
Student Success \ Brain, Emotion, and Health

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Vagal Tone & ANTs

VAGAL TONE

(Adapted from Wilson & Gottman, Skodol, Gibbon & Williams)

- Like car brakes for the heart.
- Calm heart in response to stressful events.
- Prolonged stress: decreases resiliency of human body.
- Prolonged stress: decreases vagal tone.
- Prolonged stress: negative impact on mental and physical health.

LOW VAGAL TONE: PSYCHOLOGY

(Adapted from Wilson & Gottman, Skodol, Gibbon & Williams)

- Poor control of impulses.
- Hostile and aggressive in face of frustration.
- Constant loop of stress, worry, and rumination (e.g. why did this happen?)
- Low social skills
- Constant hypervigilant state.
- Constant scanning of environment for perceived “threats”.

AWARENESS OF YOUR A.N.T.S (Automatic Negative Thoughts)

(Adapted from Amen; Carson)

- Thoughts are REAL: bio-chemical and electrical transmissions in brain.
- Notice how your body is affected by A.N.T.S.
- Notice how your body is affected by positive thoughts.
- A.N.T.S. = POLLUTION
- Are A.N.T.S. telling you the truth?
- First Step is AWARENESS – notice them – do not fight them at this stage.

SOME OF YOUR A.N.T.S

(Adapted from Amen; Carson)

- Always and never thinking.
- Focusing on the negative.
- Fortune-telling.
- Mind reading.
- Thinking with your feelings.
- Labelling.
- Personalizing.
- Blaming (one of the most poisonous A.N.T.S.).