

Understanding Fear

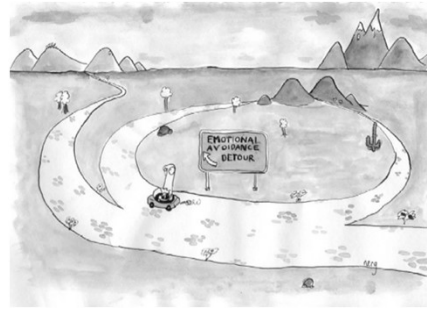
It Can Be Your Friend or Foe

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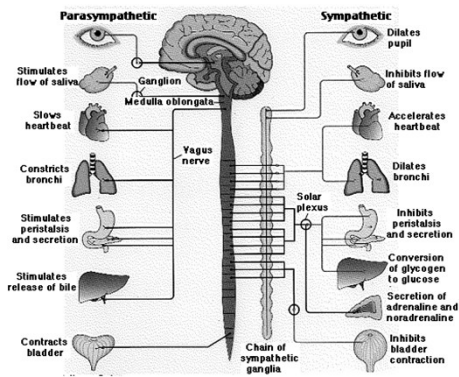
Our Brains Evolved to Be Anxious



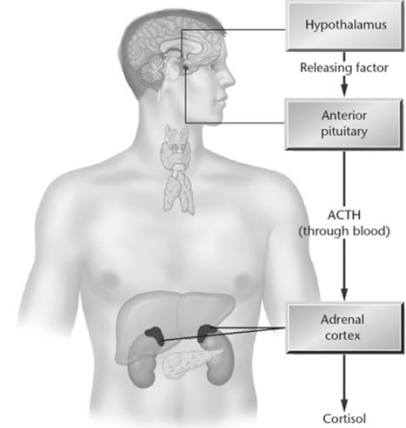
1) Aversion



Autonomic Nervous System



HPA Axis



A Well-Adjusted Brain

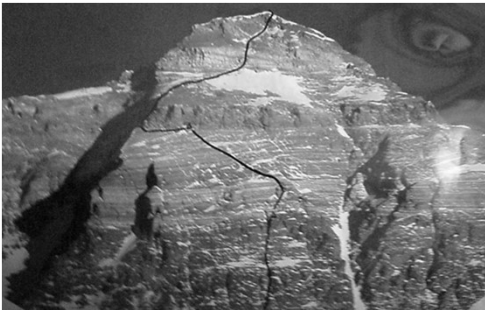


2) The Negativity Bias

- Review past pleasure and pain
- Try to maximize future pleasure and avoid future pain



3) Reification



4) Selfing



The Mindfulness Antidote

Therapeutic Mindfulness

1. Awareness
2. Of present experience
3. With loving acceptance

Acceptance & Compassion



Mindfulness *Practice* is Not:

- Having a “blank” mind
- Becoming emotionless
- Withdrawing from life
- Seeking bliss

Breath Awareness



How Mindfulness Works

1) Befriending Our Demons



2) Developing Metacognitive Awareness

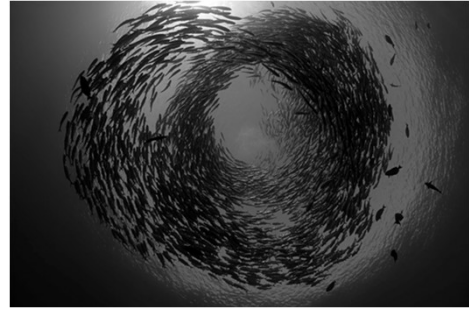
Thoughts are
not facts. . .
I am not my
thoughts. . .



3) Embracing Impermanence

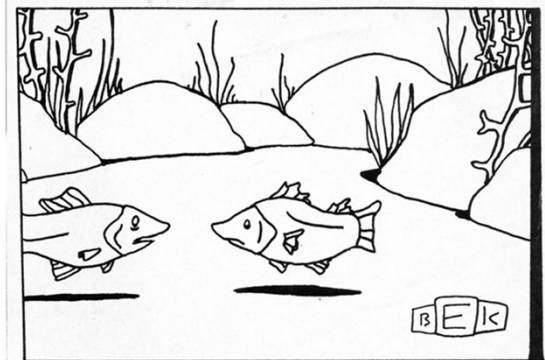


4) Cultivating Transpersonal Awareness



Components of Anxiety

- Physiological
 - Psychophysiological arousal
- Cognitive/Affective
 - Future oriented thinking, fear
 - Accurate and inaccurate risk appraisal
- Behavioral
 - Avoidance and rituals



"To tell you the truth, even when I'm in water I don't feel that comfortable."

Anticipation

- All anxiety is anticipatory
- Even people in terrible present situations worry about the future



Worry

- Keeps me safe
- Helps me cope
- Prepares me for what may come



Trying to Be Happy by Avoiding Anxiety

- The “Diver Dan” approach to life
- Medicating discomfort
- Hooked on distraction
- Stimulation tolerance



Escape-Avoidance Learning

- Enter situation
- Anxiety arises
- Leave situation
- Anxiety abates
- Reduction in anxiety is negatively reinforcing



Avoiding Avoidance

Exposure and Response Prevention



Overwhelmed?

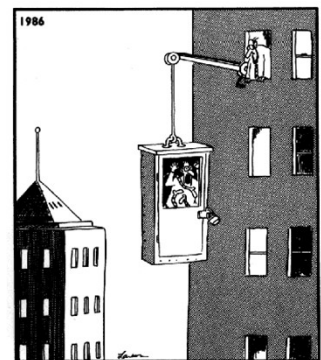


Intensity of experience

Capacity to bear experience

Facing Fears

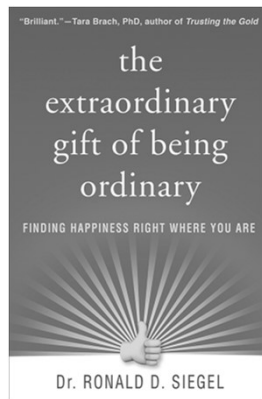
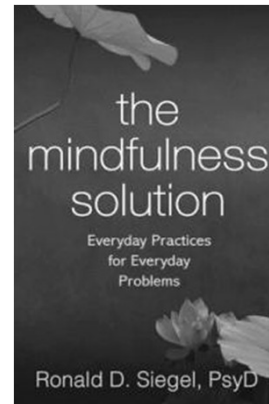
- Mindfulness provides support



Professor Gallagher and his controversial technique of simultaneously confronting the fear of heights, snakes, and the dark.

Relief from Threats to Self

- Anxiety often involves threats to who we think we are
 - Self image
 - Health
 - Wealth
 - Success
 - Love



For tailored meditation practices, visit:
www.DrRonSiegel.com