



HEALING TRAUMA
& LEARN
HOW TO **STRESS-LESS**
BY AMY DOUBLET, SEP

HOW DO YOU REACT WHEN OVERWHELMED?
LEARN YOUR SURVIVAL STYLE.

FIGHT



FLIGHT



FREEZE



SELF COMPASSION & HEALING

IT IS HARD TO FEEL SETTLED
OR SAFE
WHEN STUCK IN SURVIVAL
STATES.

KNOWING WHICH "STATE"
YOU GET STUCK
IN CAN MAKE THE
DIFFERENCE ON HOW
YOU BEGIN TO HEAL.

IMAGINE FEELING THE FLOW
OF YOUR CREATIVITY,
VITALITY AND JOY.

IT'S POSSIBLE TO
RECONNECT BACK INTO
YOUR TRUE SELF.

*Knowing What & Why is
important..*

Knowing what is happening in your Nervous System and WHY it's happening is important. It leads to a sense of safety.

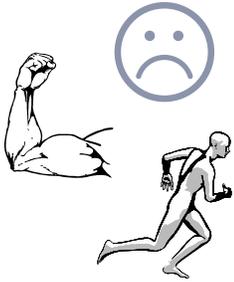
Relief and understanding also allows for the spontaneous arising of self-compassion.

This is the healing process.

So let's continue on exploring. Learn your survival style in these following pages.

HOW DO YOU PRIMARILY RESPOND TO STRESS?

Is it fight, flight or freeze? A combination?



Is it a mixed a response?

Many people have a mixed response to threat or overwhelming stress.

It might look like:

- You may want to run or can't sit still.
- Sometimes you want kick and scream.
- Other times you're like a deer in the headlights

A Tendency To Fight

Can show up as:



- The intensity of anger going from 0-60.
- Misplaced anger showing up at inappropriate times. Using intimidation.
- Yelling because you don't feel heard.
- Using anger to be scary to others.
- Standing your ground when you know you're wrong, being overly defensive.

Having to shut down or Freeze

May look like:



- Everything went blank - including your memory.
- Time is non-existent and the days blend together.
- Stillness is the safest option. If you're quiet and still, it's safe.
- No desire to move, go out, or engage in social activities.
- Lack of ability to focus or ability to hold a conversation without feeling lost.

The Need To Flee

Might feel like:



- It's unbearable to stay in an uncomfortable situation or conversation.
- Frequently changing jobs, moving or bouncing from relationship to relationship thinking the new experience will shift the inner experience.
- Avoiding confrontation or connection.
- Being too busy and hoping the problems go away on their own.

Which survival style (or styles) is most familiar to you?

Do one of these states (fight, flight or freeze) stand out more often than the others?

Do you have a mixed response?

Write down some of your observations in the space below.

Getting stuck in survival strategies takes a toll on your body.

THESE IMPULSES WERE MEANT TO BE TIME-LIMITED

Once a threat passes our physiology is meant to go back to normal. Which means coming out of arousal (fight, flight) or shutting down (freeze).

Side-note: The state of freeze is also a highly aroused state.

One that can be so unbearable, people in it have no choice but to shut down for self protection.

When stuck "on" in fight, flight or freeze, over time, it becomes detrimental to the healthy operating systems of your body.

Admittedly modern life does not support a Stress-Less lifestyle

So many of us are "stuck ON" and can't relax (is this a familiar experience?).

It can be hard to get a good night's sleep, digest food or even focus to get work done.

Trauma from car accidents, medical issues, physical falls, abuse, verbally abusive parents or partners to surviving being bullied are all ways in which we can feel stuck in survival styles.

How often do you find yourself in a state of survival?

- Once a week?
- Once a day?
- Multiple times a day (2-5)?
- All the time?

Toxic stress leads to illness and many suffer from anxiety to pain attacks.

It limits our lives and creates physical and psychological distress.

Being Stuck "ON" in survival responses can create illnesses but they don't have to.

Can you think of times when your survival response was helpful to you?
Maybe it saved your life. Instincts are good and usually life-affirming.
You need them!!!

Use the space below to write down how your survival state(s) helped you.

Perhaps they:

- *Helped you stay out of sight to not get hit/abused.*
- *Supplied some adrenaline to run away from danger.*
- *Gave you strength to stand up to a bully.*

The following is a list (incomplete) of some of the illnesses, issues and conditions that may arise from being "Stuck ON" in survival states. (Fight, Flight, Freeze)

Physical & emotional manifestations were resourced from the book, 'Scared Sick-The role of childhood trauma in adult disease' Karr-Morse and Wiley 2012

PHYSICAL & EMOTIONAL CONDITIONS

- Chronic Pain
- Adrenal Fatigue
- Chronic Fatigue
- Chron's Disease
- Lupus
- Anorexia Nervosa
- Obesity
- Ulcerative colitis
- Heart Disease
- Certain Cancers
- IBS (irritable bowel syndrome)

- Hopelessness
- Helplessness
- Depression
- Low Self-Esteem
- Low Self-Worth
- Anxiety
- Panic Attacks
- Sleep problems (apnea, insomnia, nightmares)
- Addiction

RELATIONAL ISSUES

- No desire for connection
- Fearful of intimacy
- Checking out in a conversation
- Struggles to communicate
- Cannot set boundaries
- Demanding/(impossible standards)

- Difficulty setting limits with kids
- Struggles to feel empathetic
- Repetitive toxic relationship loop
- Acting out - defensiveness - rage
- Acting In - Internalizing anger (passive aggressive behavior)

WORK RELATED/ PRODUCTIVITY PROBLEMS

- Perfectionist
- Fear of failure
- Fear of success
- Trouble asking for help
- No sense of purpose
- Scattered thoughts
- Not able to move forward

- Procrastination - lack of drive
- Impostor syndrome (playing small)
- Mental blocks
- Trouble focusing ("brain fog")
- Self Critical - "not good enough"
- Hard time asking for help
- Dissociation

HEALING IS AWARENESS + UNDERSTANDING GIVING RISE TO SPONTANEOUS SELF-COMPASSION.

AN OVERWHELMING LIST! I KNOW!!!

There are many difficult challenges that people struggle with.

It's crazy how much havoc can be created by TOXIC STRESS!

When you feel threatened and can't switch off after the danger passes it creates turmoil that can make you sick.



TOXIC STRESS MIGHT BE CONTROLLING YOUR LIFE BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE TO.

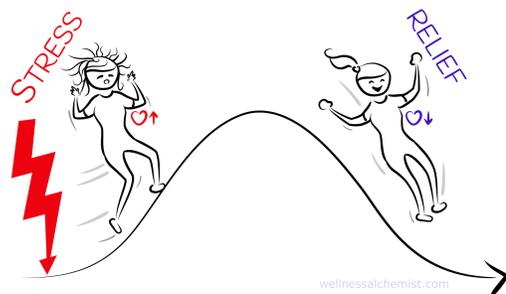
You are already choosing wellness!

The fact that you're here reading this speaks to curiosity. It's the first necessary step to well-being.

- You're now aware (or more aware) of your own stress physiology.
- Reflecting on how you experience and feel stress allows the understanding to follow.
- Perhaps you are feeling less hard on yourself with this knowledge.

Your nervous system is in control of the way you respond to threat - it governs the fight, flight and freeze responses. Most of the time you have no knowledge of its operations.

The awareness learned here is the beginning in understanding stress physiology, your conditioned and automatic responses. Having this information allows you to get a few steps ahead of the biological nature that controls the show. Over time you can change how your autonomic nervous system reacts to stress. And be respond able!



**GREAT NEWS!!!
YOU HAVE THE POWER TO HEAL
YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM.
CHANGING HOW YOU RESPOND TO
STRESS!**

Join the group conversation!

[Visit Amy's group Somatic Mind and leave a comment!](#)

Let us know your nervous system's set point and discover how we can help bring about more healing.

See you there... warmly,