

Depression and Anxiety

Jeannette Guerrasio, MD

From the Practice of
David L Mellman, MD, PLLC

720 320 2061 ext. #2

Outline

- The implications of mental health on our wellbeing
- What depression looks like in men and women
- What anxiety looks like in men and women
- How does loneliness fit in?
- How do we address mental health?
- Feel free to share or just listen.

How are mental health issues different from physical health issues?

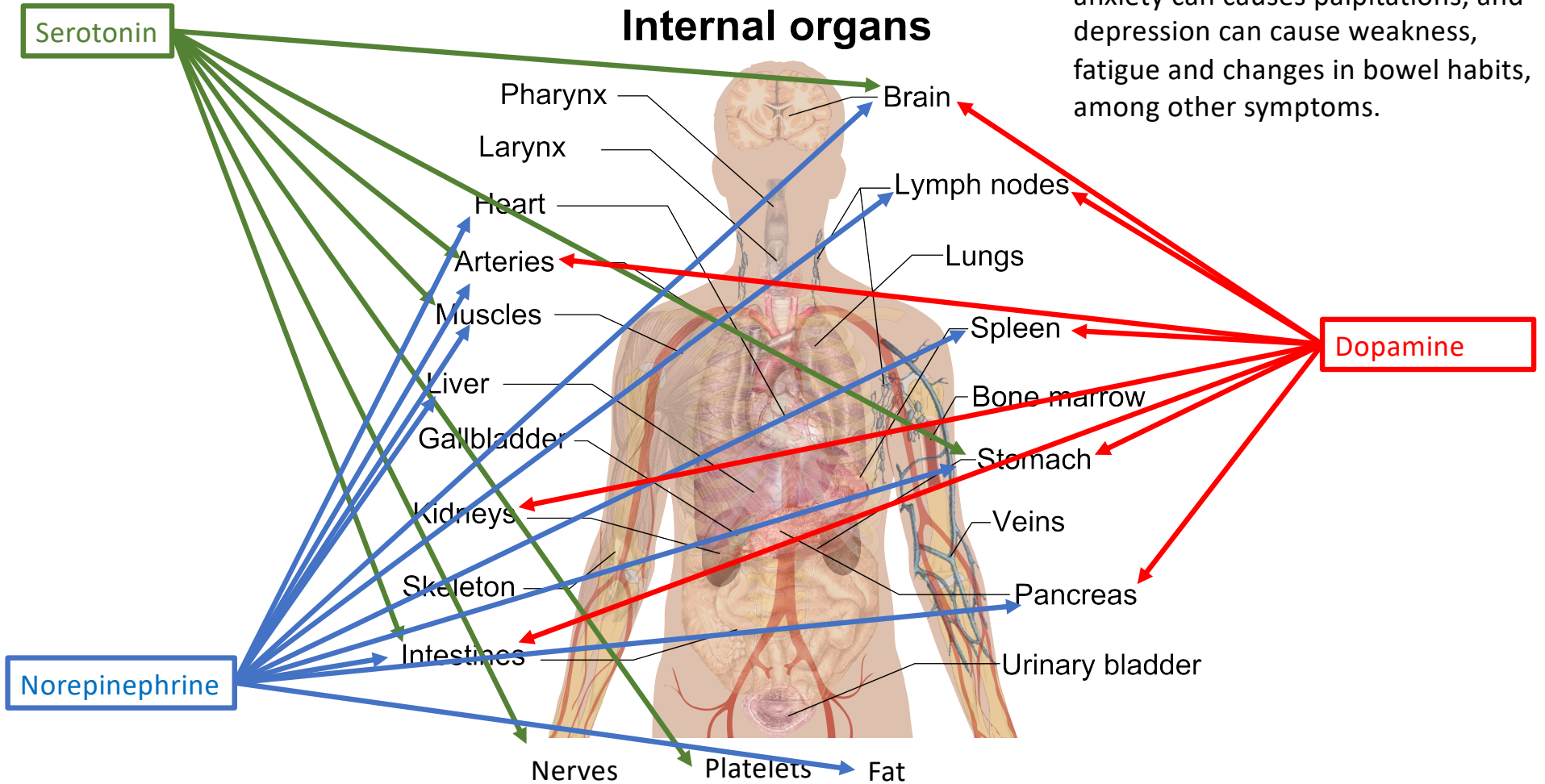
Last time I checked, our minds were connected to our bodies.

In fact, all of the common brain chemicals that we talk about – serotonin, dopamine, norepinephrine – have receptors, not just in the brain, but throughout our bodies.

The only difference between mental health issues and physical health issues is how they have been unfortunately divided in our culture.



Internal organs



This helps explain for example, why anxiety can cause palpitations, and depression can cause weakness, fatigue and changes in bowel habits, among other symptoms.

My Fear is..

... That if I say, I think your chest discomfort is from your anxiety. You will hear, “ My doctor thinks that it is all in my head.”

Depression — there are many types: Major depressive disorder; Seasonal Affective Disorder; Adjustment disorder; Dysthymia; Premenstrual dysphoric disorder; Grief

1. Little interest or pleasure in doing things
2. Feeling down depressed or hopeless
3. Trouble falling or staying asleep or sleeping too much
4. Feeling tired or having little energy
5. Poor appetite or over eating
6. Feeling bad about yourself... or that you are a failure or have let yourself or your family down
7. Trouble concentrating on things
8. Moving or speaking so slowly that others would notice or being so fidgety or restless that you have been moving around more than usual
9. Thoughts that you would be better off dead or of hurting yourself

... And it interferes with your life.

Depression

MEN

- More likely to abuse substances including alcohol
- Symptoms are harder for others to recognize
- May be more irritable and angry or tired
- More likely to commit suicide

WOMEN

- More likely to ruminate, feel sad, worthless or guilty
- More likely to become depressed from stress
- More likely to occur with anxiety or eating d/o

Anxiety

1. Feeling nervous, anxious or on the edge
2. Not being able to stop or control worrying
3. Worrying too much about different things
4. Trouble relaxing
5. Being so restless that it's hard to sit still
6. Becoming easily annoyed or irritable
7. Feeling afraid as if something awful might happen

... And it interferes with your life.

Anxiety

MEN

- As much social anxiety as women
- More likely to have a co diagnosis of substance abuse disorder
- Symptoms are harder for others to recognize
- More likely to report strained relationships with friends and family
- With panic, more likely to fear social consequences of anxiety

WOMEN

- More likely to have a co diagnosis such as depression, PTSD
- Greater illness burden
- More likely to c/o fatigue, muscle tension, cardio-pulm, GI symptoms
- With panic, more likely to feel short of breath, faint, feeling smothered

Loneliness

Surrounded by people

Surrounded by no one

11% of all people

43% of people over 60

↑ Fight or Flight

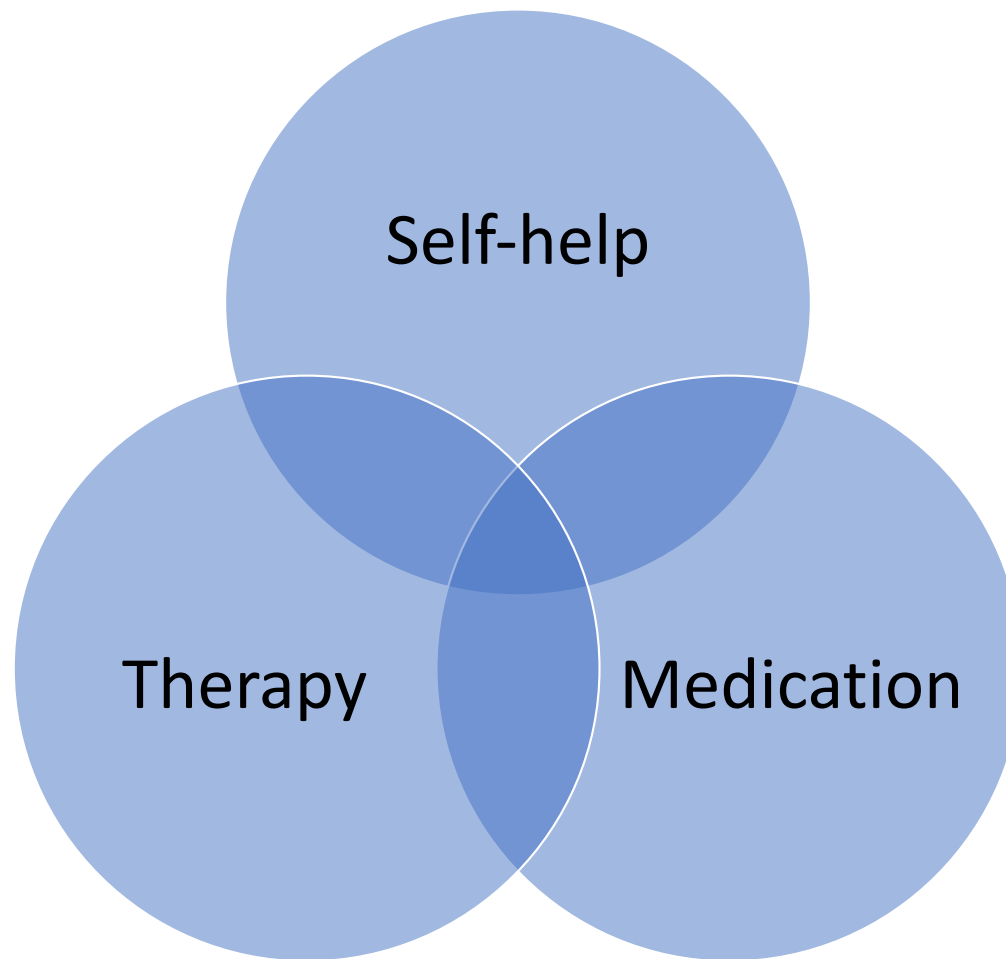
↑ Pain-processing area of the brain

↓ Immunity

↓ Sleep

Risk factor for many diseases

Similar to depression and anxiety



Self-help

Therapy

Medication

Tips

- Always be kind to yourself
- When you feel good about something share it
 - Create small moments of connection
- Reach out to people in close proximity or strengthen weak ties to others
 - If you haven't been talking, it takes time to find your words
- Do more things with people, as is most comfortable for you
 - Lunch, movies, Skype
- Focus on others and tend to your network
- Do the things that make you feel connected
- Take the actions you need to feel better

Tips

- Always be kind to yourself
- Underactivity leads to internal chatter that is often self destructive while overactivity is often a sign of avoidance of internal emotions
- Find a passion
 - What do you value?
 - What are your hopes and dreams for the future?
 - What have you always wanted to do?
 - How do you get there?
- Take the actions you need to feel better and to move forward

Internal Factors

- Socio-economic characteristics
- Beliefs & values
- Resilience
- The way you understand and relate to yourself and others
 - Values
 - Personality
 - Self-esteem and confidence (or lack thereof)

External Factors

- What does your social world look like to you, and how do you experience it?
- Do you have supportive relationships with family and friends?
- Are there local formal or informal social groups to which you belong or could belong?
- Are there factors that prevent social connection, such as a lack of transport?
- Have you experienced a recent significant change in your life (e.g. bereavement, a move, retiring, ill health)?

Guess what?

- Limit alcohol and caffeine
- Eat well-balanced meals
- Get enough sleep
- Exercise daily and de-stressing practice – yoga, deep breathing, meditation, etc
 - NPR article: exercise generates hope, happiness, a sense of purpose, greater life satisfaction and connection with others
- Try to stick to a routine/structure
- Do your best and be kind to yourself

My thoughts

- Therapy
 - Essential for most with depression, always for anxiety
 - Many different types
 - Help you feel your feelings so you can manage them
 - It is a slow process (months to years) and its expensive, but will likely be the best money you ever spent
 - Life coach

My thoughts

- Medications
 - Work fairly well
 - Not always clear which type will work best for whom, so might have to try more than one
 - Medications that have helped family members may help you too... genetics!
 - Yes, they have side effects... but they get better with time
 - Don't stop when you are feeling better, unless instructed to do so!
 - Much, much, much better with therapy, for most people



