

Shock: Sympathetic and Parasympathetic Expression

Hyperarousal (fight or flight)

1. Rapid breathing and heart rate, heart palpitations
2. Cold and pale skin, pallor
3. Dilated pupils
4. Raised blood pressure
5. Endorphins are released to reduce pain
6. Hypervigilance, panic, rage, constipation, tremor, muscle spasms, hyperventilation, cold sweats, profound sleep disturbances, loss of appetite, sexual dysfunction
7. Accelerated pace and amplitude of thoughts and emotions, intrusive memories, difficulties in concentrating
8. Active dissociation: persisting physiological hyperarousal and hyperactivity, busyness, increased muscle tone, increased body temperature, hyper startle response (jumpiness), affect regulation problems and generalized (or specific) anxiety

Hypoarousal (freeze)

1. Decreased heart rate and respiration
2. Warm and flushed skin
3. Lowered blood pressure
4. Endorphins are released in the brain to create stress-induced analgesia
5. Helplessness and hopelessness
6. Sudden and extreme immobility (appears as “feigning death” or “suspended animation”)
7. Palpitations, nausea, dizziness, bowel cramps, indigestion, diarrhea, incontinence, generalized weakness
8. Numbness, ‘shutting down’ within the mind, dulling of inner body sensation, slowing of muscular/skeletal response, especially in the face
9. Social isolation and withdrawal, substance abuse, constricted affect, denial
10. Passive dissociation: drifting consciousness, emotional constriction, social isolation, loss of contact with reality, lack of motivation, body numbness, a sense of “leaving” the body, withdrawal, somatic complaints, anxiety, dependence



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