



The Bio Self-Emergence Institute

Life-changing Glands

By Donna Harber, MSW, CBT

If someone told you that the care of two small glands in your body would provide you with protection against chronic inflammation (which is a precursor to all degenerative disease), assure proper levels of estrogen and testosterone, regulate your weight, and assure the maintenance of your lean body mass (the number one indicator of metabolic disease), keep you safe during emergencies in life, and (utilized to its fullest potential) you could run as fast as a deer, would you be interested in knowing what these two small glands might be?

These two small glands are the two adrenal glands - walnut-sized, 3-layered, and resting on top of our kidneys. The inner layer of the adrenal gland is called the adrenal medulla and it is responsible for mobilizing the fight or flight response in the body. When this response is chronically turned on, it steals calm, physical and mental vitality, pushes us into chronic disease, and robs us of our magnificent birthright in our body.

To understand how vulnerable we all are to this chronically turned-on fight or flight response, it is important to understand the hypothalamus. When our hypothalamus is stimulated, it sets off the stress response. It starts with the hypothalamus signaling the sympathetic nervous system and the adrenals to release epinephrine, norepinephrine, and cortisol (hormones). The positioning of the hypothalamus in the brain sensitizes it to respond to things seen, smelled, emotions, and any life situation that aggravates our body's physiology - making us vulnerable to the chronic release of cortisol. Toxic smells can trigger this response every time we pump gas. Intense emotional experiences, whether of joy, sorrow, or even something viewed on TV (the news, a stressful movie) can set off this stress response.

In my practice, whether someone is coming for medical healing or psychological issues, the adrenals are usually in a state of dysfunction. To help us understand how it is that so many of us suffer from fatigue of two tiny glands in our body (affecting our soul, both on a medical and psychological level), look at the changes in our body that occur when the stress response is initiated by the hypothalamus.

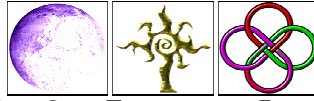
Short-term stress response

1. Increased heart rate.
2. Increased blood flow.
3. Liver converts glycogen to glucose and then releases glucose into the blood.
4. Dilation of bronchioles.
5. Changes in blood flow patterns, leading to increased alertness, decreased digestive system activity, and reduced urine output.
6. Increased metabolic rate.

Long-term stress response

1. Retention of sodium and water in kidneys.
2. Increase blood volume and blood pressure.
3. Proteins and fats convert to glucose and breakdown for energy.
4. Increased blood sugar.
5. Suppression of immune system

Our body adapting physiologically as above creates fatigue, insomnia, weight gain, depression, panic disorder, support for the bipolar cascade, hormone imbalances, skin problems, autoimmune



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disorders, mood fluctuations, feeling “on top of the world” at one moment and collapsing the next, and many more. This list of symptoms alone would be enough to wake most of us up to the need to adjust and to learn the care and feeding of our adrenal glands.

Yet another painful side of overworked adrenals occurs with childhood or adolescent obesity. Life style, poor diet, toxins in food, air, water, and/or home products (plastics) can cause our adrenals to over-signal and become exhausted in young people. This causes obesity due to the kinase cell signal process of the utilization of insulin. Simply, the adrenal release causes our liver to release more and more glucose. Glucose bombards the cell membranes. The cell membranes open up to let the glucose in and call for more insulin so that the glucose can be metabolized. The cell soon becomes flooded and the kinase cell processes say “no more, close the cell”, causing an insulin resistance state to develop. The cells will take in more glucose, so it becomes converted to fat and stored. This is why we are unable to lose weight when stressed.

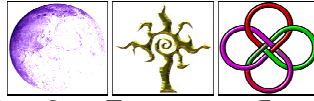
We are at the beginning stages of understanding the complexities of our adrenals and how they affect us. We clearly understand what is needed nutritionally, with herbal remedies and the type of lifestyle that support our adrenals healing and becoming fully functioning. You can go online and locate a functional medicine practitioner to support you in a natural, nutritional, and herbal healing.

Long term, we need to take back our adrenals to heal and retain our sense not to respond (with fight or flight) to everything in life. We need to do this so that our bodies no longer live in chronic anxiety. Here is a healing meditation that supports you in reducing your hypothalamus from signaling your body in the chronic stress response.

1. Sit in a straight-backed chair with your back supported, feet flat on the floor, arms uncrossed, and palms turned up.
2. Begin a four-part breath: Exhale - blow all your air out of your lungs almost until it hurts. Pause (do not take in air for at least 5 seconds, preferably 10 seconds). This pause is the way we connect and wait for the flow.
3. Inhale - the breath of God, don't make your body inhale any special way just inhale and think, “I take in the breath of God. It fills my belly and aligns me to what is in body”.
4. Pause, with your lungs full of air, wait in your fullness of being and communicate with what is.
5. Exhale - slowly release your breath saying, “I have experienced the one, I return to the one”.

Do this patterning of breath three times. Now you are ready to begin the hypothalamus healing. From the center of your breath, say hello to your hypothalamus. Communicate with it about how magnificent you know it is, how powerful, how sensitive. Appreciate it for all it has done for you thus far. Tell it that life is changing and that some of the ways it has signaled in the past need updating. Wait. Focus on the four phases of breath. Exhale, pause, inhale, pause. Wait for any communication back from your hypothalamus. If you received any, respond to it.

Move your breath into the part of the hypothalamus that caps the brainstem. Ask, with each breath, that this area clear, particularly stimuli that leaves your stress response chronically on. Then visualize the thinnest purple scarf you have ever seen and let it float between the brainstem and the hypothalamus (do not worry about how it will get there, just ask). The pause in our breaths connects us to pure knowledge. Once the purple scarf is in place, sit and experience the calm, focusing on your breath.



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Breathe your breath into the part of the hypothalamus that forms the inferolateral walls of the third ventricle. Say the words, “the universe likes you to be specific, but do not worry if you do not know what part of the brain this is”. Allow the breath to clear any pictures (in the cerebral spinal fluid) of life circumstances that have caused your body to initiate and release cortisol from the adrenal glands. For some, it may be rush hour, because you hate feeling trapped. For others, it may be a look on someone’s face, or a feeling of abandonment or loss and there will be millions of other pictures. Work with your breath in permission to clear the pictures. Sit and be with your breath and let it clear your pictures.

Breathe into the part of your hypothalamus that extends from the crossover point of the optic nerves. Sit and allow your breath to clear the space where the hypothalamus crosses over the optic nerve. Leaving everything intact, ask for a thin translucent gold membrane to line the crossover section. This will aid our spiritual sight to filter what triggers our body into the stress response.

Do this exercise once a week until you feel it sticks. Release judgment that it is better if it happens in one time. Often, perfectionistic souls have to do this many times, as there is a demand for a deep, complete level of completion – so, refrain from judgment.

Blessings in your journey to the healing your adrenals and may (in your life time) we once again claim the wonderful physical feat of running with the deer, that accessing fully functioning adrenals enable us to be in our body.

Healing and article by Donna R. Harber, MSW, CBT.

Find a functional medicine practitioner at <http://www.functionalmedicine.org/>.

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