Take Control of Your Emotional Health - Part Seven.



Signs You Are Emotionally Drained or Emotionally Exhausted

Life provides us naturally with a constant ebb and flow of emotions which we would normally deal with. However, sometimes the negativity in our lives takes over and it becomes a real challenge to get back on track. In particular, the current pandemic has really elevated our awareness to take care and deal with our own emotional health, as well as others. In particular those that face life on their own without the normal support systems and those that are vulnerable to change, particularly those changes to everyday life that is beyond their control. Sometimes it seems we just get used to the roller-coaster of advice and restrictions and things appear near normal, then we are hit by another twist of circumstances. Inevitably, many of us find ourselves emotionally drained and have difficulty in coping as we would in normal circumstances.

Becoming zapped of energy and wanting to escape the seemingly never-ending drain on our emotional resources and desperately needing some respite from it all. Emotional exhaustion can feel like we are being dragged through a quicksand pit; the harder we pull and claw to get out, the deeper we seem to get until we are completely enclosed, and feel like we are suffocating to our emotional core.

If the above sounds familiar to you, then listed below are some of the common warning signs to look out for!

Becoming Emotionally Exhausted / Drained - Signs to Watch Out For.

Running on Empty

When our emotions are low, our physical and mental energy is quickly consumed. It always feels like we are running on empty. All the caffeine in the world doesn't seem to keep the eyelids from wanting to close and no matter how many hours of sleep or how many catnaps we have had, we just don't feel well rested. Waking up unrefreshed and often irritable.

Trouble Sleeping

In addition to the lack of energy, our minds seem to refuse to quieten down so that we can get some meaningful rest. Anxiety, stress, and overstimulation are some of the factors that cause us to toss and turn. Consequently, this can cause us to wake up several times during the night. Loss of sleep can be very disruptive and prevent the body from recuperating properly.

Crying Easily

Crying is a normal emotional response to many different situations and factors. However, frequent, uncontrollable or unexplained crying, can be emotionally and physically exhausting, which can adversely affect normal daily life. For an exhausted mind, crying seems be the go-to response for just about everything. No matter how small or trivial the issue appears to be i.e., running out of bread (*so you can't make a sandwich*) Utility Bills prices going up overnight? or maybe your kids are taking too long to eat breakfast and making you late? Perhaps a good cry right there and then should do the trick! There are several methods to prevent crying at an inappropriate time; you could try to relax the facial muscles and press your tongue against the roof of the mouth or alternatively try a deep breathing exercise to calm down and gain control over your emotions. A common method involves breathing in deeply through the nose for the count of 4, causing the belly to expand, holding on to the breath for the count of 4, then fully exhaling the air through the mouth slowly or to the count of 4 until the belly is drawn back towards the spine. If you find that you are still unable to gain control over your crying then it would certainly be a good idea to make an appointment to see your Doctor, who will be able to diagnose the causes and help you to overcome the undesirable and unwanted effects of frequent or uncontrolled crying.

Becoming Quickly Irritated or Angry

Crying isn't the only emotional response to emotional exhaustion. It can be all too easy to go from mild irritation to anger. Normally, those little or insignificant things that wouldn't usually irritate us, suddenly seem to become intolerable, when we are emotionally exhausted. Common triggers for anger may include feelings of injustice, or extreme anxiety relating to family / personal issues, having a sense of being undervalued or even specific traumatic events such as the loss of a loved one. Sometimes, physiological processes, such as hunger, chronic pain, fear, or panic can also provoke anger for no apparent reason. Should you feel that your anger is becoming out of control, then as with any other physical or mental issue, it would be wise to seek the help and advice of your doctor, bearing in mind that frequent anger episodes may indicate an underlying condition, such as an infection or diabetes. Emotional issues are every bit as important as a physical condition and should be treated with the appropriate treatment. You would not think twice if you had a severe cut on your body, your emotional well-being is every bit as important. Like any condition if left untreated, it can have serious long-term effects for you and those around you. Never be afraid to seek help no matter how insignificant you think the issue is.

Emotional Detachment / Self-Isolation

Emotional detachment is a type of coping mechanism used when a person finds themselves emotionally drained or exhausted. It is often perceived to be an easy way to hide emotions from friends, family or situations, and not have to interact with people whilst feeling stressed or facing particularly difficult situations. In certain cases, it can be a symptom of a mental health condition. Apart from avoiding or hiding away from the situation, other symptoms of emotional detachment may include: -

- **Preferring to be alone more than normal.**
- **Lacking any interest in people or activities.**
- **Taking deliberate action to avoid people, situations, or events.**
- **Experiencing great difficulty in being able to open up to other people.**
- **Struggling to feel positive emotions or overcome negativity.**

If you (*Or someone close to you*) believe that you may be experiencing any of the above symptoms, or find that you are struggling to get past the emotional exhaustion, then you really should make a point of talking to your doctor. There is absolutely no shame in seeking help. Such symptoms can be a response to a severe but temporary situation, or possibly (*particularly if not addressed*) it may be a sign of a mental health condition, such as Bi-Polar Disorder or Depression. Your doctor will ask you a number of questions to assess you, to form a prognosis, and then will be able help you with a specific plan of treatment, in order for you overcome this unwanted and undesirable condition. Alternatively, the doctor may refer you to a mental health professional for a specific treatment plan that is personal to you, such as C.B.T. *(Cognitive Behavioral Therapy),* or other program strategy that will allow you to successfully develop your own coping mechanisms.

Tips and Strategies to Use to Help Rejuvenate Your Emotions.



All of us feel overwhelmed and emotionally drained from time to time, It's perfectly normal! To say the very least, life can be very trying at times, and it's virtually impossible to stay 100% positive the all of the time. If you are finding that life is really getting you down, try some these tips and strategies to help you get 'back in the groove' and allow you to enjoy those great moments in life when you can.

Move Your Body and Help Your Brain to Help You.

Although you probably feel like doing nothing, because you just don't feel like you have the energy – it is really important to maintain vitality and not allow yourself to vegetate, and make every effort you possibly can to keep the blood flowing. Don't allow the exhaustion to paralyze your body, use exercise to combat the exhaustion, even if it's only a little bit at a time. Try a new exercise class, go for a walk, or even give the house a spring clean! Research has shown that just 30 minutes of exercise increases Endorphins *(often referred to as the **'feel-good'** hormones).* These are ***Peptides*** produced by the brain that bind to the brain's opiate receptors, which in turn reduces your perception of pain and trigger positive feelings in the body, similar to that of **Morphine**. Physical activity also releases **Dopamine** and **Serotonin**, known as the '***Happy***' hormones and help to improve your mood and perspective.

Switch it Up - Change your Environment.

Sometimes we just need to spice life up a little bit and approach life from a different perspective, in order to get our juices flowing again. For those who live and work in a suburban or built-up area, go to the local country park or take a day trip to the countryside and enjoy all that nature has to offer. Have a picnic, touch the grass, gaze at the enormous sky and breathe in the fresh air.

If you are fortunate enough to already live in or close by the countryside then take a journey into a city, make plans to take in a show or visit places of interest. Make plenty of time whilst you're there to absorb everything, the lights, the people and hustle and bustle of a busy environment. It's amazing how refreshing and rejuvenating it can be to switch up the scenery and enjoy all that life has to offer.

Give yourself Permission to Do Something You Love!

At some points in our lives, we get so inundated with our daily routines that the simple pleasures of life often get overlooked, and shoved aside. Whatever your ***thing*** is, make a point of **doing it**. Karaoke night might be the answer for some whilst others may prefer painting, playing a musical instrument or engaging in some type of sports activity. Whatever, it is you should give yourself permission, and strive to make the time to **just do it** and have some **fun**! You may have heard the old proverb ***"All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy"*** Everyone deserves and has the right to experience joy and happiness in their lives. Get those Endorphins working for you!

The Amazing Benefits of Caring for Others.

Oftentimes and perhaps without realizing it, the act of caring about the welfare and well-being of others can have an amazing effect upon our own emotional health. Regardless of our personal circumstances, acts of kindness such as responding to a charitable appeal, helping a child or doing a favour for a neighbour, will all help to increase self-esteem, empathy and compassion, as well as improve our mood, and help change our perspective. Recent scientific brain research has shown that acts of giving and collaborating with others can stimulate the reward areas in the brain, helping to create positive feelings. This action of helping and working with others, gives us a sense of purpose and belonging, as well as promoting our feelings of self-worth.





In addition, research has shown that kindness can decrease blood pressure and **Cortisol**, a stress hormone which directly impacts stress levels. Interestingly, people who give of themselves in a balanced way also tend to be healthier and live longer.

So, consider in what ways could you benefit from showing kindness and set about caring for others? Everyone has some talents and skills that others could benefit from, *(if you are unsure of yours then I am sure those closest to you will tell you!).* For example, volunteering and helping others will give us a sense of belonging, introduce us to new friends, and help us to connect with our local communities. Face-to-face activities such as volunteering at the local nature reserve, local food bank or hospital can also help reduce loneliness and isolation. Caring for others helps to create positive mental health and the rewards are often incalculable.

In Summary – It's Time to Change Your Story!

Remember, when you're feeling emotionally drained, strive to take some quality time for yourself. Indulge in some pampering, take an art or photography class, build a toothpick mansion, endeavour to get out and meet new people; do whatever it takes to stimulate your happiness and motivation. There's a lot of life left to live! Make every single day count! As the U.S president **Abraham Lincoln** once said ***"And in the end it's not the years in your life that count; it's the life in your years."***

Sometimes it's all too easy to bog yourself down with negativity and find it terribly difficult to be positive and imagine the glass to be half full. Those periods in our lives when our self-expectations are unmet, which inevitably lead us to frustration resulting in the depletion of our mental and emotional energy reserves. Take a deep breath and learn to take it **one step at a time** and regain control of ***your*** story!



We sincerely hope that you have enjoyed this latest article, enabling you to discover the huge benefits of good Emotional Health & Well-Being, and of course we welcome any comments or observations that you may have.

In Part Eight, we will explore together how you can gain a better understanding of how your emotions affect you and those around you by learning how to take 'Effective Control' and live a more fulfilled life.

In the meantime, I wish you all a Happy, Healthy New Year and every success on your life's journey!

Until Next Time / ... ***Jonathan.***

