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# Limbic Retraining - Part 1A

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# 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

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# 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

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# 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

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# POPS

Thought  
Emotional  
Behavioral

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# 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.

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# 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.

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# Additional Thought POPs

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

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# 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.

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# 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.

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# 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.

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# 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.

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# Additional Emotional POPs

Feeling confused or indecisive

Repetitive feelings of insecurity

Experiencing a flat affect

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# 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.

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# 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..

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# 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.

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# 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

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# 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.

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# 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.

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# 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.

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# 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.

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# 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

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# 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

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# 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
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- Lacking in self-love or self-care

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# 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?

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# 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.

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# 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

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# 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.

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# 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)

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# 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

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# 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?

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# 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?

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# 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

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# 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.

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# 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.

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# 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

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# 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.

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# 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”.

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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”

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# 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.

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# 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.

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# 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)

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# 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

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DNRS retraining/rounds

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# 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)

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# 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.

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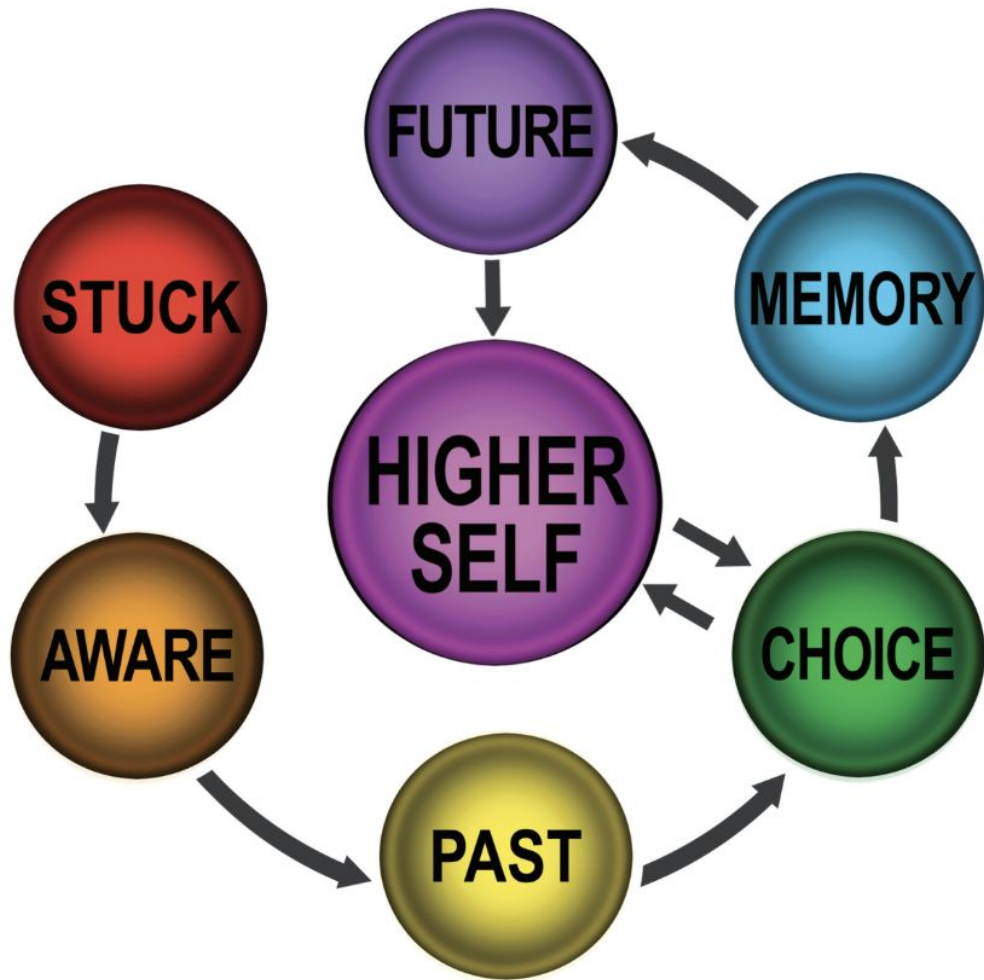
# Retraining rounds

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



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# 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.

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# 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.

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# 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

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# 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.

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# 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..

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# 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.