

Making sense of stress warnings with the help of Neurosciences

For the past 30 years we have focused on trying to explain and justify stress and other emotional symptoms of all kinds – it is a mistake. New insights and knowledge brought by neurosciences and various clinical experiments leveraging this new field of therapy are making this clear every day.

We can now make sense of stress, but looking forward – into the future.

The protocols shaped by the discoveries made by Freud and his successors were based on observations and knowledge in biochemistry and neurology that have since been turned upside down by new discoveries made in the past 15 years. Freud did not have access to an MRI and the practice of genome sequencing is less than 20 year old.

To put it simply: any imbalance, whether physical or emotional (i.e., created by neurotransmitters), is a sign of an individual effort to adapt and find a new state of balance supporting the evolution process (in the Darwinian sense). It is therefore a ‘warning’, for one’s self and one’s future, which cannot be linked to anyone else (nor the past) since nobody else than oneself has access over one’s neurotransmitters.

In the history of evolution, each individual contains observable adaptations and inadaptations transmitted and learned, from the origins of Time, contributing to the spread of the species from one generation to the next. Those individual strategies are either transmitted or discontinued from time to time as the best fit survives. As exemplified by the extinction of the Dinosaurs, it is not strength but fit to a given environment that guarantees the survival of the species.

The field of epigenetic (i.e., deciphering the expression of our 30,000+ genes that provide 98% of each of our individual ‘code’ - more than our DNA - and how they influence the bridge between innate and learned), helps us understand how, what we have implicitly acquired through the evolution and transmission process, shape our individual behaviors.

The expression of those genes results from our accumulated experiences, encounters, and environment throughout our life and has two characteristics: it is, of course, transmissible but more importantly, it is reversible.

What we implicitly acquire is written and read in a part of our Brain to which we do not have conscious access using our reasoning power. It is the realm of the Limbic Brain where our feelings, perceptions, senses, moods, anxiety, stress, emotions, and reflexes reside. The Limbic Brain is highly performing and manages our survival 24/24. We do not have conscious access to it using our reasoning power as reasoning is the realm of our Neocortex Brain. The Neocortex appeared much later in the evolution process and has therefore no direct access to what has made us who we are now as an individual.

The Neocortex Brain can observe, analyze, and justify what our Limbic Brain does, which might give us some form of reinsurance, but it does not really make sense of it.

We have a much deeper understanding of the innerworkings of the Limbic Brain since the beginning of the XXI century. Each of its constituents – amygdalae, hippocamp, thalamus, hypothalamus, insula, dark matter - its role in the dopamine reward circuit and the production of hormones and neurotransmitters, as well as its interactions with the microbiota (200 millions of bacteria in our guts), all contribute to shaping our being.

The discovery of the plasticity of the Limbic Brain (i.e., the ability to re-configure existing neural networks) and of its ability to create new neural networks as a result of our life adaptation and the conditions of its activation (Neurogenesis), and the linkage between those elements and clinical observations, give us the ability to predict with extreme accuracy the drivers of individual and collective adaptation within a group. Anybody can now access his or her unique and personal adaptation strategy, transmitted or acquired.

Armed with this understanding, ‘stresses’ become ‘warning signals’ and a mean to predict what is happening beyond the daily contingencies, identify what is not adapted, and enable the learning process so as to remain fit for one’s life.

The practitioner in Epigenetic combines this logic with an extensive knowledge base of clinical observations and a strict protocol to create a secure learning process and accelerate the (implicitly) required adaptation process and Neurogenesis. One becomes a conscient and determined participant of one’s life, breaking free of previously transmitted patterns which are no longer adapted.

This practice is also relevant and available to organizations looking to accelerate the adaptation of the human capital to the rapidly evolving demand of their environments in order to remain performant.

Participants will learn about inadaptations, their transmission through the expression of our genes, and how to become an active participant who makes sense of stresses (personal and professional) to break free from them – leading to better, faster, and more fluid adaptation.