Emotional Regulation Systems Info Sheet

Drive System

Purpose: To motivate us towards resources

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Feelings:

Wanting, pursuing, achieving progressing, focused

Soothing System

Purpose: To manage distress & promote bonding





Feelings: Contented, safe, protected, cared-for, trust

Threat System

Purpose: Threat detection & protection "Better safe than sorry"



Adrenaline, cortisol

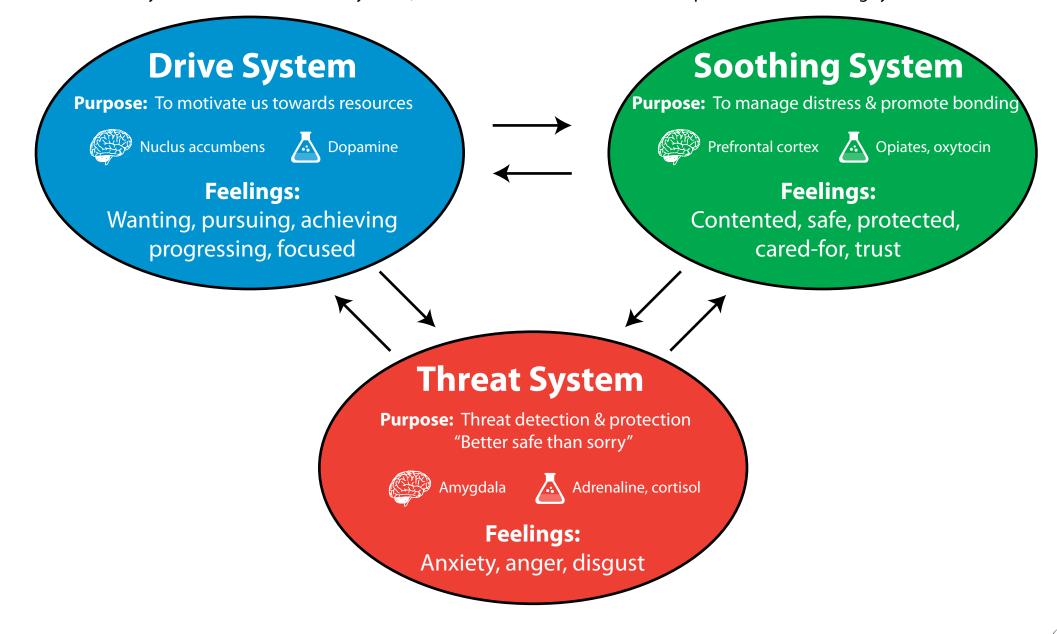
Feelings:

Anxiety, anger, disgust



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Paul Gilbert's evolutionary model proposes that human beings switch between three systems to manage their emotions. Each system is associated with different brain regions and different brain chemistry. Distress is caused by imbalance between the systems, often associated with under-development of the soothing system.



Adapted from: Gilbert, P. (ed) (2005). Compassion: Conceptualisations, Research and Use in Psychotherapy. Routledge.

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