



WHAT YOUR BODY IS TRYING TO TELL YOU, AND HOW TO LISTEN

Learning to identify signs of distress by paying attention to our bodies helps mitigate trauma and stress injuries (and also helps us be a healthier human all around). This is information intended to get you started on the journey of hearing/healing your body. Please reach out for specific assistance via a medical/mental health professional to address long term injuries and healing.

SIGNS OF DISTRESS IN YOUR BODY

MUSCLE TIGHTNESS

Muscles tightening is often a sign that the body is in a fight or flight stress cycle. The tension and tightness is your body collecting energy in your muscles to fight or flight.

HOW YOU CAN ADDRESS IT

By forcing yourself to sit in your chair and not move, you are holding your body in that state of acute stress, and causing it further injury. Get up and move your body any way you can based on the situation. This will release the energy stored up and your body can start to regulate again.

SIGNS OF DISTRESS IN YOUR BODY

CHEST TIGHTNESS

This is often a sign your body is trying to tell you it is experiencing anxiety, sadness, anger, fear and it's holding it all in.

HOW YOU CAN ADDRESS IT

By continuing to hold it in, your body cycles the suppression and heightens the feelings. This is when figuring out which emotion is causing the tightness is key to figure out what is needed to relieve it. Naming the emotion often takes a lot of power out of it. Once named, it can be addressed.

SIGNS OF DISTRESS IN YOUR BODY

THE FEELING OF BEING ON THE VERGE OF CRYING

That sense of that at any moment you will break down and cry is your body telling you that it needs to release what it's holding in.

It can be a sense of stress, overwhelm, sadness, helplessness, panic. Sometimes it is a physical overwhelm such as fatigue that pushes us here.

HOW YOU CAN ADDRESS IT

Take the time to figure out what it is that is pushing you to the edge. Once again, naming the emotion will help diffuse it for the moment until it can be further addressed.

Use breathing exercises to calm down your nervous system.

Self-soothing exercises are extremely helpful. Place your hand over your heart and take a few deep breaths. Touch and weight lowers cortisol and increases oxytocin.

SIGNS OF DISTRESS IN YOUR BODY

INSOMNIA/CONSTANT NEED TO SLEEP

Your body may be having an anxious and/or depression reaction to stress and/or trauma injuries. Both not sleeping and oversleeping is your body alerting you to something going on beyond your busy schedule.

HOW YOU CAN ADDRESS IT

Recognize the fact that your body is telling you it needs help.

These are situations in which medicating (especially overmedicating with alcohol/pills) can cause further harm rather than a benefit.

Reach out to professionals that can help assess both your medical and mental/emotional needs in a healthy way.

SIGNS OF DISTRESS IN YOUR BODY

PIT IN YOUR STOMACH

That feeling that you have a rock in your stomach, an ache that won't go away that isn't from hunger. It typically comes with a sense of dread.

HOW YOU CAN ADDRESS IT

Notice when you have this pit in your stomach. Is it: when you are going to work? sitting in the parking lot? when you are assigned to a specific position? will have to see "that" person? before having to do a task you feel judged on? having an important conversation? When you realize when it happens, that's when further curiosity as to why it is happening comes into play. Once you are able to determine that, determine if you are able to make appropriate changes, and if not, seek help to take the necessary action.

SIGNS OF DISTRESS IN YOUR BODY

ABDOMINAL PAIN

This can often be a burning pain that may or may not be exacerbated based on food choices. Most often seen in the form of ulcers due to stress.

HOW YOU CAN ADDRESS IT

After identifying the issue, which requires medical assessment, it is all about life and choice changes. Ulcers can heal themselves, but it takes a deliberate effort to eat/drink differently in order to not make it worse. It also requires lifestyle changes that embrace more self care and less stress.

THINGS TO KNOW/RESOURCES

We are humans, therefore because of that fact, we need help! Sometimes it is medical help, sometimes mental/emotional help, sometimes a mix of everything kind of help. That is okay!

YOU ARE NOT BROKEN

Sometimes we just need to realize that our bodies, hearts, minds, and spirits are trying to tell us we need more than what we have. Use the QR code to go to the Help for the Headset drive, and click on the "When the Helpers Need Help" folder. There is a resource page made just for you.

