

OVERCOMING ANXIETY

Susannah Lawson

Exploring anxiety triggers

- ▶ Visible and invisible causes of anxiety
- ▶ Hormone imbalances
- ▶ Adrenaline addiction
- ▶ Progesterone deficiency
- ▶ Dietary contributors
- ▶ The impact of stimulants
- ▶ Intoxication or detoxification issues
- ▶ Histamine
- ▶ Excess lactic acid
- ▶ Look at how to transform anxiety in the moment using HeartMath

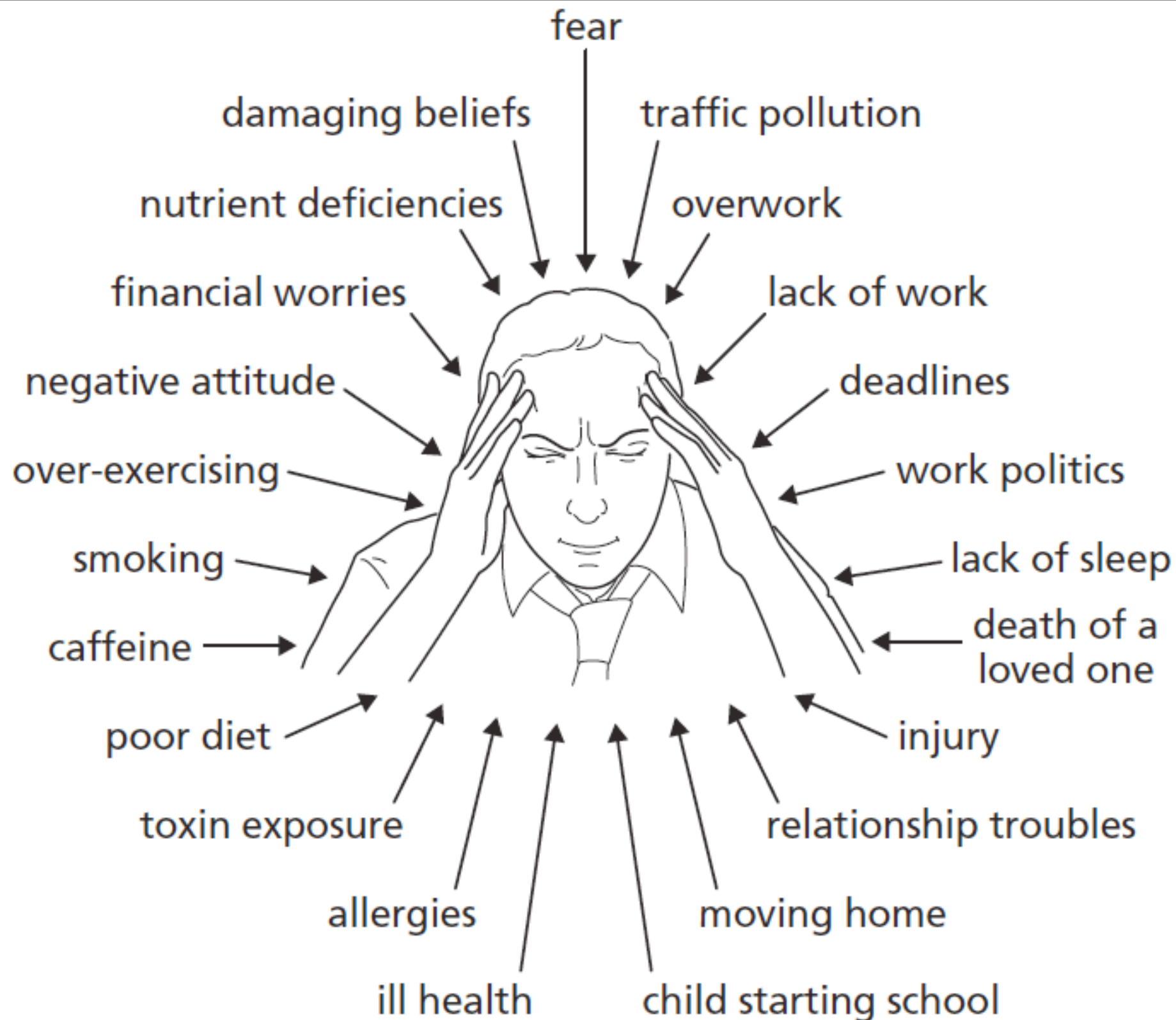
Anxiety: stress expressed emotionally

- ▶ 66% say they easily become anxious and tense
- ▶ 39% say they often feel nervous or hyperactive
- ▶ One in five take time off work due to stress and anxiety
- ▶ 59% say life is more stressful than five years ago

Regularly experiencing anxiety:

- ▶ Increases heart disease risk five-fold
- ▶ More than doubles your diabetes, obesity and dementia risk
- ▶ Is as bad for your health as smoking or having high cholesterol

What makes you anxious?



Anxiety check

- ▶ Do you feel fearful and panic easily about things?
- ▶ Do you feel anxious and nervous?
- ▶ Are you restless and unable to keep still?
- ▶ Do you easily become irritable or angry?
- ▶ Do you find your breathing becomes fast and shallow?
- ▶ Do you experience shortness of breath and feel you are lacking oxygen and/or hyperventilate?
- ▶ Do you feel overwhelmed and unable to think straight?
- ▶ Do you suffer from a sense of impending doom?
- ▶ Do you have heart palpitations?
- ▶ Do you have a dry mouth?
- ▶ Do you perspire excessively?
- ▶ Do you feel the need to urinate frequently?
- ▶ Do you suffer with night terrors and/or disturbing dreams?

Anxiety triggers

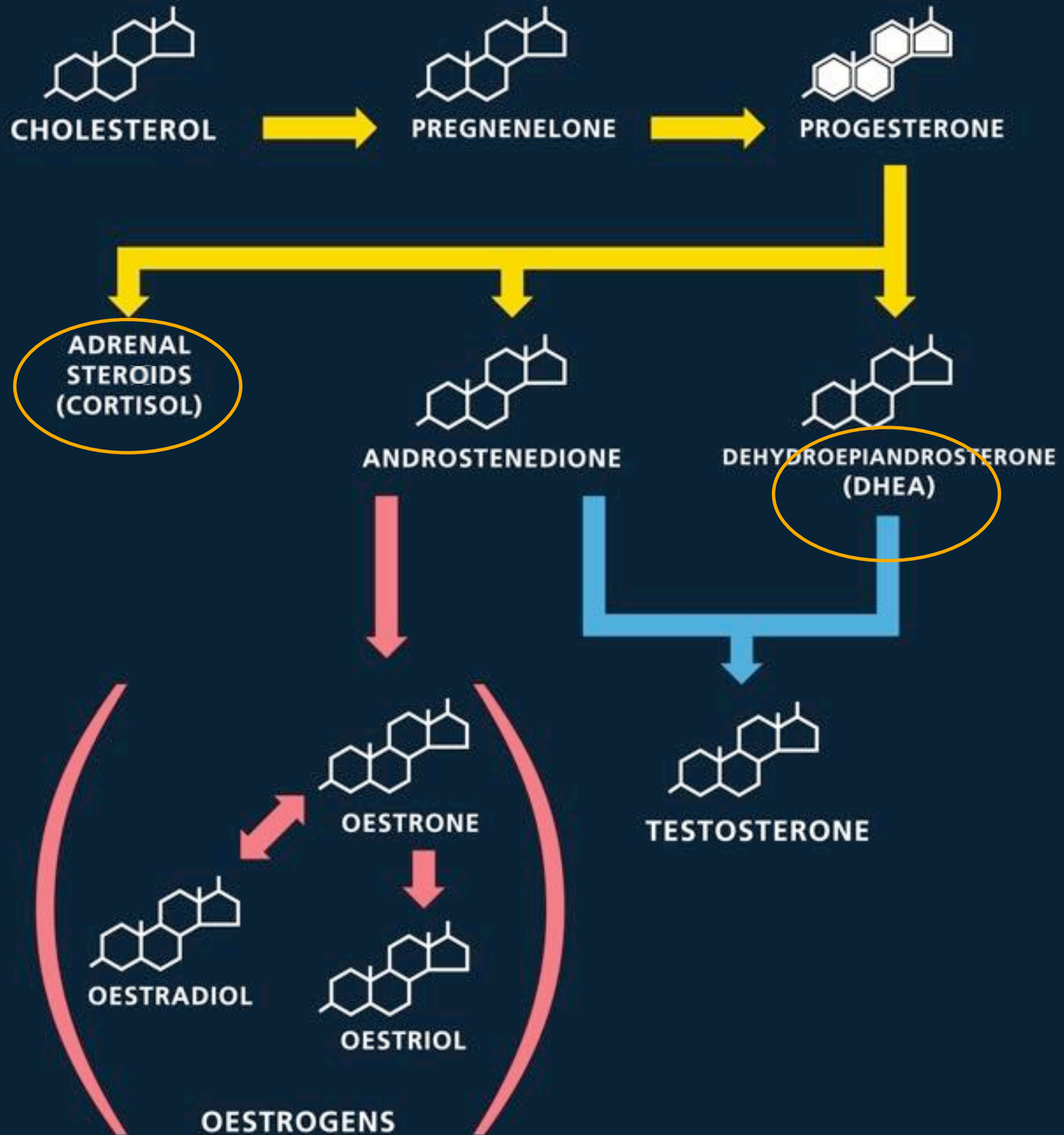
I. HORMONES

Meet the stress hormones

- ▶ **Adrenalin** triggers 'fight flight' response and raises blood sugar by breaking down 'glycogen' stores. It is short-acting (up to one hour)
- ▶ **Cortisol** is the long-acting stress hormone that also raises blood sugar by converting protein into glucose in the liver. Too much promotes ageing
- ▶ **DHEA** is the 'good' anti-ageing stress hormone that gives you stress resilience. It is depleted by too much cortisol
- ▶ **Insulin** is the sugar hormone that transports glucose out of the blood into cells, and the excess to the liver, where it is converted into glycogen and fat

Which stage are you?

	Stage 0 <i>No stress</i>	Stage 1 <i>Normal stress</i>	Stage 2 <i>Prolonged stress</i>	Stage 3 <i>Chronic stress</i>
	Stress free	Stressed	Stressed out	Can't cope
	Even energy	Energy OK	Always tired	Chronic fatigue
	Good concentration	Concentration OK	Poor concentration	Unclear thinking
	Mood good	Sometimes anxious/irritable	Anxious and depressed	Depressed
	Sleep good	Sleep OK	Disturbed sleep	Always tired
DHEA	Normal	High	Low	Low
CORTISOL	Normal	High	High	Low



High cortisol and low DHEA is bad news

- ▶ Accelerated ageing (Kerr et al., 1991; Namiki, 1994)
- ▶ Brain cell death (Kerr et al., 1991; Sapolsky, 1992)
- ▶ Impaired memory and learning (Kerr et al., 1991; Sapolsky, 1992)
- ▶ Decreased bone density; increased osteoporosis (Manolagas, 1979)
- ▶ Reduced muscle mass (Beme, 1993)
- ▶ Reduced skin growth and regeneration (Beme, 1993)
- ▶ Impaired immune function (Hiemke, 1994)
- ▶ Increased blood sugar (DeFeo, 1989)
- ▶ Increased fat accumulation around waist and hips (Marin, 1992)

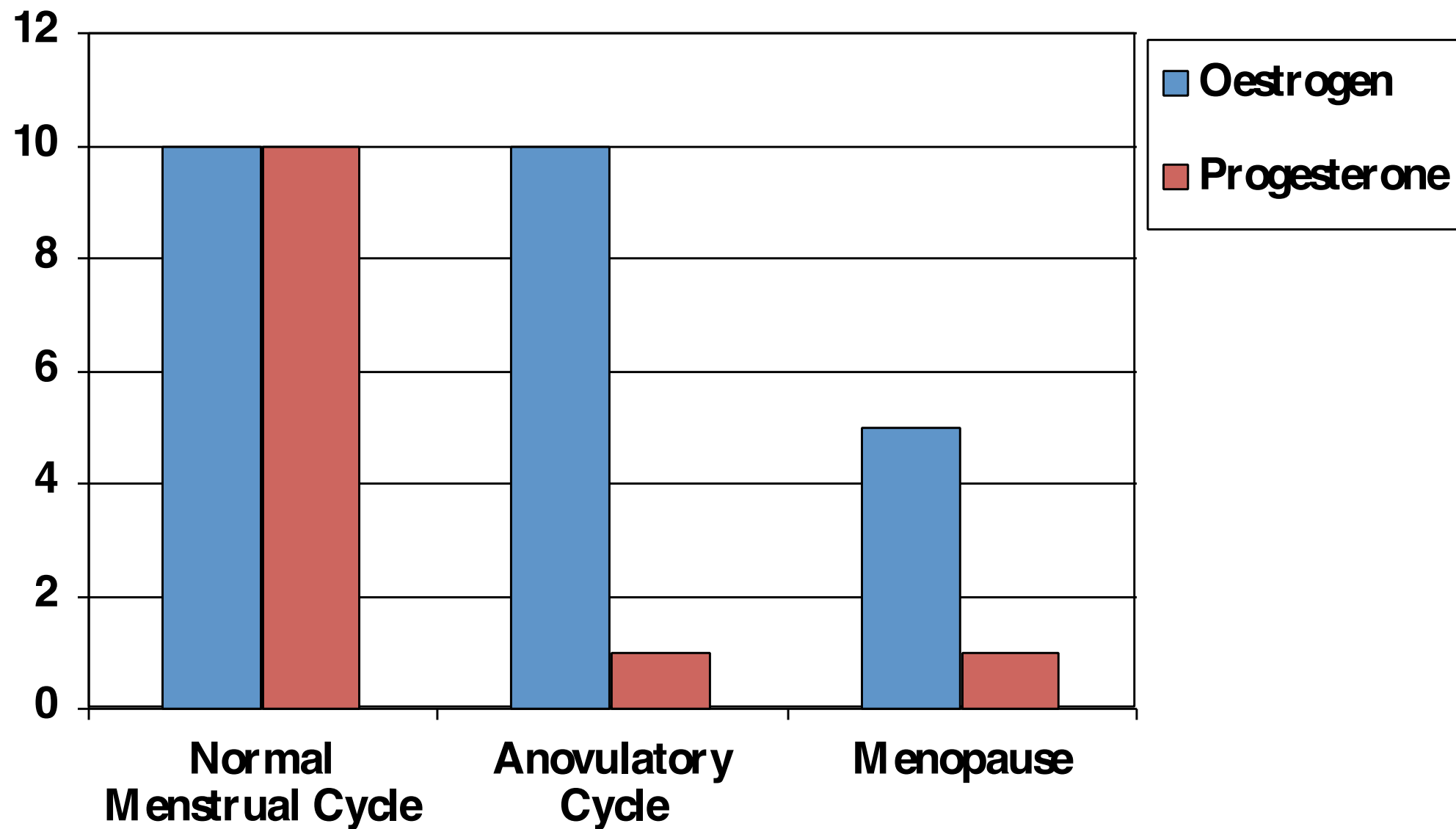
Are you 'addicted' to adrenalin?

- ▶ Are you often late for things?
- ▶ Do you over-promise and then not leave yourself enough time?
- ▶ Do you often find yourself creating 'drama' when you're feeling tired, bored or overwhelmed?
- ▶ Are you rarely hungry in the morning?
- ▶ Do rely on caffeine rather than food for energy?
- ▶ Do you find you gain weight easily?
- ▶ Do you engage in high-risk sports or activities?
- ▶ Do you prefer active rather than relaxing downtime, hobbies or holidays?

Reducing adrenalin 'dominance'

- ▶ Dr Michael Platt: Anxiety, panic attacks, restless leg syndrome, night sweats, increased urination, cold hands/feet, fibromyalgia
- ▶ Balance blood sugar (and always eat breakfast)
- ▶ Wean off stimulants
- ▶ Pursue gentle calming activity (avoid high-heart-rate exercise)
- ▶ Practice HeartMath techniques
- ▶ Supplement calming nutrients
- ▶ Check for nutrient status (eg Hair Mineral or other testing)
- ▶ Look at progesterone status and treat if low (applying 30-100ml of progesterone cream can avert a panic attack in seconds)

Oestrogen & progesterone ratios



Symptoms of progesterone deficiency

- ▶ Anxiety
- ▶ Panic attacks
- ▶ ADHD & poor concentration
- ▶ Insomnia
- ▶ Muscle aches, cramps, restless legs
- ▶ Hot flushes
- ▶ Elevated blood pressure
- ▶ Feeling cold, having cold hands and feet
- ▶ Excessive peeing
- ▶ Lack of sex drive and sensation

Addressing progesterone deficiency

- ▶ Prioritise resilience-building to reduce cortisol
- ▶ Lose weight if your BMI is high
- ▶ If pre-40s, try supplementing Agnus Castus
- ▶ Consider using progesterone cream
- ▶ Address excess oestrogen: support liver function and good digestion, eat more phytoestrogens and essential fats, reduce chemical/plastics exposure, eat organic esp dairy, choose natural products
- ▶ Supplement B Complex and Vitamin C daily

Anxiety triggers

2. DIET

Blood sugar dips produce adrenalin

Jones T et al, 1995, J Pediatr, 126(2), pp 171-7

- ▶ Researchers at Yale University gave 25 healthy children a drink containing the equivalent amount of glucose found in a can of Fanta.
- ▶ **The rebound blood sugar drop boosted their adrenalin to over 5 times their normal level for up to 5 hours** after ingesting the sugar. Most of these children had difficulty concentrating and became anxious and irritable, which are normal reactions to too much adrenalin in the bloodstream.

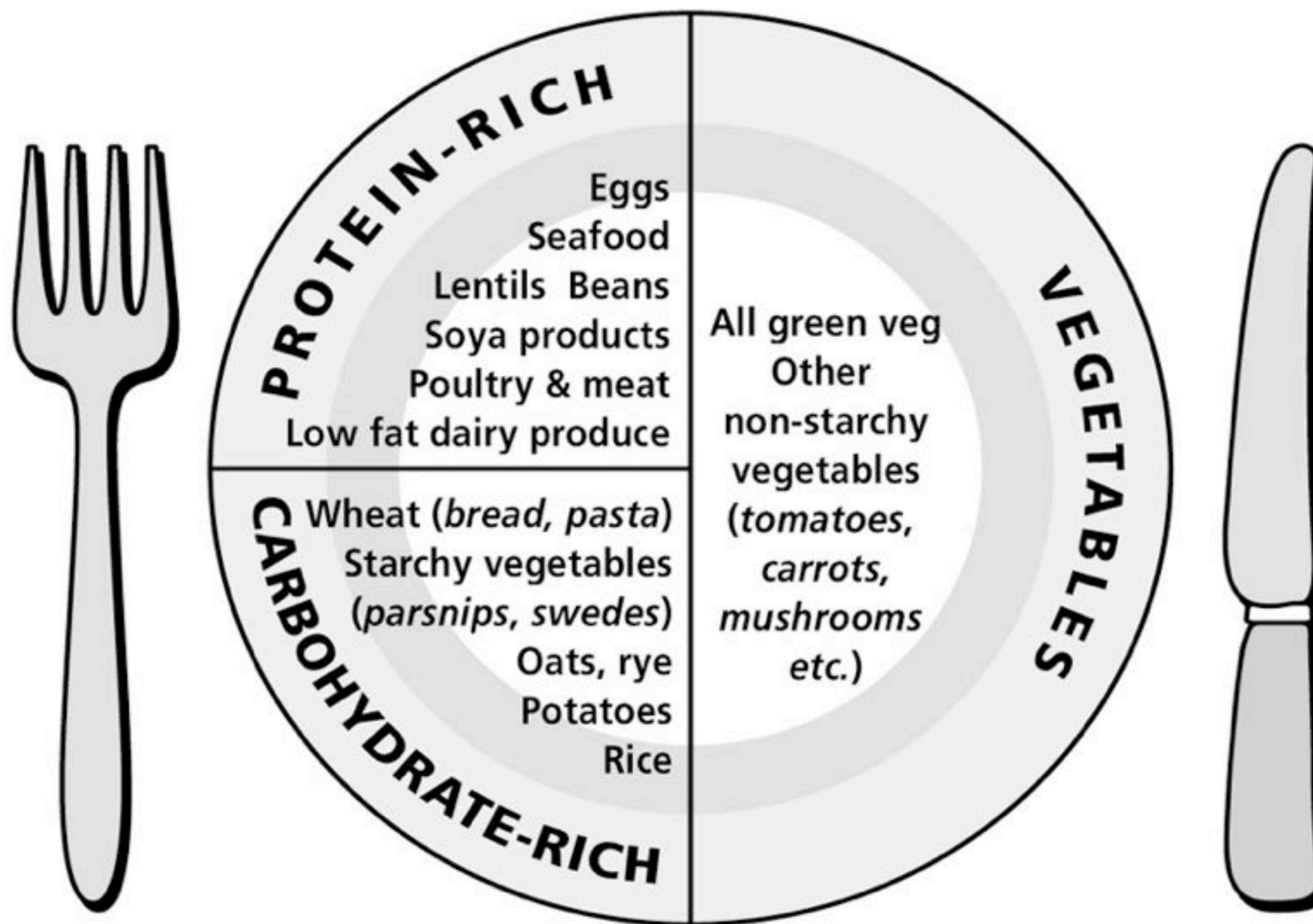
Four simple rules to balance blood sugar

- ▶ Choose slow-releasing carbs
- ▶ Eat protein with every meal
- ▶ Snack initially mid-morning and mid-afternoon to offset blood sugar drops, then only if you need to
- ▶ Limit your intake of stimulants

Energy-sustaining break-fast ideas

- ▶ Scrambled eggs with wholegrain toast
- ▶ Frittata with mushrooms, sweet potato and watercress
- ▶ Smoked salmon on crushed avocado on rye toast
- ▶ Apple protein pancakes with plain yoghurt
- ▶ Low-GL granola with berries and Greek yoghurt
- ▶ Smoothie with protein powder (spinach, celery, carrot, half avocado plus cup of berries and half an apple – pea/whey/rice protein powder – and vitamin C capsule)
- ▶ Feta, avocado and toasted pumpkin seeds in a wholegrain pitta
- ▶ Kippers
- ▶ Sardines on wholegrain toast

Main Meals



Energy-sustaining snack ideas

- ▶ A pear or two plums, plus five almonds or a dessertspoon of pumpkin seeds
- ▶ Two oat cakes and half a small tub of cottage cheese or hummus (150g)
- ▶ A piece of rye bread and peanut butter
- ▶ Crudités (carrot, pepper, cucumber, celery) and hummus or pâté
- ▶ A small plain yoghurt or some cottage cheese (150g) and berries
- ▶ An apple and a chunk of Cheddar cheese

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THE
LOW-GL DIET
COOKBOOK

EASY RECIPES FOR WEIGHT LOSS,
HEALTH AND ENERGY



Anxiety triggers

3. STIMULANTS

**SUB-OPTIMUM
NUTRITION**

fatigue



WITHDRAWAL



**USE OF
STIMULANTS**

more energy



**OVER-USE OF
STIMULANTS**

stress, anxiety,
fatigue,
mood swings



DEPENDENCE ON STIMULANTS

exhaustion, depression,
chronic fatigue, can't cope with stress



The vicious circle of stress and fatigue

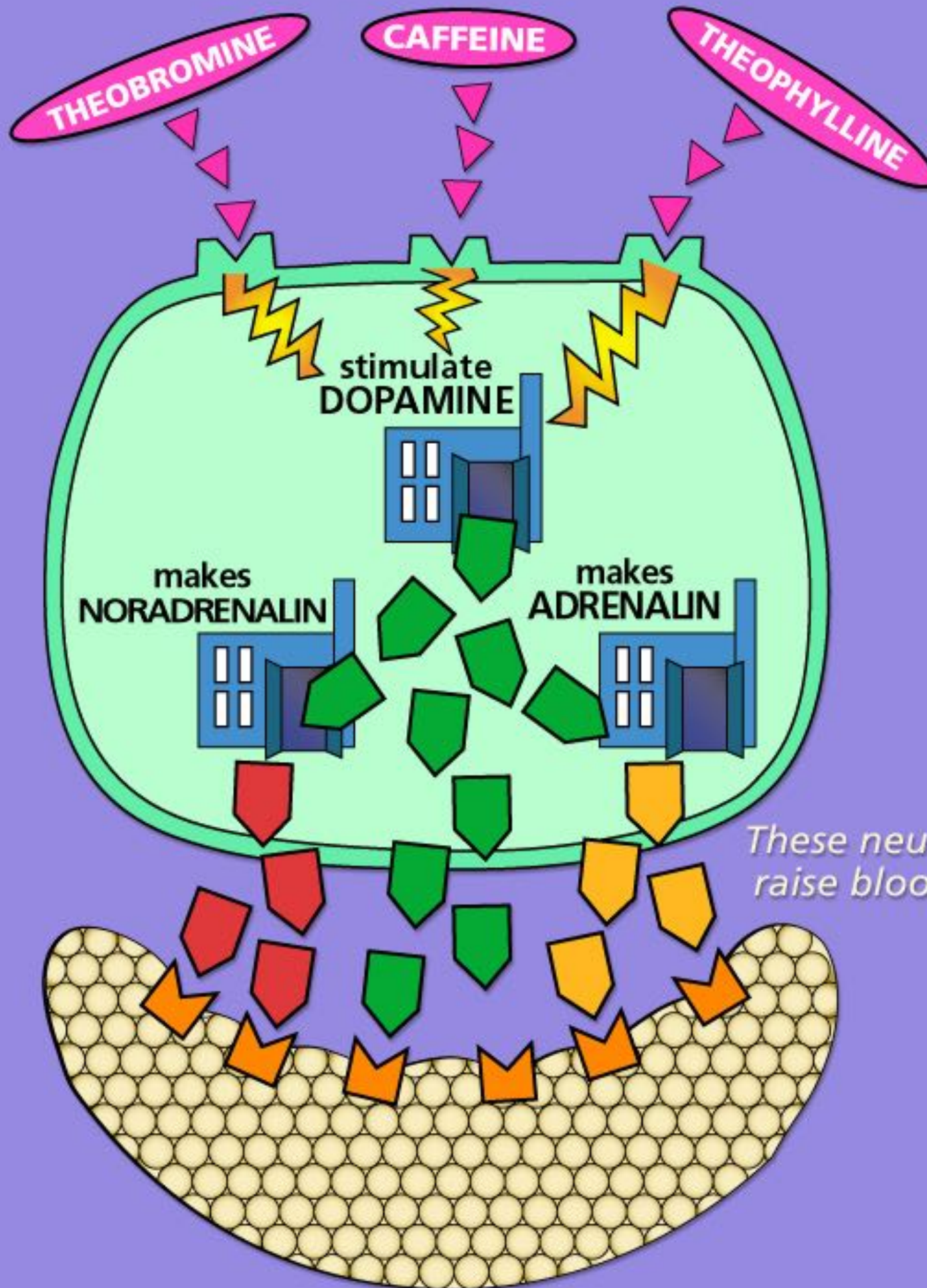
2 billion cups of coffee are drunk
every day worldwide



70 million cups
of coffee are
drunk every day
in the UK

The average
person has 3
cups of coffee or
6 cups of tea a
day

1 in 5 visit a coffee shop every day



How Coffee Gives You a Kick

These neurotransmitters raise blood sugar levels

Caffeine buzzometer

Here are the caffeine levels in the following products:

Coca-Cola Classic (12 oz)	46mg
Diet Coke (12 oz)	46mg
Red Bull	90mg
Hot cocoa (5oz)	10mg
Coffee, instant (5oz)	40-105mg
Coffee, percolated (5oz)	60-125mg
Coffee, filtered (5oz)	110-150mg
Coffee, Starbucks (grande)	up to 500mg
Tea (5oz)	20-100mg
Green tea (5oz)	20-30mg
Chocolate cake (1 slice)	20-30mg
Bittersweet chocolate (1oz)	5-35mg

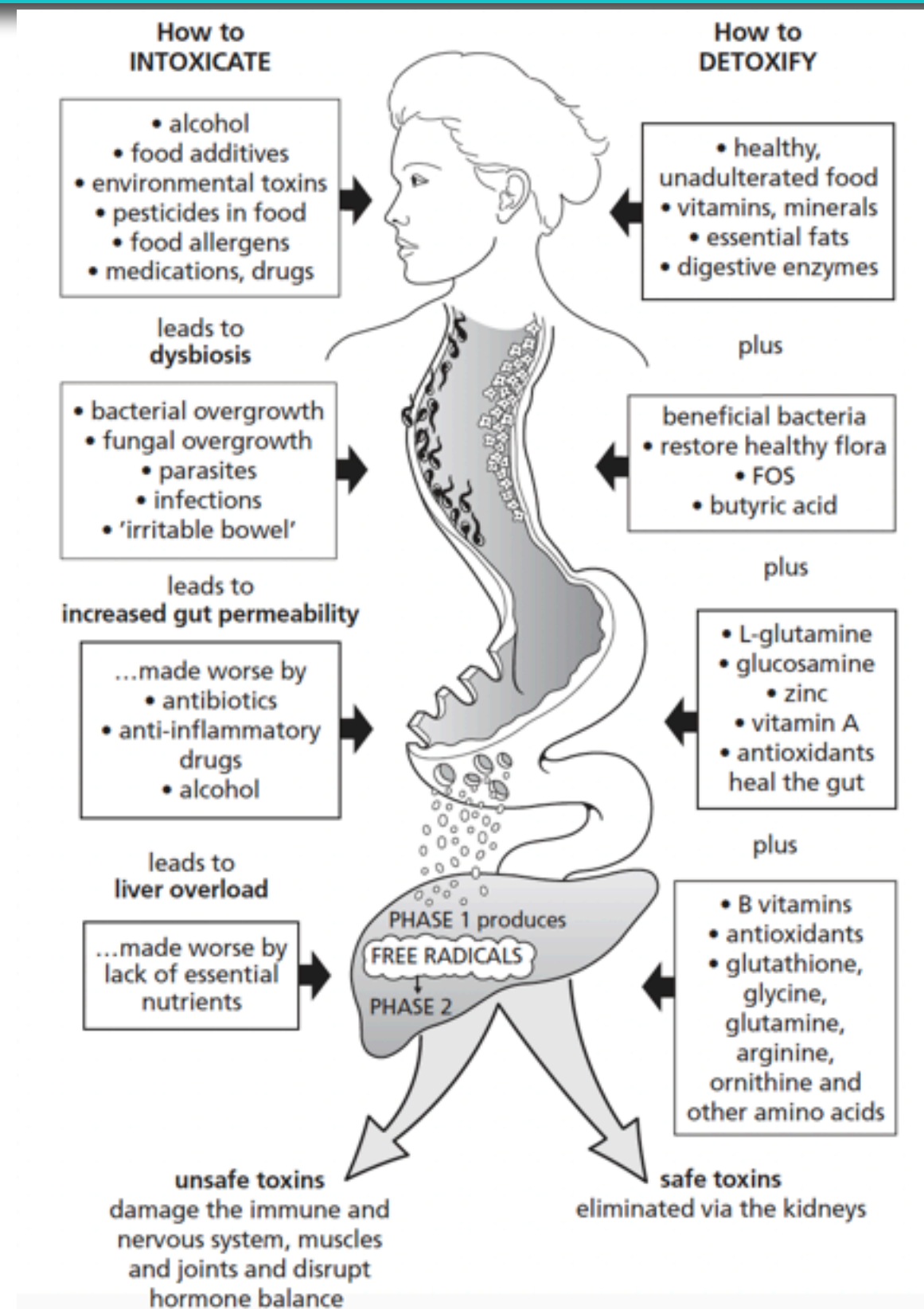
Anxiety triggers

3. BIOCHEMICAL IMBALANCES

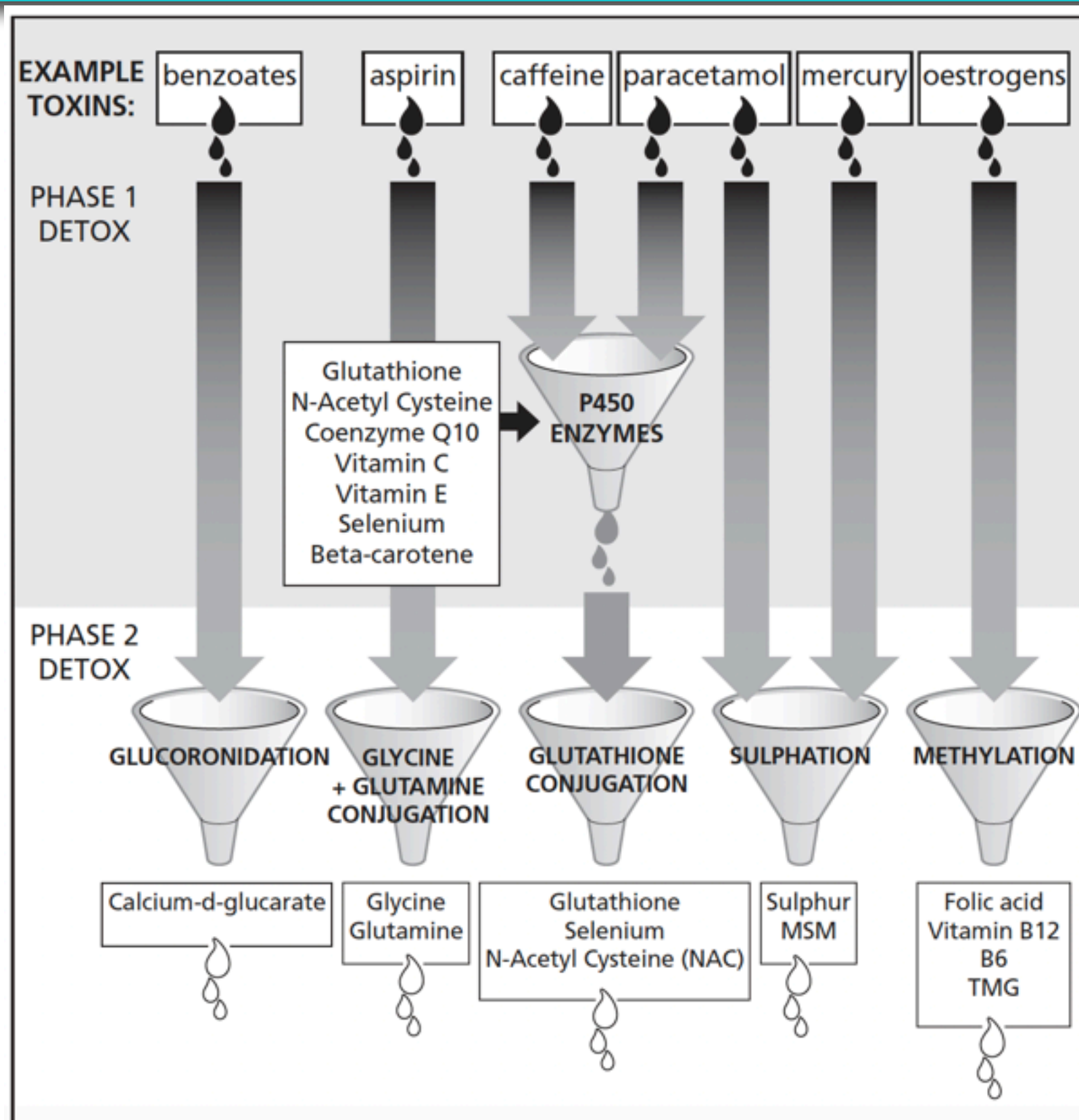
Check your detox potential

- ▶ Do you often suffer from headaches or migraines?
- ▶ Do you sometimes have watery or itchy eyes, or swollen, red or sticky eyelids?
- ▶ Do you have dark circles under your eyes?
- ▶ Do you sometimes have itchy ears, earache, ear infections or drainage from the ears?
- ▶ Do you often suffer from excessive mucus, a stuffy nose or sinus problems?
- ▶ Do you sweat a lot and have a strong body odour?
- ▶ Do you suffer from acne, skin rashes or hives?
- ▶ Do you sometimes have joint or muscle aches or pains?
- ▶ Do you have a sluggish metabolism and find it hard to lose weight
- ▶ Or are you underweight and find it hard to gain weight?
- ▶ Do you often suffer from frequent or urgent urination?
- ▶ Do you suffer from nausea or vomiting?
- ▶ Do you often have a bitter taste in your mouth or a furry tongue?
- ▶ Do you have a strong reaction to alcohol?
- ▶ Do you suffer from bloating?
- ▶ Does coffee leave you feeling jittery or unwell?

How to intoxicate and detoxify the body



Supporting liver detoxification



The histamine connection

- ▶ Dr Carl Pfeiffer discovered LOW histamine in those suffering with extreme fears, phobias and paranoia
- ▶ Many also had high copper, which can depress histamine
- ▶ Low histamine individuals are often tend to be overweight, hirsute, have a high pain threshold and a suspicious nature
- ▶ Can do a Hair Mineral Test to determine mineral profile
- ▶ May find methylation issues also common (which can be determined by testing for Homocysteine or doing a methylation profile)
- ▶ Zinc and B6 supplementation are key to reduce high copper
- ▶ Niacin, folic acid and B12 often helpful too

Panic attacks: is lactic acid a trigger?

- ▶ Panic attacks: extreme fear, palpitations, rapid breathing, dizziness, unsteadiness, feeling of impending death!
- ▶ When the brain or muscles don't get enough oxygen, they make energy from glucose instead. Lactic acid is a byproduct: can induce panic attacks
- ▶ Hyperventilating also produces too much lactic acid in response to an imbalance in oxygen and carbon dioxide
- ▶ Breathing deeply into a paper bag for six or so breaths can help to increase carbon dioxide levels and rebalance blood pH
- ▶ Also worth investigating Buteyko breathing
- ▶ Glycine switches off noradrenaline: open 1-3 capsules under tongue
- ▶ Also check B1 status (deficiency stops glucose breakdown)
- ▶ Food intolerances can also induce panic attacks and anxiety

SUPPLEMENTS

Relaxing nutrients

- ▶ **GABA** – is a neurotransmitter and amino acid that switches off adrenalin
- ▶ **Taurine and glutamine** – these amino acids are the building blocks of GABA
- ▶ **5-HTP** (Tryptophan precursor) – is used to produce serotonin (for mood) and melatonin (for sleep)
- ▶ **Theanine** – an amino acid in green tea, has a calming anti-stress effect
- ▶ **Magnesium** – supplementation reduces anxiety, hyperactivity, depression, confusion, blood pressure, irregular heartbeat, muscle tension and improves sleep

Anti-anxiety support

- ▶ Daily B Complex
- ▶ Zinc (15mg) and Vitamin C (500-1000mg)
- ▶ Magnesium (200mg up to x 3 day and before bed)
- ▶ Omega 3 has been shown to reduce anxiety (1000mg x day)
- ▶ Additional methylation support if needed (test Homocystine to determine)
- ▶ GABA precursors: Taurine (500-1000mg x 2 day) and Glutamine (500-1000mg) x 2 day
- ▶ If suffer from low mood or poor sleep: 5-HTP (50mg x 2 day, building up to total intake of 200mg)

Relaxing herbs

- ▶ **Passion Flower** — has a mild sedative effect and promotes sleep, much like hops, with no known side-effects at normal doses.
Dose: 100-200mg a day
- ▶ **Hops** — ancient remedy for a good night's sleep. Help to calm by acting directly on the central nervous system (rather than affecting the brain's GABA receptors).
Dose: 200mg a day (works best in combination with Valerian and/or other herbs, such as Passion Flower)
- ▶ **Valerian** — good for restlessness, anxiety and insomnia. Enhances the activity GABA receptors in a process that is similar to the tranquillising action of benzodiazepines, but without the unwelcome side-effects or addiction.
Dose: 50-100mg x 2 day is an effective relaxant
100-200mg 45 minutes before bed to promote a good night's sleep
Since Valerian potentiates sedative drugs, including muscle relaxants and antihistamines, don't take with prescribed medication without your doctor's consent. Valerian can also interact with alcohol as well as certain psychotropic drugs and narcotics.

TRANSFORM

ANXIETY

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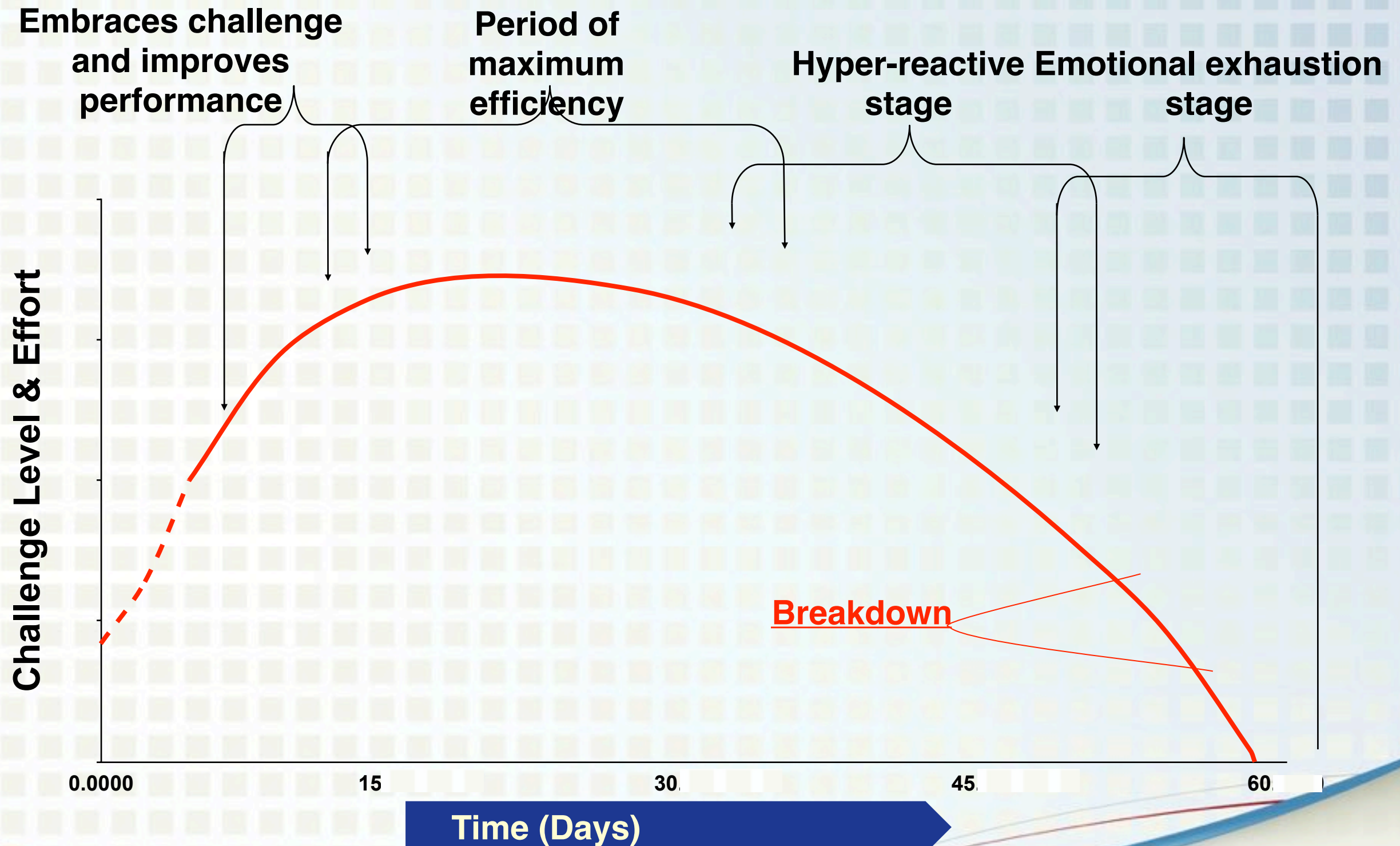
BUILD

RESILIENCE

Reprogramming stress reactions

- ▶ When a perception is attached to a negative emotion, we accumulate an emotional charge = stress and anxiety
- ▶ The brain's circuitry increasingly 'hardwires' this such that similar perceptions evoke stress response and anxiety
- ▶ We can break this hardwiring by evoking a positive emotion at times previously considered stressful – this is a key part of the **HeartMath technique** we will learn shortly

Stress, Resilience and Performance



Resilience

The capacity to prepare for, recover from and adapt in the face of stress, challenge or adversity.

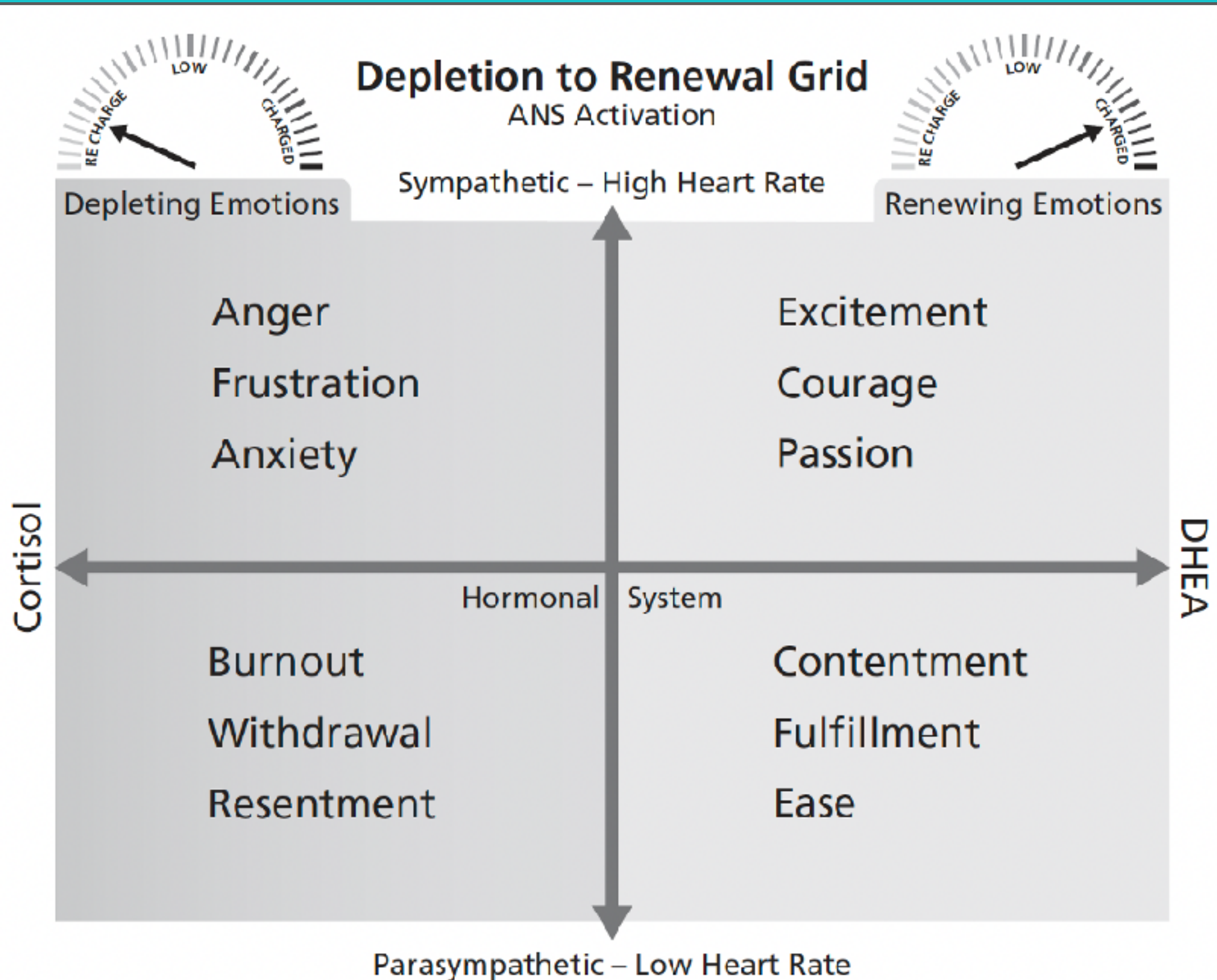
You can learn to build your resilience capacity and sustain your energy.



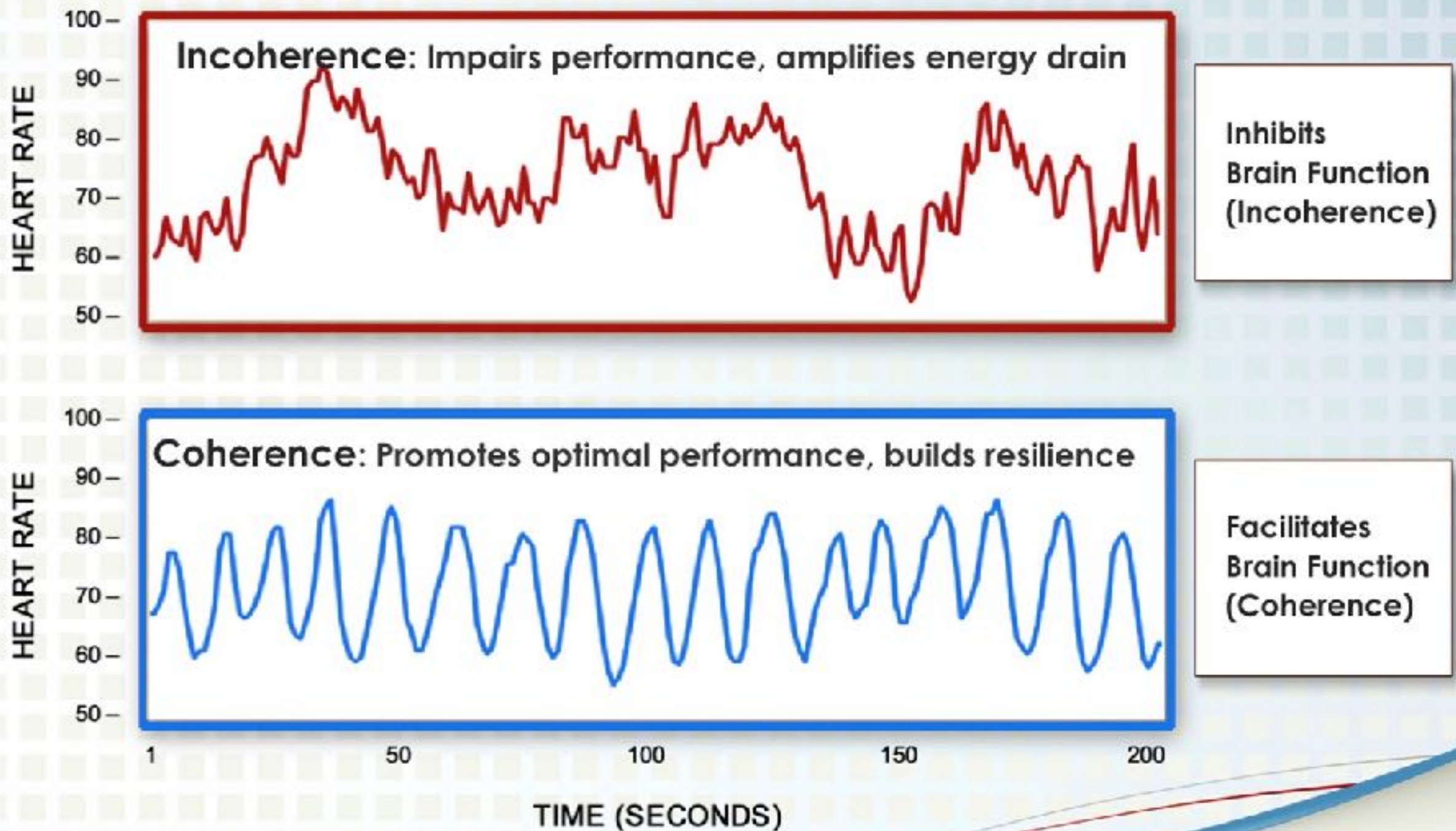
Basically, we are “energy systems”
that expend and renew energy.



Depleting versus Renewing emotions



Emotions and Heart Rhythms



Coherence

An optimal state in which the heart, mind and emotions are aligned and in sync.

Physiologically, the immune, hormonal and nervous systems function in a state of energetic coordination.



Heart-Brain Communication



- The heart has its own complex nervous system: the “heart brain.”
- The heart sends far more information to the brain than the brain sends to the heart.
- Signals from the heart especially affect the brain centers involved in strategic thinking, reaction times and self-regulation.



Quick Coherence® Technique

An Intelligent Energy Self-Regulation Technique



 HeartMath®



INSTITUTE OF HEARTMATH®
Expanding Heart Connections

Quick Coherence® Technique

Step 1:

Focus your attention in the area of the heart. Imagine your breath is flowing in and out of your heart or chest area, breathing a little slower and deeper than usual.

Suggestion: Inhale 5 seconds, exhale 5 seconds (or whatever rhythm is comfortable).



Quick Coherence Technique

Step 2:

Make a sincere attempt to experience a regenerative feeling such as appreciation or care for someone or something in your life.

Suggestion: Try to re-experience the feeling you have for someone you love, a pet, a special place, an accomplishment, etc., or focus on a feeling of calm or ease.



Quick Coherence® Quick Steps

1. Heart-Focused Breathing
2. Activate a positive or renewing feeling



Inner Balance™ for iDevices



ACTIVITIES TO
SUPPORT
RESILIENCE

Embrace good sleep 'hygeine'

- ▶ Build a 'wind down' routine into your evening
- ▶ Avoid all devices after 8pm
- ▶ Switch off phones and WiFi before bed
- ▶ Aim to go to bed and get up at regular times
- ▶ If you get a 'second wind' at night, be in bed by 10pm
- ▶ Warm epsom-salts bath 20 minutes before bed OR
- ▶ 200mg of magnesium 20 minutes before bed
- ▶ Practice a few minutes of HeartMath or relaxation before sleep
- ▶ If you wake up anxious, 'write out' your worries before bed
- ▶ If you wake with blood sugar low, have a snack before bed

Support with supplements if needed

- ▶ Supplementing **100-200mg 5-HTP** half an hour before you go to bed can help you get a good night's sleep
- ▶ **Magnesium** and **GABA** help you to relax. Take a supplement containing these, or GABA precursors taurine and glutamine
- ▶ **Melatonin** (which is a neurotransmitter not a nutrient) is proven to help you get to sleep but needs to be used much more cautiously than a nutrient. However, it has a fraction of the side effects of sleeping pills. Discuss with your doctor. Try between 3mg-6mg before bed
- ▶ **Cannabidiol (CBD)** can also help. Choose a time-release option if you wake in the second-half of the night

Prioritise self care

- ▶ Build 30 minutes into every day to chill out – read a book, go for a walk, watch an upbeat film, or do a relaxation exercise
- ▶ Explore exercise that generates *chi* or *prana*: yoga, t'ai chi, ChiGung
- ▶ If your anxiety seems embedded in your subconscious, seek dynamic support: EMDR, EFT, hypnotherapy, time-line therapy
- ▶ Think before you commit to ensure you manage your time

What would Shakespeare advise?

“There is nothing either good or bad but thinking that makes it so.”



The Power of Positivity

“The pessimist sees difficulty in every opportunity. The optimist sees the opportunity in every difficulty”

- ▶ Identify and name your ‘inner critic’ or ‘saboteur’
- ▶ Gratitude journal – count your blessings
- ▶ Don’t blame: reframe – how did I contribute to this situation? What can I learn from it? How can I resolve things and move on?

“I have never got indigestion from eating my words”



Overcoming Anxiety – Summary

- ▶ Address hormone imbalances
- ▶ Eat a diet that supports blood sugar balance
- ▶ Minimise stimulants
- ▶ Investigate additional biochemical imbalances
- ▶ Get a good quality and quantity of sleep
- ▶ HeartMath® exercise to build resilience
- ▶ Supplement calming nutrients
- ▶ Prioritise self care

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The
**STRESS
CURE**

HOW TO RESOLVE STRESS,
BUILD RESILIENCE AND
BOOST YOUR ENERGY