

The Effects of Norepinephrine, Dopamine, and Adrenaline in Our Lives

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Simple knowledge is that when they are raised we are happy; albeit a little stupid and naive. Yet, when they crash, we experience increased depression and anxiety. My personal understanding of this has been: Once upon a time, Addiction was just a word. Yes, there was a family history. But, it increased its realness through different experiences. In innocence and arrogance, Ava wanted to chase tornadoes and moved to the Midwest to pursue this. Unbeknownst at the time, her sister began experimenting with different substances at work. Ava was not a hundred percent what these substances were; yet, Ava knew that her sister was different and to a degree that they were hurting her. Ava pursued her best efforts to help her sister stop. With the assistance of family and time did occur.

Once her sister was safe, different factors compiled in Ava's life to spiral her life out of control; perhaps it was the sustained stress, perhaps it was my best friend leaving to go back home, perhaps is the way the strictness of the values she felt compelled to conform to. Over an extended time, Ava felt lost with all of the council she was receiving not understanding. Slipping further and further into self-destruction yet, it all ended within a few days of her roommate kicking her out and losing her job.

Ava has always felt out of her element in Florida. Yet, it served a purpose to focus her. The deep desire to escape pushed Ava into her education began pursuing psychology due to a deep desire to help others without controlling them or making them to be a certain way. However, between Junior and senior year, Ava was hit by an intoxicated driver at 8 AM. Instinctively putting her arm up to protect her head, it smashed into the window, along with her hip into the door, and her shoulder blades connected. Yet, Ava still managed to pick her phone up off the floor and dial 911.

In a state of shock; yet, walking around, Ava did not realize the extent of her injuries. Ava refused to go on the ambulance. A few hours later, she did experience some pain and went to the ER. Ava was prescribed an opiate; but it just made her sick and did not manage her pain. Thus, Ava did not take it.

Ava could not accept this failure and weakness in her physical body. Thus, Ava latched onto and hyper focused onto the one thing she could control which was her education. Physically, Ava felt fluid running down her spine, her muscles felt like pins, her

mind was fuzzy, and had inconsistent energy levels. Yet, mentally, Ava was adapting to work with these inadequacies and pushed herself to excel as evidenced by as in the majority of the classes.

Ava discovered quickly that she was living in more pain that she once thought possible. Understood it as if this is possible on earth, hell must be worse. Nevertheless, it felt like hell on earth. Ava would never wish it on her worst enemy. Yet, Ava did not wish to return it. It both scarred and saved her.

There have been days that Ava felt intelligent which has been evidenced by accomplishment and there have been days that Ava's mind was fuzzy and Ava struggled to function which became increasingly evident during the double Masters. For which mental health was no longer enough. Ava desired to study recovery, to study addiction. Or at least Ava thought she understood it and wanted the credentials.

Looking back, Ava can see the effect of norepinephrine, dopamine, and adrenaline (brain chemicals) on her thinking, on her functioning. Although, Ava likes to think that she made the best of them or at least accommodated them when necessary.

Registered Internship was a different experience. Her mind-set continued to be one of accomplishment and pushing through. However, due the current norepinephrine, dopamine, and adrenaline, Ava did not realize the lack of boundaries and incompetence of her first supervisor at the time. Yet, eventually Ava realized how tired and depressed she was; learned that something had to give which transpired into changing supervisors and changing jobs.

One of last vocational opportunities as a registered intern involved working in a psychiatric hospital. Ava made the mistake of thinking that the medical director was intelligent and wanted to learn from him. Falling into fuzzy boundaries once more somewhere knowing she could but did not want to. Somewhere along the line becoming sick and experiencing difficulty functioning. Yet, the straw that broke the camel's back was when he became jealous of a patient.

Looking back, Ava can see that she had been under the influence of norepinephrine, dopamine and adrenaline. Ava had split physically and mentally as a means to cope. In a sense becoming an object. In a sense not objecting to another telling me to not

feel, not think, not be a person, just be pretty due to not knowing who she was. Yet, deeply understanding that once learning this that she worked hard to feel like a person to stop being an object her path to balancing her norepinephrine, dopamine, and adrenaline including healing. Enforcing to her that she was a person through intellectual accomplishment and pursuing work with people whom had experienced being an object due to past traumas and addiction. Clinically, Ava works very hard to objectively know where she is. Yet, Ava has found great value in the depthless of empathy developed through pain to help others. Ava currently has 5 tattoos on her scars, to ground her, and to inspire her.