate an unconscious maladaptive stress response.

Exercise Instructions

You will be modifying your language to change your brain's association to symptoms/conditions.

Refraining from discussing symptoms or conditions by their names (ie fatigue, anxiety, stomach pain...) and using a more neutral work "IT" - you will learn to modify your language and help change your brain's negative association with symptoms and illness to a more neutral one.

Exercise

1. How has “IT” given me a deeper understanding of myself?
2. How has “IT” led to a deeper level of compassion for myself and others?
3. How has “IT” demonstrated my personal strength?
4. Review everything you have written.

Delete words that relate to or indicate personal ownership - such as “my” when referring to symptoms or conditions.

Doing this will send a signal to your brain not to take ownership of the symptoms or conditions.

Repetition

Each time we use specific neural circuits through thoughts, emotions, behaviors - the more established they are.

Daily repetition for weeks or months to become permanent.

Nervous System

You cannot heal if you don't feel safe (even subconsciously)
A lot goes back to CDR (cell danger response)
Nervous system is hypervigilant and hyperreactive
This is not psychiatric but neurological!

We are often unaware of triggering the neuro response
But we are aware of the body's response
So we become hypervigilant and hyperreactive
Becomes a vicious cycle

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a-ddSEHRWVg>

Toxic stress effects on the cells

Chronic release stress hormones - affect mitochondria
Defensive role - too many cellular resources.
More energy to defend - less energy to heal.

If F/F state not resolved - cells move into hibernation mode until the threat - real or perceived has been removed.

CDR: Fatigue, brain fog, IBS, Exercise intolerance, cold hands and feet (to name a few).

Cells must move 3 stages healing in the CDR cycle.

Cell Danger response (CDR)

Stage 1:

Injured cells release ADP and histamine

Cells are recruited to try to neutralize the threat

If neutralized - cells move from stage 1 → 2

If the threat cannot be neutralized - cells begin to act independently (and go into hibernation mode)

Stage 2:

Cells begin to repair if given the right environment

Stage 3:

Cells reconnect back to the body/brain through the vagus/PSNS

Stage 1 and 2

Stage 1 - getting rid of the threat

Stage 2 - important to be aware - certain treatments may cause additional stress on the nervous system.

If stuck F/F/F response -

Right healing environment treatments may not respond

Treating infections, toxins, etc... before the body is ready - keeps them stuck.

List sensitivities grow as we are stuck here.

Get rid of the alarm signals and constant F/F/F - we can move forward.

We can.....

Decrease stressful thoughts, behaviors and emotions

Influence our body's stress response to our environmental load

Engage in healthy environmental practices while doing DNRS

Take home message

We have to address the imbalances in the nervous system

We have to get out of chronic SNS

 This will take some work

We need to retrain the body and brain how to respond (or not respond) to external subconscious cues

As Neil Nathan says - every person needs this - but especially anyone with illness, trauma, etc..

Safety first.....

STRESSOR

Life Experience
Life returns to normal

Stress Response
In a healthy cycle, the body elicits a stress response after a typical stressor

Symptoms/Condition
This response creates certain symptoms that may result in various illnesses or conditions

Homeostasis
Once the stressor is gone, the thoughts, feelings and behaviors subside. The body returns to homeostasis

Thoughts, Feelings, Behaviors
These symptoms can trigger negative thoughts, feelings, or behaviors associated with the symptoms or conditions





The Quality of your Life Experience

decreases; you begin to seek evidence to support the thoughts, feelings, and behaviors you have around illness; and you start to anticipate negative outcomes

Lack of Homeostasis

When you continually repeat these thoughts, feelings and behaviors, your neural networks begin to disorganize, over-fire and evaluate incoming stimuli inaccurately - leaving you little sense of stability



Stress Response

Results in the brain and body getting stuck in a *fight, flight, or freeze* state - sending inaccurate threat messages to numerous body systems - signaling that it's more important to "run" than to feel happy, eat, digest, or fight illness

Symptoms/Condition

Over time this maladaptive stress response creates pronounced physical, psychological and emotional patterns (symptoms and conditions) unique to each person

Thoughts, Feelings, Behaviors

"Will I ever get better?" "I'm so scared, worried and sad." "I constantly check body symptoms and scan the environment for danger." "I isolate myself and focus on past or future trauma"

Social Engagement System

signalling for emotion, motion,
communication

Parasympathetic Ventral Vagal Complex

SAFE

optimal relaxation & activation
(rest, digest, relate)

eye contact, facial expression, voice

Aggressive Defensive System

mobilization for fight or flight

Sympathetic Nervous System

DANGER

increase arousal and heart rate,
muscle tension, fear, anger,
aggression, rage

Passive Protection System

immobilization for freeze or faint

Parasympathetic Dorsal Vagal Complex

LIFE THREAT

decrease arousal, frozen
activation, decrease heart rate
dissociated, frozen, collapsed, limp

– Polyvagal Theory by Dr. [Stephen Porges](#)



LSI

In chronic response - threats that may still be there or perceived

The limbic system becomes primed to react to less and less stimuli (real or perceived) despite living in a healthy environment

DNRS helps regulate maladaptive stress responses

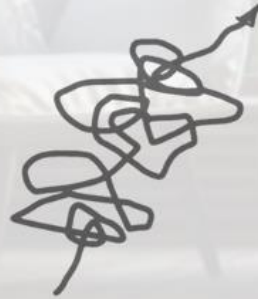
Move you from survival to growth and repair state.

Rather than chasing the symptoms - DNRS addresses the system (brain and NS) that is affecting the symptoms

Ebb and Flow of Recovery



Expectations



Reality

Participants thoughts

Reframe from it's the lyme, the foods, the chemicals...
It's my brain not functioning correctly!

Refuse to let you brain think it is anything else than the brain's
response.

Skeptical that this would work.

I knew better...not work for me.

Take a beginners mind ("I had become the expert"). Back up -
and have a beginners mind - I'm going to do this exactly how
instructed.

Participant's thoughts

Strongly believe, understand, acknowledge the symptoms are part of the perfect storm that pushed into limbic impairment.

Decision based on wisdom - not fear.

Fear based decision -> avoiding.

Make decisions that can help support your journey.

Breathing break/Stretch

Pillar 2 - POPs

Interrupting and redirecting your Pathways of the Past (POPs)

- The thought, emotional and behavioral patterns associated with LSI.

We will learn to recognize old neural pathways that keep us in a state of survival and learn to shift out thoughts, emotions and behaviors to create new positive pathways

Pathways of the Past (POPs)

Unhelpful thoughts, emotions, behaviors

Unique to each person

Not your fault and not something to fear

Can become repetitive in nature

Can be symptoms of a brain stuck in a rogue threat response

Often focused on patterns of fear, protection and uncertainty

Tips to recognize POPs

Be a curious observer

Recognize habitual patterns

Shift your brain's attention

This requires shifting your thoughts, feelings and behaviors that do not support your recovery to ones that do

POPS

Thought
Emotional
Behavioral

Thought POPs

Having negative thinking patterns about yourself, others and the world.

- I won't get better doing this because nothing helps me, and I have trouble sticking with things.
- I don't know anyone on this call, and I am sure they are not as sick as me or more disciplined.
- What a beautiful garden, they must have sprayed pesticides.

Thought POPs

Being stuck in past trauma or predicting a negative future

- I can't stop thinking about xxxxx trauma. I'll always be damaged goods because of my traumatic past.
- I had a fight with my family member before we left this morning. I know they will come home in a bad mood today. It always happens that way.

Thought POPs

Defining yourself through a lens of illness

- My symptoms of sensitivities continue to get worse over the past months.
- My only social events are appointments
- I can't do anything I enjoy because of (list of symptoms or diagnoses)
- Which supplements have I taken today? I forgot again, I will never get better.
- I need to make sure I record and track all my symptoms
- Someone asks how you are doing - 10 minutes later you are still listing your symptoms.

Additional Thought POPs

- Thinking you are the expert
- Overanalyzing situations, illness, emotions
- Discounting the positive
- Catastrophizing

Emotional POPs

Constantly worrying, feeling fearful or anxious

- I am afraid I will never be able to work again - or like I did in the past.
- I am beginning to feel anxious because my family does not believe me about my illness. I worry they won't continue to support me.
- I am really afraid to visit my parents today. I've been dreading it for weeks.
- I am afraid to drive. I remember what happened last time and I am worried it will happen again.

Emotional POPs

Constantly worrying, feeling fearful or anxious

- Using my cellphone makes my heart race
- I can't make commitments because I fear I won't have the energy to follow through.
- I feel so hopeless. I've tried so many treatments in the past and none of them have worked.
- I am worried that the woman walking towards me has perfume on.

Emotional POPs

Finding yourself reacting to situations with anger, sadness, despair, and frustration.

- I feel exhausted all the time. It's so hard to get through the day with such limited energy.
- My kids are constantly fighting. I am so mad and frustrated with them. I never have a moment of free time for myself.
- I just can't keep up with the pace of my job. Maybe I should resign. I'm disappointed and upset.
- I feel so sad and isolated. I can't go out with my friends.
- I just had a small exposure and went backwards. I feel horrible and I am frustrated and don't understand it.

Emotional POPs

Experiencing mood swings and/or over-reacting emotionally

- I felt so happy when I woke up this morning, but since breakfast I am so depressed.
- I am frequently losing my temper with my kids, but they are just being kids.
- I criticise my partner all the time for no good reason, and I don't like myself for it.
- I don't know what came over me during that call - but I found myself yelling at them.
- When someone asks how I'm doing - I cry. I don't get it.

Additional Emotional POPs

Feeling confused or indecisive

Repetitive feelings of insecurity

Experiencing a flat affect

Behavioral POPs

Body checking for symptoms

- I just woke up and I still feel exhausted, even though I slept for like 10 hours. My brain feels like it is in a fog. I think I have pressure in my head.
- I just ate but now my stomach is starting to feel upset. I can feel a rash starting under my chin. I'm also starting to feel dizzy.
- I just got to work but my heart is already racing. I feel disorganized and can't think clearly. My hands and legs are tingly and I'm starting to sweat.

Behavioral POPs

Scanning the Environment

- I have CFS, so I count each flight of stairs I need to climb and try to find nearby places to sit
- I have IBS and I find all the bathrooms on my route - or I don't go.
- I have electrical sensitivities and I look around for hot spots, cell phone and smart meters.
- I have mold sensitivity. When I go to a restaurant - I immediately look for water damage spots, smell for mold, etc..

Behavioral POPs

Behaving in a symptom-focused or overly self-protective way

- I have moved to a rural setting to avoid too much radiation in the city.
- I need to see a specialist for my knee pain, even though I have already seen 3 who tell me nothing is wrong and the initial injury is healed.
- I wear only organic clothing because other clothing is bad for me.

Additional Behavioral POPs

Blaming justifying or complaining

Procrastinating and/or rushing

Needing to be in control, over-responsible, or hypervigilant

Having perfectionist tendencies

Endless questions about your health, or needing continual reassurance.

Engaging in addictive behaviours

Lacking self-love or self-care

Thought POP

I tend to overanalyze symptoms.

When symptoms increase, I tend to focus on figuring out each individual cause and wonder how long they will last and what I did to increase them.

Emotional POP

Constantly worrying feeling fearful or anxious.

I am afraid I will never feel good enough/ focus enough to get done everything I need to get done.

Behavioral POP

Scanning the environment.

I am constantly scanning the environment for mold and worried how it will affect me if I stay in that environment.

Exercise for home

Review the list of POPs

Make a check mark to those you most relate to

If you don't find one - make your own

From the list, identify the top three most common POPs

Describe what you think, feel, or do when each of the POPs show up.

We will have you do this before our next visit.

Thought POPS

- Having negative thinking patterns about yourself, others and the world.
- Being stuck in trauma from the past or predicting the future in a negative way.
- Defining yourself through the lens of illness
- Thinking you are the expert
- Over-analyzing situations, illness/symptoms, or emotional states
- Discounting the positive
- Catastrophizing

Emotional POPs

- Constantly worrying, feeling fearful, or anxious
- Finding yourself reacting to situations with anger, sadness, frustration, despair
- Experiencing mood swings and/or over-reacting emotionally
- Feeling confused or indecisive
- Repetitive feelings of uncertainty
- Experiencing a flat affect

Behavioral POPs

- Body checking for symptoms
- Scanning the environment
- Behaving in a symptom-focused or overly self-protective way
- Blaming, justifying, or complaining
- Procrastinating and/or rushing
- Needing to be in control, over-responsible, or hyper-vigilant
- Having perfectionist tendencies
- Endless questioning about your health or needing continuous reassurance
- Engaging in addictive behaviors
- Lacking in self-love or self-care

Limiting beliefs

With limbic impairment - we put new limits on ourselves based on past life experience

Before - person can do things without limitations

After - we have more and more limitations.

Start developing beliefs on what you can and can't do - which changes behavior.

What limiting thoughts, emotions, and behaviors might be impacting your experience?

How do POPS affect your daily life? Symptoms?

MCS - multiple chemical sensitivities

ITs: Noxious taste, Headache, Tachycardia, Loss voice, Crying

Thought POPs:

All fragrances are toxic and poisonous

I'm glad I know more about chemicals than other people

It will take days to recover. I should have stayed home

Emotional POPs: Anger, Frustration, Fear, Powerlessness, Sadness

Behavioral POPs: Scanning, Avoiding shopping/activities, isolating, focusing on the pain, Body checking.

POTS

ITs: Light-headed with palpitations, High HR, Low BP, pooling

Thought POPs: Doing anything is extremely difficult
No one understands me

Emotional POPs: Despair, Fear, Helplessness, Anxiety,
Uncertainty, Loneliness

Behavioral POPs: Having to rest, focusing on pain, body
checking, avoiding activities, isolating

POPS

How POPS affects our entire life experience.

Thought, emotional, behavioral POPS that that person may have in that experience.

1. Review the four POPS situations below
2. Pick two situations that you want to work on
3. Identify the possible POPS (thoughts, emotions, behaviors) the person in those situations might experience.

Situation 1

Food Sensitivities

I just ate my typical breakfast of organic oatmeal and organic almond milk. Immediately afterwards I feel terrible.

ITs: Painful bloating, stomach pain, rash, itching.

Possible POPs (thoughts, emotions, behaviors)

Situation 2

Chronic pain

Moving creates pain, especially in my shoulders and legs when I am walking, getting dressed, or lifting things. I used to be active, but the pain is getting so severe that time on the couch watching TV is increasing every day.

ITs: Pain in my joints, shooting nerve pain my shoulders and neck, tired and achy all the time

Possible POPs: Thoughts, emotions, behaviors

Situation 3

Chronic Fatigue

I rest all day long so that when my children get home from school, I'll have the energy to help them with homework. I want to do more, but I can't. I haven't cleaned house, done laundry, or cooked a meal for weeks.

ITs: Fatigue, weakness, excessive sleep, post-exertional malaise

Possible POPs - Thoughts, emotions behaviors?

Situation 4

Anxiety

When I get to work, my heart starts to race. In meetings, I get panicked and feel like I need to leave the room. My work is suffering and it's hard to concentrate.

ITs: Heart palpitations, dizziness, tingling, sweating, temperature fluctuation, headache, insomnia

Possible POPS: Thoughts, emotions behaviors?

Exercises

Now do the same exercise you just completed - to your own situations.

Start by choosing 1 situation that creates POPS for you.

Do 2-3 more.

Prepare your mind to notice and gently shift your brain's attention.

This will help weaken old neural pathways of survival and strengthen new pathways to move to a state of growth and repair.

Example

Joining a work conference call:

Thoughts: I have so much brain fog - I can't think straight and won't make sense

Emotions: anxiety, fear, embarrassment

Behaviors: Avoiding talking and participating as much as possible.

Being invited to a social function.

Thoughts: I don't know if I will feel well enough to follow through. People will think I am lazy and antisocial.

Emotions: Sadness, worry, depression

Behaviors: Avoiding all social engagements, isolating

Example

Eating a meal

Thoughts: I am reacting negatively to foods.
This meal will probably make me sick again.

Emotions: Fear, dread hopelessness

Behaviors: Limiting foods, avoiding eating all together

Try to identify some of your own.

Imagine a situation that typically creates POPS for you.

Identify the POPs you experience when you are in that situation.

Thoughts, emotions, behaviors.

How to identify POPS throughout my day

Pause once in awhile and ask yourself 4 questions:

1. What thoughts am I having right now?
2. What emotions am I entertaining right now?
3. What behaviors am I engaging right now?
4. Do my answers support a stress response, or do they make me feel empowered and calm?

Notice.

Acknowledge the pattern and gently shift your focus to thoughts, feeling and behaviors that will nourish you.

When you notice

- Make it easier to create new positive neural pathways
- Decrease the stress levels associated with hormones such as cortisol, adrenaline and norepinephrine
- Create emotional distance from your symptoms

In a POP -

When experiencing a POP - ***may need to think greater than how you feel***

Acknowledge the brain's involvement with illness and symptoms.

Sometimes you need to override your old beliefs about illness.

Challenging: Some coping behaviors that may have helped a little in the past - are not helpful in neuro rehabilitation.

Not a denial - but a new way of acknowledging symptoms - choosing to actively act back on the brain.

Recognizing POPs

Can make it a light and playful experience

Can make it a game

Not about stopping them - but being a curious observer to recognize them - acknowledge them and then choose to feed new pathways.

Popposites - positive opposites

Assist in developing new ways thinking, behaving, feeling.

POPPosites - Positive opposites

- Distractions
 - Laughing
 - Singing
 - Watching funny videos
 - Dancing
 - Counting backwards by 3's from 100
 - Noticing and savoring the positive in the moment
 - Counting colors in your field of vision
 - Thinking and acting greater than you feel
 - Sending kindness, gentleness and love to yourself
 - Finding 2-3 things you are grateful for in the moment
 - Tell yourself - it's not me - it's my brain.
 - Take 3 breaths, and use one of your senses to be present in a positive way

Using a POPposite

POP: Avoiding participating in a work conference call

POPposite: Share at least 1 idea and think, “I am capable”.

POP: Feeling sad, worried or depressed after being invited to a social gathering.

POPposite: Listen to uplifting music and enjoy yourself, consciously having the thought “I can enjoy myself in any situation”

Using a POPposite

POP: I'm reacting negatively to foods. This meal will probably make me sick again.

POPposite: I was able to add three more foods to my diet last week. Congratulations to me.

Using a POPposite

POP: I forgot my supplements/meds today again. I can never stay on target. I am never going to get through this or better.

POPposite: I remembered my supplements/meds more times this week than last week. I am starting to heal my body which will continue to make it easier to remember them. I am making progress and I am so proud of myself.

Exercise

This exercise will assist you in learning how to use Popposites to shift your brain's attention when experiencing a POP.

1. Review the three situations you listed earlier that typically bring up POPs for you.
2. Write the three situations in the area provided below.
3. Identify three quick distractions or Popposites you could use to redirect your POPs when you are in each of the situations again.

Make a list of distractions that resonate with you (for unexpected)

What people are saying about pillar 2

Focus on being quiet conscious observer.

Certain POPS - could get rid of.

But then go back - and see other ones....

Peel the layers.....new POPS as you get rid of old ones.

If too much - go right into mini round.

Need to be diligent! Practice so important!

Listen - redirect - redirect

DNRS retraining/rounds

Purpose of the steps

To help you use your thoughts, behaviors and emotions to decrease a chronic F/F/F stress response.

Through consistent focus and repetition of the steps as outlined - you block or weaken unhealthy neural pathways and strengthen positive neural pathways that promote optimal health.

Steps 1-6 work on weaken unhealthy patterns

Steps 7-9 work on reinforcing healthy patterns

Best results - 1 hour /day for 6 months (not all at once - 1-4 sessions)

Rounds

Normal for it to feel a little challenging at first

Can be tiring as well initially

Can be done anywhere.

Complete and undivided attention while doing it.

Remove distractions before you begin.

Pause - regain focus if get distracted.

Start where you left off.

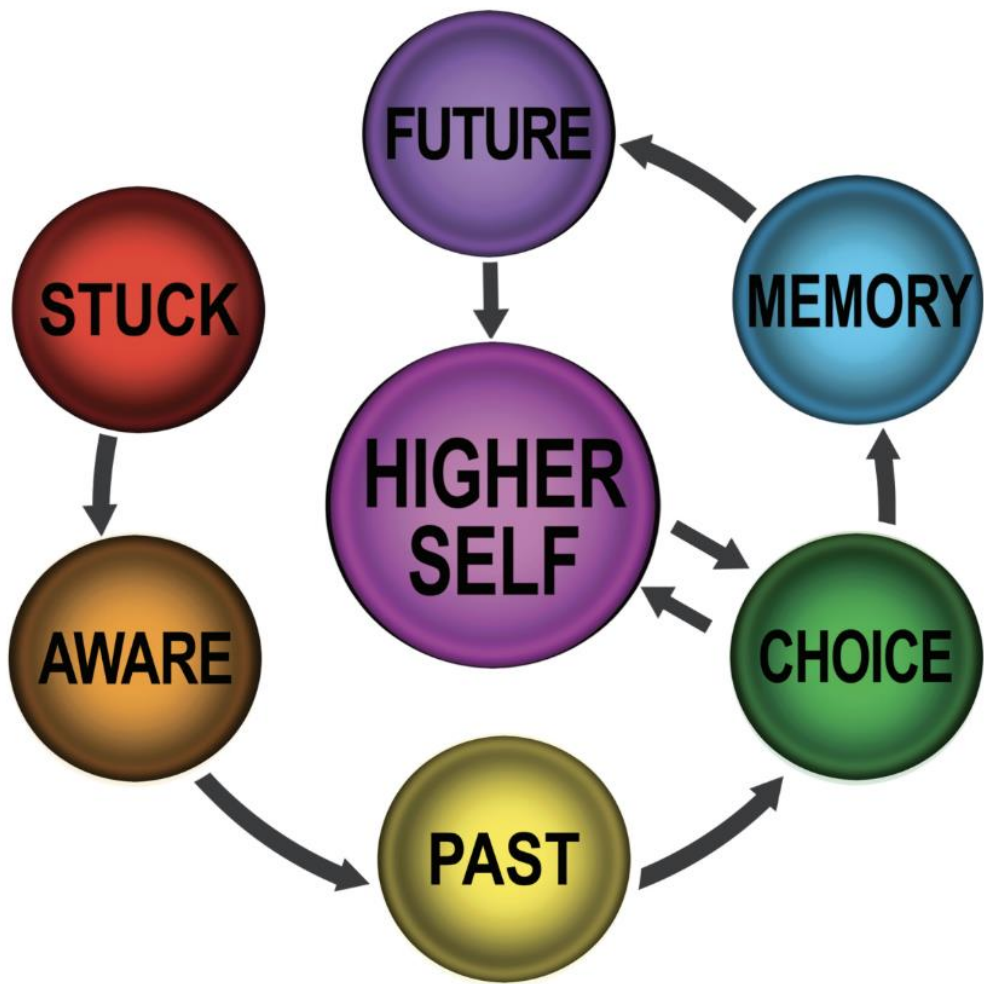
Retraining rounds

Assist in rewiring the brain

Activate the pre-frontal cortex, motor cortex, and limbic structures

Go in a specific order

Should be followed as outlined



Rounds

Step 1-6:

Help the brain see the link between your condition and a maladaptive stress response.

Steps: 7-8

Help you shift from CAN to DOSE chemistry

Step 9:

Acknowledges and rewards your effort

CAN → DOSE

Dampens the firing of threat mechanisms

C-Cortisol

A-adrenaline

N-norepinephrine

These are released in chronic F/F/F stress response.

D - dopamine

O- oxytocin

S - serotonin

E - endorphins

Helps create state of growth and repair - and moves away from maladaptive response.

Rounds

Limbic system - like 3 year old. Looking for verbal and non-verbal cues.

Will listen to every internal conversation to support F/F/F state

Will follow as you consciously choose different tones/paths.

Talk out loud with gentle and loving voice tone.

Will help decrease stress response.

May choose to customize dialog in steps - but at first - use what is there.

Start with proclamation.

Proclamation

Brain works best when given a purposeful vision or goal
Clearly define ideal state of optimal health - create a
proclamation to encompass this.

The words evoke a positive emotional state

Resonate and elevate you

Present tense

Keep it short and simple

Avoid negative words - about what you don't want or that
mention symptoms/triggers

Choose a gesture or action - give self hug, stand up with power
pose, extend arms

Proclamation

- I am comfortable and at ease in any social situation
- I am capable and strong in every situation
- I am healthy, strong, and energetic every day
- I communicate with grace and ease
- I am full of vitality and I love my life.
- I can go wherever I want, whenever I want, and do whatever I want.

Write it 10 times a day for 30 days.

Place it where you can see it often

Picture it as if you have already achieved it

Use your proclamation to redirect POPs

Exercise - Proclamation

1. Imagine your ideal state of optimal health
 - a. What are you thinking?
 - b. How are you feeling emotionally?
 - c. What are you doing?
2. Write a Proclamation that describes your ideal state. Remember to keep it short and simple.
3. Which gesture(s) will help you connect with and feel the Proclamation more strongly.
4. Repeat your Proclamation out loud several times using the gesture(s) you choose. Adjust the words/gestures if needed.

Other homework

Group - facebook?

Find a funny video - or something that makes you laugh or smile and share it.

Laugh daily (or at least smile)

Do 1 thing new every day.

Try to reframe negative into positive

Share something about positivity, etc..

Some “extra” things to do

Change your routine continually

Routine is hardwired and will keep the brain following the same pathways it always does.

Go outside the box of your habit zone- learn new things, do things differently.

Helps rewire new brain connections

Fun, joy, music, Laughing

Changing your routine recruits neuroplasticity in the brain and helps to make new neural connections.