

## **LOA and the Biology of Emotions**

### **Accept Negative Emotions**

When talking about the law of attraction, we look at emotions on a scale from joy down through despair. How we feel in any given moment is an indicator of our vibration or point of attraction. Knowing this, sometimes people freak out when they feel stressed, anxious, afraid or down in the dumps. But, there is no reason to fear negative emotional states. They are natural responses to what is going on in your body, mind, and life. Don't add another level of stress by judging the emotional state you are in.

By understanding the biology of so-called “negative” emotional states—and that they serve an important purpose—you can ease up on your own self-judgment. Then, when you find yourself experiencing one of them, acknowledge and allow it to be there—without judging it as bad—knowing that emotions are fleeting and will pass. Then, get off the subject or do something else if you can to slow the momentum and use one of the power tools in this course to help you to continue to move in the right direction.

### **Understanding Worry, Stress, and the Fight or Flight Response**

If our bodies didn't have a natural stress response we would be dead. Actually, our ancestors would have died and we never would have been born at all. Our fight-or-flight response was designed to save our cave-dwelling ancestors from an untimely death in the jaws of a saber-toothed predator or other danger. Our bodies increase our heart rate and send a flood of adrenalin and cortisol throughout our bodies, getting oxygen to the brain and energy to the muscles. This “fear response” provides us an instinctive form of self-protection, allowing us to flee dangerous situations or muster the strength to defend ourselves. Today, humans are on the top of the food chain, but we may still recognize the symptoms of flight-or-flight response from the last time someone cut us off in traffic:

- increased heart rate
- elevated blood pressure
- increased oxygen in the brain
- increased muscle tension
- a boost in energy supply (no coffee needed!)

However, according to Mayo Clinic, there are also a few things going on under the surface that we may not notice:

- altered immune system responses
- suppressed digestive system (who needs to digest when you're running from a saber-toothed tiger?)
- suppressed reproductive system and growth (saving your own butt takes priority over survival of the species)

But, the chemicals and hormones and heart rate we experience in order to save our lives are supposed to return to normal after our Neanderthal is sitting around the cave fire telling his buddies about his narrow miss. But in the modern world our bodies don't normalize because our

stress isn't caused by threat of death. For us, everything looks like a toothed predator! Our stress is constant! Overbearing bosses, tight schedules, nagging children, distant spouses, and empty hearts put many of us in a state of chronic worry, anxiety and stress.

### **Remember That Your Problem Is Imaginary**

Our habit of worrying puts us on edge. Then, a stressful situation can agitate us further, adding to the tension we already had and causing physiological reactions, such as increased heart rate, high blood pressure. If we continue to focus on the “problem” causing our state of anxiety, it gets worse (momentum). We feel out of control. Our body fully enters the state of fight or flight. And, here’s the key... because there is no REAL THREAT happening our mind cannot say “here is the danger and this is what you can do to protect yourself.” And because it’s not real, your mind cannot stop it and then say “it’s over, I’m okay now.” The mind, who is trying to protect you, then looks at this fear response and thinks “there must be something wrong.” It escalates the situation and you begin to panic. You think there’s something wrong with you. You may even think you’re dying. You’re under attack, but the assailant is YOU.

This is psychological fear (as opposed to biological fear), and although the experience is very real, what you are afraid of is imaginary. You are fighting a battle with a phantom shadow.

The best way to win this battle with psychological fear is to stop it before it starts. Remind yourself that it’s not real and that you have the power to stop yourself from spiraling into a state of fear. Catch yourself when you’re feeling stressed, uncertain or anxious and take action to change your situation, environment or mental focus to help you de-escalate your emotional state BEFORE it gets out of control.