

# FOUR STRESS REACTION TYPES

## MALADAPTIVE 'GETTING' AND 'PROTECTING' BEHAVIORS (PARTS)

We all have maladaptive strategies and patterns, known as PARTS. We tend to 'overprotect' ourselves from feeling painful feelings by attempting to 'fight,' 'fawn,' 'flight,' or 'freeze' from them.

We tend to maladaptively react/'protect' ourselves from emotions like anxiety, sadness, shame, insecurities, unworthiness, loneliness and vulnerability (neediness). The first step towards resolving these reactions/parts is to identify them: the point of this workbook.



## MANAGER vs FIREFIGHTER PARTS

We have MANAGER and FIREFIGHTER Parts. Managers typically work 'all day' and can become part of our personality. Firefighters detect 'emergencies' (triggers and painful emotions) and attempt to 'extinguish' abruptly.

A woman with voluminous curly hair is sitting on a light-colored wooden floor. She is wearing a white blazer and matching trousers. Her right hand is raised to her forehead, and she has a thoughtful or distressed expression. The background is a plain, light-colored wall. The entire image is overlaid with a semi-transparent white rectangle containing text.

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**A current event  
can have only the  
vaguest  
resemblance to a  
past situation and  
this can be  
enough to trigger  
the psyche's  
hard-wiring for a  
fight, flight, fawn,  
freeze response.**

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Pete Walker, MA, MFT

# THE FOUR DISTRESS

# reaction types

Gain awareness of default distress-reaction types and ways you automatically react to stress, painful emotions, triggers and relating distress.

## FIGHT



- Sensitive to Feeling Vulnerable
- Reactivity, Angry Outbursts
- Controlling Behaviors or Blaming
- Physically Acting Out or Abusive
- Silent Treatment with Contempt
- Unsolicited Criticism, "You \_\_\_\_"

Can Become Diagnosable When Extreme ODD, Conduct Disorder, Narcissist, other Cluster B Disorders, 'Bully,' Controlling Behaviors

## FLIGHT



- Always 'On the Go', Impulsive
- Over-thinking, Obsessing
- Worry, Anxiety, Panic, Fidgeting
- Perfectionism
- Achievement-Addict
- Addictions to 'Flee' Feelings

Can Become Diagnosable When Extreme ADHD, Anxiety Disorders, 'Addict' Substance Use Disorders, OCD, 'Workaholic,' Distancing Behaviors

## FREEZE



- Spacing-Out, Shut-Down
- Overwhelmed by Expectations
- Disassociating, Fogginess Feels
- 'Stuck,' Hopeless, Apathy
- Achievement-Phobic
- Procrastination
- Difficulty Deciding Wants, Goals

Can Become Diagnosable When Extreme Depression, ADD, DID, Chronic Fatigue, IBS, Inflammatory Medical Conditions, Substance Use Disorders (typically depressants)

## FAWN



- Please and Appease
- Over-Giving, Prioritizes Others
- Lack Balanced Boundaries
- Unsolicited Advice and Help
- Passive Aggressive, Resentful
- Compliant, Can't say 'No'
- Highly Self-Critical

Can Become Diagnosable When Extreme Codependency, Enabling, People Pleaser, Over-giving, Boundary-less/Selfless, Self-Neglecting Behaviors

# THE FOUR DISTRESS

# adaptive responses



Instead of mindlessly reacting, learn to mindfully choose adaptive ways, from each of the Four Types, to navigate stress, emotions and circumstances.

## FIGHT



- Attack Your Goals
- Protect Yourself & Loved-Ones
- Creative Powerful Solutions
- Conquer Difficult Tasks
- High-Impact Exercise or Sports
- Build Balanced Boundaries
- Assertive Communication
- Live Aligned with Your Values

## FLIGHT



- Disengage & Flee Danger
- Evacuate Fights with Loved-Ones
- Vacations and Road Trips
- Spontaneous Adventures
- Jog to 'Flight' Painful Feelings
- Strategic Planning for What-if's
- Plan to Leave Abusive People, Jobs and Toxic Situations

## FREEZE



- 'Emotional Cast' to Heal
- Slow Down, Relax, Nap, Meditate
- Simple Comforts, Movies, Books
- Daydream, Simply Imagine
- 'Turtle Shell' Mode
- Take Time to Plan before Action
- Choose No Response when Interaction is Counterproductive
- Feel Instead of Avoiding Feelings

## FAWN

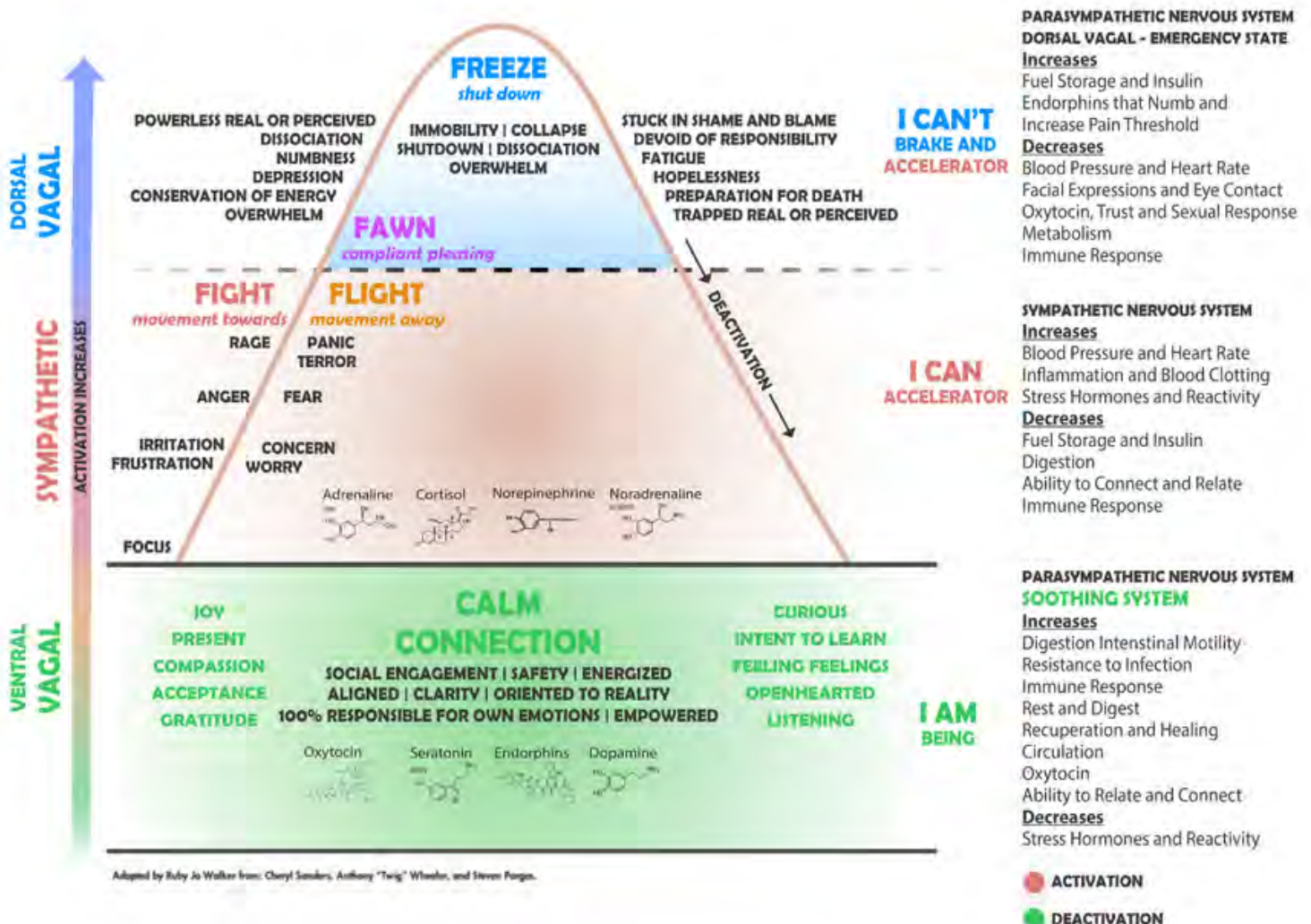


- Choose to Help Others in a Balanced Way, Not Guilt-Driven
- Leverage Empathy to Connect with Openhearted Listening
- Problem-Solve for Win-Win
- Prioritize Values and Self-Care
- Go with the Flow when Ideal
- Cultivate Connection with Balanced Boundaries

# FOUR STRESS REACTION TYPES

Stress types are primal defenses. Encounter a threat, like a snake, we are triggered in 100 milliseconds with the urge to 'flight' (run).

- Nowadays, our 'threats' are mostly relational distress (family, loved-ones, coworkers), low self-worth, purposeless, feeling 'alone', like an outsider, imposter, or comparing our value with millions of others
- We can't fight, flight, freeze or fawn away from these 'threats' as they are inner feelings, but without awareness we try to (with maladaptive reactions) as an attempt to rid of the 'threatening' feelings like anger, anxiety, depression, low self-worth and shame.
- They also keep us cycling in nervous system states, for example, feeling anxiety but maladaptively trying to 'Flight' from it.



Adapted by Ruby Jo Walker from: Cheryl Sanders, Anthony "Twig" Wheeler, and Steven Porges.

# Maladaptive Parts

## FAWN REACTIONS



- Complaint strategies *try* to ensure you feel belonging and valued to any extent.
- Take into account others' needs before your own.
- When fear of rejection or vulnerability (neediness/ imperfections) are too much, FAWN types submit or react with FAWN behaviors.

Fawning avoids potential disappointment by hiding behind helpful personas, overdoing, giving service but never risking real self-exposure [genuine needs, wants, boundaries] and the possibility of deeper rejection.

Pete Walker, MA, MFT

# FAWN TYPE

These are common FAWN reactions, yet possibilities are endless.  
**Identify your typical Fawn reactions.**

## MALADAPTIVE WAYS WE FAWN TO REACT TO DISTRESS

**PEOPLE PLEASER** guards against disappointing others. Hyperfocused on others' needs. Uncomfortable asserting limits and saying No. Lacks boundaries.

**MIND READER** anxiously attempts to read into/detect others' thoughts/feelings to predict or prevent possible conflict or abandonment.

**OVER-GIVER** It feels good being needed! Yet taking over-responsibility for other adults blurs into enabling, 'should-ing', controlling and self-neglect.

**UNSOLICITED ADVICE/HELPER** Although caring and perhaps even 'right' and wise, gives advice or help without asking first if it is wanted or needed.

**PLACATER** guards against others' rage or abandonment by taking blame, apologizing for things that aren't directly your fault; placating, and taking over-responsibility.

**HERO** guards against feeling useless, devalued or alone - fears you aren't valuable unless you save, win, perform, impress, improve or put others needs first.

**RESENTER** feels unappreciated and believes others should be able to 'mind read' your wants, needs and limits, without you even communicating them.

**FIXER** attempts to 'fix' others' emotions in attempt to not feel guilty or make yourself feel better: unsolicited advice, making their problems your own.

**SELF-SABOTAGER/DEPRICATOR** Breakup a relationship, friend zone yourself or quit a job to avoid feelings. Make self-deprecating jokes even during serious matters.

**HELP AVOIDER** wants to be independent and not have needs or wants - to avoid relying on others and 'protect' from feeling disappointed, let down, rejected, guilty or vulnerable/'too needy.'

# FAWN TYPE

## WAYS TO LEVERAGE STRENGTHS WITH ADAPTIVE FAWN RESPONSES

### **MINDFUL PEOPLE-PLEASING**

At work or in certain social settings learn to turn on your charm, but also learn to turn it off, instead of always pleasing.

### **ASK BEFORE GIVING ADVICE**

Ask before offering advice and if they say yes, ensure you are choosing to give your time. Then be the caring hero you are!

### **LEVERAGE HIGH EMPATHY**

Fawn types tend to be naturally empathic. Leverage this ability with Curious Listening, offering kindness and win-win solutions.



### **ASK BEFORE GIVING OR DOING**

Ask, "Anything I can do for you?" The Five Love Languages are ways to give: Comforting Touch, Acts of Service, Affirming Words, Gifts, Quality Time

### **GO WITH THE FLOW**

Use your natural tendency to 'go with the flow' and be optimistic when appropriate, while 'picking your battles' carefully and strategically.

### **APOLOGIZE ONLY WHEN AT FAULT**

Use your ability to take responsibility for your mistakes, feel remorse and apologize for things that are directly your fault.





# FAWN TYPE

## WAYS TO IMPROVE DEFICIENCIES WITH ADAPTIVE FAWN RESPONSES

### **SELF-CARE INSTEAD OF SELF-LESS**

Build a sense of "Self" by attuning to your genuine feelings, wants, needs, and needed boundaries. What are my REAL wants, needs and limits? In this moment? Long term?

### **BOUNDARIES INSTEAD OF BOUNDARLESS**

Learn all about Boundaries Skills. Say 'no' to unhealthy expectations from others. Say 'no' to unhealthy behaviors or to people you don't want to be with

### **PROCESS TOXIC GUILT/SHAME**

Identify and process through guilt and anger, with Emotional Health Skills, instead of buckling into Fawn Reactions



### **COMMUNICATE EXPECTATIONS INSTEAD OF RESENTMENT**

Clearly communicate your needs, wants, limits, without explaining or trying to make others understand why you have them. Simply state them.

### **SELF-LEADERSHIP OVER INNER**

**CRITIC** When your Inner Critic Work shames you into over-giving, face it and tell it 'no.' Focus on self-care and Mindful Self-Compassion

### **LISTEN RATHER THAN 'FIX' OTHERS' FEELINGS AND PERCEPTIONS**

Being caring does not involve trying to control others' emotions. Allow others to feel how they feel, think how they think and have their own opinions of you. You only have control over how you WANT to be perceived by others, so focus on behaving how you want to be seen.



# FAWN TYPE

Which of these fawn reactions do you tend to default to? How are they effecting your relationships and your life overall?

Are there other types of behaviors you can think of that may fall within fawn type maladaptive protective strategies? These may be behaviors you notice in yourself or in others. Describe.

Which fawn type adaptive behaviors and healthy responses do you want to start incorporating in your life?



**Feel through  
painful emotions  
without launching  
into inner critic or  
4F's. 'The only pain  
that can be  
avoided is the pain  
that comes from  
trying to avoid  
unavoidable pain'.**

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Pete Walker, MA

# *Maladaptive Parts* **FIGHT REACTIONS**



- Fight strategies rail against the fact that we are inevitably powerless over others by trying to 'power-up'
- Fight strategies also work to temporarily feel 'powerful adrenalin' for about 90 seconds (a lot of damage can be said or done in this time)
- Also temporarily avoids feeling guilt/shame (responsibility) that comes with feeling 'bad' 'wrong,' imperfect, vulnerable or disrespected.

Fight types avoid real intimacy by unconsciously alienating others with angry and controlling demands for the unmet childhood [and inner child] needs of unconditional love.

Pete Walker, MA, MFT

## MALADAPTIVE PROTECTIVE STRATEGIES (PARTS)

# FIGHT TYPE

The following are common FIGHT reactions, yet possibilities are endless. Every Part has a very important job, although it tends to react in extreme and overly protective ways. **Identify your typical FIGHT reactions.**

## MALADAPTIVE WAYS WE FIGHT TO REACT TO DISTRESS

**CONTROLLER** grapples for a sense of safety and predictability and tries to rid of anxious feelings by trying to force others to be, perceive, feel a certain way

**PROTESTER** rails against not feeling seen, heard, valued or respected by demanding it with criticism, blaming, 'you don't love me!' 'I feel disrespected!'

**BLAMESHIFTER** denies, lies and attempts to devoid responsibility (ironically rendering oneself powerless by blaming others)

**GRANDIOSITY** promotes a 'perfect persona' to counter deep wounded feelings of unworthiness; judges others as 'less than' (racism, sexism, etc.)

**INTERRUPTER** intends to protect (instead of learn/listen), derails conversation, fears disappointment or lack of control or other painful emotions

**STONEWALLER** Intentionally represses anger within, yet it burns slowly with smoke but no flame - silent treatment, sarcasm, passive aggression, or contempt.

**RESENTER** feels unappreciated and believes others should be able to 'mind read' your wants, needs and limits, without you even communicating them

**DEFENDER/EXPLAINER (JADE-ER)** albeit well-intentioned, renders you in 'defense' (Justify/Argue/Defend/ Explain) which is conflict inducing and anxiety producing

**ATTACKER/EXPLODER/ABUSER** rails against perceived powerless by lashing out to regain a sense of 'rightness' and power, repressing anger only works for so long - eventually it explodes.

**OPINION/EMOTION DUMPER** Instead of communicating your opinions, needs, wants and limits clearly, you complain, yell or blame others for unmet needs, hurt, anger **(opinions are emotionally based)**

# FIGHT TYPE

## WAYS TO LEVERAGE STRENGTHS WITH ADAPTIVE FIGHT RESPONSES

**ATTACK YOUR GOALS** Leverage your need to be in control by attacking personal goals, plan for strategic solutions and take action to conquer tasks.

**PROTECT WITH BOUNDARIES** Protect yourself and loved-ones with the powerful, protective fuel anger offers, work hard for financial safety, alarm system, etc.

**FORTHRIGHT NEEDS AND WANTS** Fortright communication to speak your wants and needs and ask for help if you want. "I need \_, how can we make it happens"



### **FIGHT FOR YOUR VALUES**

Fight for your values in a constructive, real way, instead of arguing about it. Invest in a company you believe in, learn, teach, engage in advocacy, etc.

**TAKE ACTION AT** by ensuring you are pursuing your work and interests and getting a Sense of Purpose and Belonging in your friend group, career, community, etc.

### **ACTION-ORIENTED SELF-CARE**

Use your fight energy for caring for yourself, like Acts of Service for yourself, make a delicious meal, etc. Also, exercise, running, boxing, etc. does wonders for deactivating adrenaline and fight energy!



# FIGHT TYPE

## WAYS TO IMPROVE DEFICIENCIES WITH ADAPTIVE FIGHT RESPONSES

**SELF-INITIATED TIME-OUTS** Instead of trying to get rid of your emotions, by controlling others or expressing emotions at others, take self-initiated timeouts to process your emotions.

**TAKE 100% RESPONSIBILITY FOR YOUR OWN EMOTIONS, OPINIONS AND PERCEPTIONS!** Only you can understand and process your anger and hurt feelings with Emotional Health Skills. Take the time you need to process them.

**TAKE TIME TO DIG DEEP** Take time to 'dig deep,' understand unmet needs, list exactly what you need in life, and clearly, calmly communicate your needs.



**COMMUNICATE EXPECTATIONS INSTEAD OF RESENTMENT** Clearly communicate your needs, wants, limits, without explaining or trying to make others understand why you have them. Simply state them.

**ACTIVE CURIOUS LISTENING** Use 'fight' energy to listen with Intent to Learn, ask questions, and be curious about others' feelings, needs, wants, boundaries and rightful freedoms.

**LISTEN RATHER THAN 'FIX' OTHERS' FEELINGS AND OPINIONS** Being caring does not involve trying to control others' emotions. Allow others to feel how they feel, think how they think and have their own opinions of right vs wrong. You only have control over how you WANT to be perceived by others, so focus on behaving how you want to be seen.



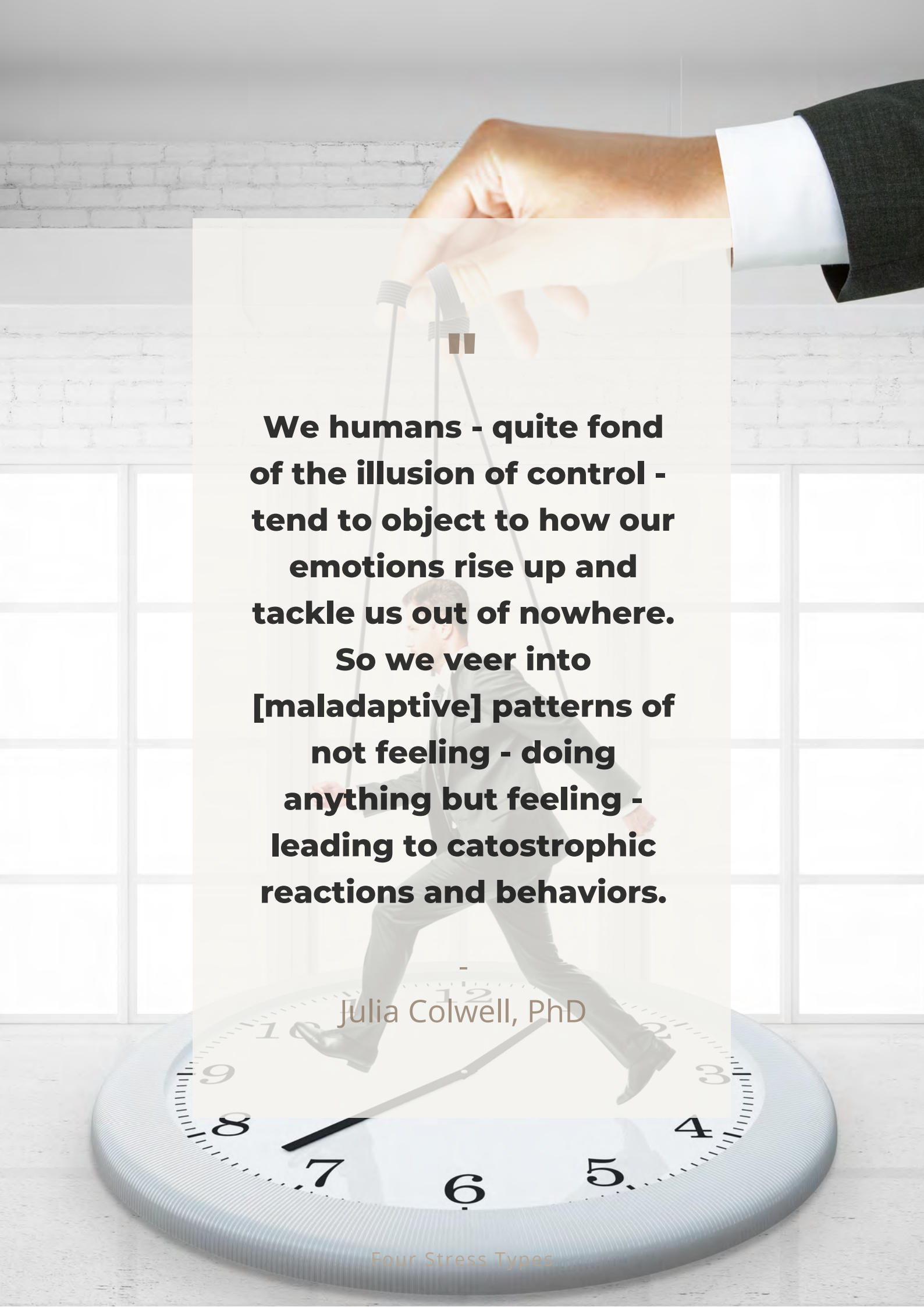
# FIGHT TYPE

Which of these fight reactions do you tend to default to? How are they effecting your relationships and your life overall?

Are there other types of behaviors you can think of that may fall within fight type maladaptive protective strategies? These may be behaviors you notice in yourself or in others. Describe.

Which fight type adaptive behaviors and healthy responses do you want to start incorporating in your life?



A hand in a dark suit sleeve with a white cuff is pulling a man in a dark suit by a string attached to his back. The man is walking on a large, round, light blue clock face on the floor. The clock face has numbers 1 through 12 and a black hand pointing towards the 7. The background is a white brick wall with a window. The text is overlaid on a semi-transparent yellow rectangle.

**We humans - quite fond of the illusion of control - tend to object to how our emotions rise up and tackle us out of nowhere. So we veer into [maladaptive] patterns of not feeling - doing anything but feeling - leading to catastrophic reactions and behaviors.**

Julia Colwell, PhD

# *Maladaptive Parts* **FLIGHT REACTIONS**



- Attempt to rid of anxiety, 'neediness,' shame and other painful emotions
- Try to future-proof so you don't get hurt, hurt another, fail, end up surprised, oblivious or naive.
- Typically anxiety- based, ranging from subtle worry to panic and 'need to flee' feeling.
- Flight types tend to need a lot of freedom and space and need to learn to clearly communicate this need.

Flight types stay perpetually busy, industrious... or perfectionistic... to avoid potentially triggering interactions from others and inner critical / shaming feelings from within.

Pete Walker, MA, MFT

## MALADAPTIVE PROTECTIVE STRATEGIES (PARTS)

# FLIGHT TYPE

The following are common FLIGHT reactions, yet possibilities are endless. Every Part has a very important job, although it tends to react in extreme and overly protective ways. **Identify your typical FLIGHT reactions.**

## MALADAPTIVE WAYS WE FIGHT TO REACT TO DISTRESS

**WORRIER** rails against feeling powerless by tugging at you with looping, insidious fears and 'what-ifs' (thinks this is caring)

**OBSESSER/PERFECTIONIST** seeks relief from anxiety/stress with looping thoughts, perfectionism, compulsions/repetitive behaviors (OCD), and repeated checking.

**OVER-ANALYZER** over-thinks and goes into overtime-detective mode due to fears of feeling fooled or caught off guard (also temporarily numbs feelings)

**BUSIER/HYPERACTIVE** distracts from feelings by gaming, cleaning, working, etc., results in fidgeting, disconnection, inattention (ADHD)

**DOOR-SLAMMER** takes immediate action to end relationship (or leave a job) as it detects pain of possible rejection, abandonment or engulfment

**FOOD/SUBSTANCE USER** talks you into over-eating, over-drinking, smoking, or using drugs to escape social anxiety, emotional pain and inner conflict

**GHOSTER** feels overwhelmed and flees, disappears and fails to contact without clearly communicating need for space or need to end the connection.

**FOOD/SUBSTANCE BINGER** detects possible emotional overwhelm and 'fire hoses' with alcohol or food to extinguish - may also explode verbally or overshare at inopportune times

**TOO-MUCHER** over-shop, over-text, over-share, over-talk, over-gaming, or similar types of behaviors to distract from painful or distressing feelings and beliefs.

**ALARMER/PANICKER** focuses on possible catastrophes, feels powerless, creates convincing crisis, and rings the alarm of PANIC (panic and shame attacks)

# FLIGHT TYPE

## WAYS TO LEVERAGE STRENGTHS WITH ADAPTIVE FLIGHT RESPONSES

**PLAN FOR WHAT-IF'S** Use your tendency to over-think, over-analyze and compare by sitting with your anxiety and thoughts, write them down, and plan for what-ifs.

**EVACUATE FIGHTS** Instead of arguing and fighting with loved-ones, state "I need 10 minutes to calm down" for self-initiated time-outs. Arguing, defending and explaining gets you nowhere!

**ESCAPE MUNDANE LIFE WITH SPONTANIETY!**

Flee mundane daily life with spontaneous trips and adventures! Plan for big vacations and be inspired to achieve big goals.



**RUN, WALK, BIKE, SWIM, ETC.** Biking, running and other aerobic activities in which you are literally 'fleeing' does wonders for deactivating anxiety and cortisol.

**TAKE ACTION AT** by ensuring you are pursuing your work and interests and getting a Sense of Purpose and Belonging in your friend group, career, community, etc.

**FOCUSED PERFECTIONISM AND WORK ETHIC** Leverage your ability to obsess and perfect (OCD), over-work, over-active and over-do (ADHD) by igniting this part of you to 'get sh\*t' done! BUT, set limits and turn this high-gear off to relax, do nothing and allow for calm.



# FLIGHT TYPE

## WAYS TO IMPROVE DEFICIENCIES WITH ADAPTIVE FLIGHT RESPONSES

**GEAR BOX OF ENERGY MODES** Learn a 'gearbox' of focus and energy modes: high-gear, slow and idle so you can use hyperactivity when you want, and also relax when you want

**MINI MEDITATIONS** It is difficult for flight types to do full meditations. Work with your high energy and incorporate mini-minute meditations and grounding exercises throughout the day, as needed, breath, count to 60.

**TAKE TIME TO DIG DEEP** Take time to 'dig deep,' understand unmet needs, list exactly what you need in life, and clearly, calmly communicate your needs.



**SELF CHECK-IN MOMENTS** Self check-in moments, ask yourself "What is my most important priority right now?" "What hurt am I running from right now?"

**MAKE UNKNOWNNS KNOWN** Anxiety stems from unknowns and fears. Use the energy that comes with anxiety to do 10 to 30-minute 'researching' by analyze, research, asking questions, etc. to figure out unknowns.

**FLEE UNHEALTHY SITUATIONS** Instead of fleeing and distracting yourself, only to come back to toxic jobs, relationships or situations, learn to make a succinct list of your wants, needs and limits, and communicate them as needed, if not met, then plan for healthy choices and leave.



# FLIGHT TYPE

Which of these flight reactions do you tend to default to? How are they effecting your relationships and your life overall?

Are there other types of behaviors you can think of that may fall within flight type maladaptive protective strategies? These may be behaviors you notice in yourself or in others. Describe.

Which flight type adaptive behaviors and healthy responses do you want to start incorporating in your life?



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**Your experience of pain changes relative to how you react to it. When you move toward it in an adaptive way, pain shrinks. When you move away from it, pain grows. If you flee from it, pain pursues you like a monster in a dream.**

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Tony Fahkry

# *Maladaptive Parts* **FREEZE REACTIONS**



- Triggers neurochemicals and hormones to 'depress' you, take you out of awareness, in order to 'hide' from threats and other people, slow metabolism and numb you out.
- FREEZE protectors are terrified of overwhelm and don't trust your ability to process emotions.
- You likely don't trust others' emotions either, as you've witnessed others' immaturity, reactivity, angry outbursts or abuse.
- Similar to 'deer in the headlights,' FREEZE protectors are the most subtle, yet the most disconnecting.

This type can be so frozen in retreat mode that it seems as if their starter button is stuck in the 'off' position.

Pete Walker, MA, MFT



# FREEZE TYPE

The following are common FREEZE reactions, yet possibilities are endless. Every Part has a very important job, although it tends to react in extreme and overly protective ways. **Identify your typical FREEZE reactions.**

## MALADAPTIVE WAYS WE FREEZE TO REACT TO DISTRESS

### **MINIMIZER/DISMISSER**

minimizes your own and others' feelings and experiences ("Oh stop, you're fine.") which is emotional neglecting

**PROCRASTINATOR** rebels against pressure from others or from Inner Critic to complete tasks, feels overwhelmed, self-resentful or resentful towards others

**FOGGER/DISASSOCIATOR** clouds thinking, roadblocks clarity, your inner self feels powerless and/or overwhelmed so it needs ALL your attention and shuts down your attention/focus altogether (ADD)

**SABOTAGER** blocks you from reaching goals, finding love, achieving desires, and feeling good about accomplishments due to fears of outshining others, feeling selfish or like 'not enough.'

**ISOLATER** collapses you in feelings of loneliness, depression, shame or hopelessness, as a way to protect from feeling pressured/enmeshed by forcing separateness by isolating.

**SELF-DEPRICATOR** protects from feeling vulnerable/out-of-control or like a failure, by 'beating others to the punch' and self-berating, may even explode projections at others.

**GHOSTER** feels overwhelmed and flees (also Flight), disappears and fails to contact without clearly communicating need for space or need to end the connection.

**NUMBER** guards against the painful electric shock of a trigger, stressful experience or unresolved past trauma, especially with PTSD flashback.

**SHUT DOWN** tongue-tied, unable to form new thoughts, shocked into physical immobility like a deer in the headlights.

**POKER FACE** to protect against feelings of hurt, caring, vulnerability (neediness) or rejection, by putting up a wall of indifference and denial.

# FREEZE TYPE

## WAYS TO LEVERAGE STRENGTHS WITH ADAPTIVE FREEZE RESPONSES

### **NATURE'S SHOCK ABSORBER**

Leverage your ability to go into denial when something shocking or overwhelming happens, FREEZE is nature's shock absorber.

**DAYDREAM** When appropriate allow yourself to daydream, which can be healthy type of dissociated state. Enjoy the natural escape of fantasizing.

### **TURTLE SHELL MODE**

If a loved-one, boss or coworker is yelling or arguing and you can't leave (although safe) you can use 'turtle-shell' mode as an emotional boundary, and to avoid fighting or saying something you'll regret.



### **EMOTIONAL CAST FOR HEALING**

When sad, heartbroken, depressed, exhausted or had a bad day, employ your ability to go into curl up with blankets and create a safe space to cry (heal).

**TAKE ACTION AT** by ensuring you are pursuing your work and interests and getting a Sense of Purpose and Belonging in your friend group, career, community, etc.

**STOP, ACCEPT, GRIEVE** Leverage ability to slam on the brakes, deny, minimize or depress (depression) huge painful realities and schedule mini healing sessions for 15 mins a day to ACCEPT and GREIVE (healing) then go back to denial as distraction so you can work, etc.



# FREEZE TYPE

## WAYS TO IMPROVE DEFICIENCIES WITH ADAPTIVE FREEZE RESPONSES

**SCHEDULE FREEZE TIME** Schedule time with limits to enjoy refuge in daydreaming, gaming, scrolling, etc. (these behaviors are healthy when balanced with time limits).

**MINI MEDITATIONS** It is difficult for freeze types to do full meditations. Work with your high energy and incorporate mini-minute meditations and grounding exercises throughout the day, as needed, breath, count to 60.

**SELF CHECK-INS** Ask yourself "What am I avoiding right now?" "What is one thing I need to make sure I get done today instead of procrastinate?"



**THERAPY AND/OR SUPPORT PERSON** As a social species we need support to vent our hurts and distress. This is especially true when stuck in Freeze Mode or depression.

**FROM POWERLESS TO EMPOWERED** Journal about what you are feeling powerless or helpless over. This includes loss, real or perceived. Ensure you are taking empowered steps for self-care and support as needed. A hug from a friend or loved-one can make a huge difference. Clearly ask for what you need.

**TALK WITH YOUR DEPRESSION** Sit down with your numbness, exhaustion, depression or foginess and have a conversation with it. Use Conscious Complaining Practice (freewrite about all your stressors and complaints) to validate your pains and stressors instead of minimize, depress or deny them.



# **FREEZE TYPE**

Which of these freeze reactions do you tend to default to? How are they effecting your relationships and your life overall?

Are there other types of behaviors you can think of that may fall within freeze type maladaptive protective strategies? These may be behaviors you notice in yourself or in others. Describe.

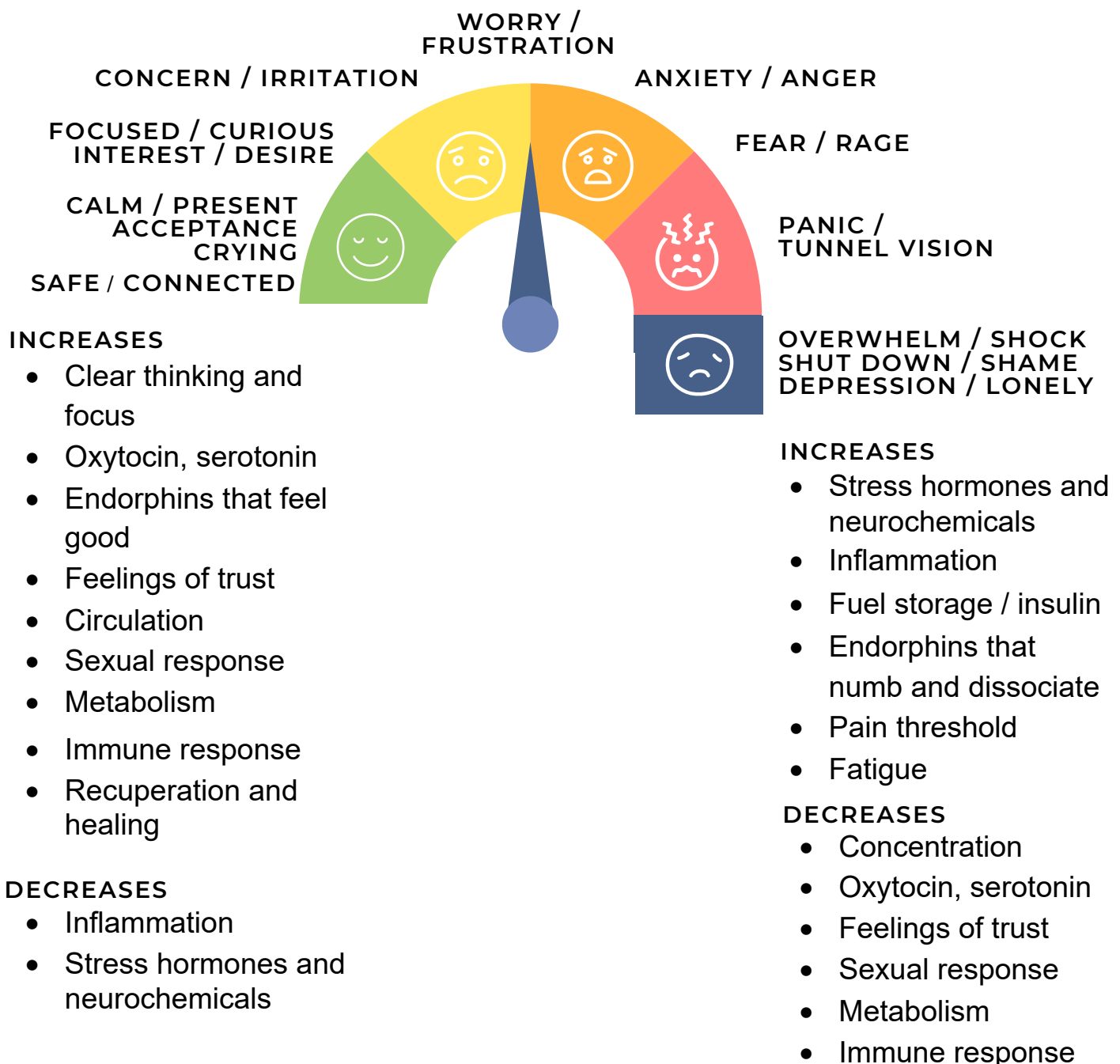
Which freeze type adaptive behaviors and healthy responses do you want to start incorporating in your life?

# NERVOUS SYSTEM REACTION TO INTERNAL AND EXTERNAL TRIGGERS AND DISTRESS

Learn to identify what 'gear' you are in, in any given moment. Then choose an Adaptive Response (from Fight, Flight, Fawn, Freeze) rather than maladaptively reacting to distress, triggers and emotions.

**What gear are you in currently?**

**What gear do you tend to get stuck in?**





#### MEDICAL DISCLAIMER

Content provided and presented in this document or otherwise is not a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Content is intended for educational purposes only. It should not be used as a substitute for medical or psychiatric advice, cannot diagnosis or treat any medical or psychiatric condition and does not replace care from your physician. Always consult a healthcare professional if you suspect you require medical or psychiatric treatment.

If you are experiencing a life-threatening emergency, in danger of hurting yourself or others, feeling suicidal, overwhelmed, or in crisis, you can access the following resources to find help.

If you are experiencing an emergency dial 911

Crisis Text Line [www.crisistextline.org](http://www.crisistextline.org)

Suicide Prevention [988lifeline.org](http://988lifeline.org)

National Domestic Hotline [www.thehotline.org](http://www.thehotline.org)