

Craving Management

By
Jeffrey M. Georgi, M.Div., CCAS, LPC, CGP
Clinical Associate Dept. Psychiatry, Surgery and Nursing
Duke University Medical Center
And
Georgi Educational and Counseling Services
Bluefield: A University Recovery Community
Durham, NC

©GEC

Biological
Vulnerability

Psychological
Liability

Social
Context

Spirituality
Bankruptcy

Plus
Trauma
experience

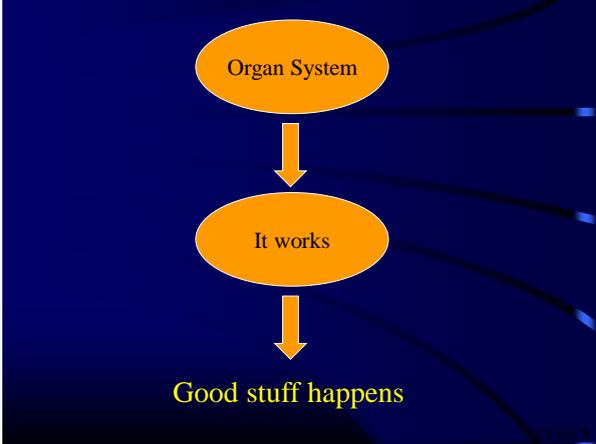
Addiction

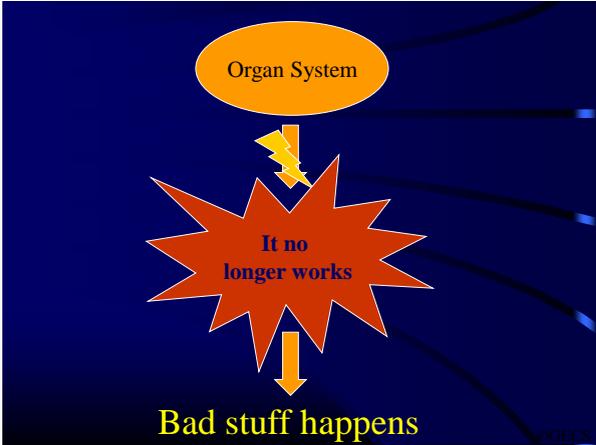
Drug of Choice

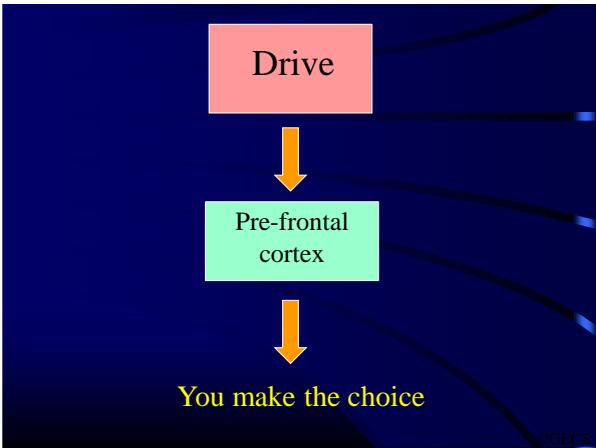
Wrong

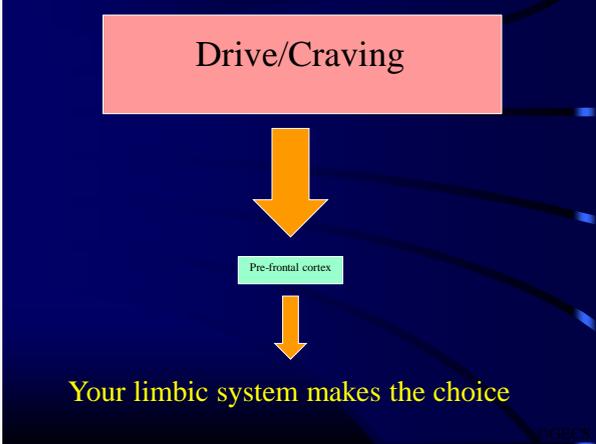
Drug of addiction

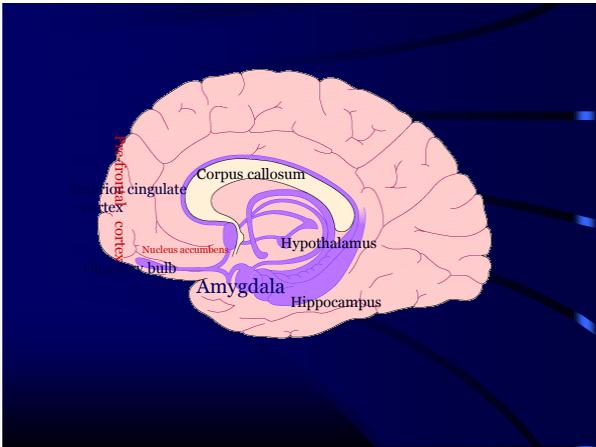
©GEC

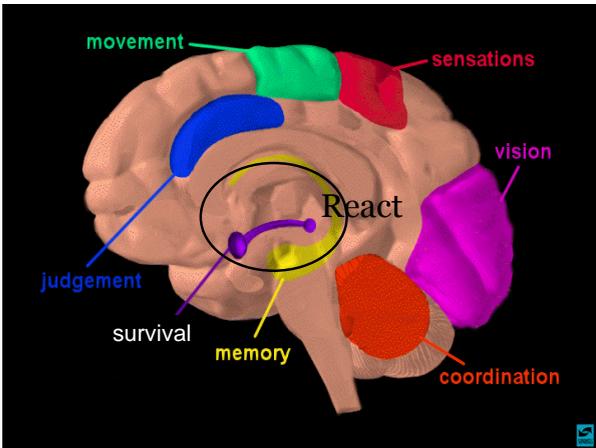


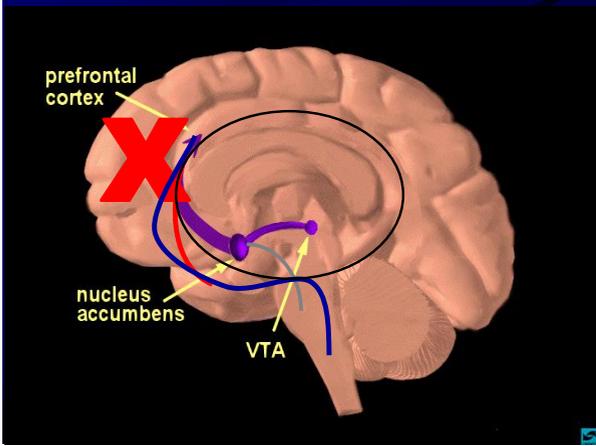












Craving Management

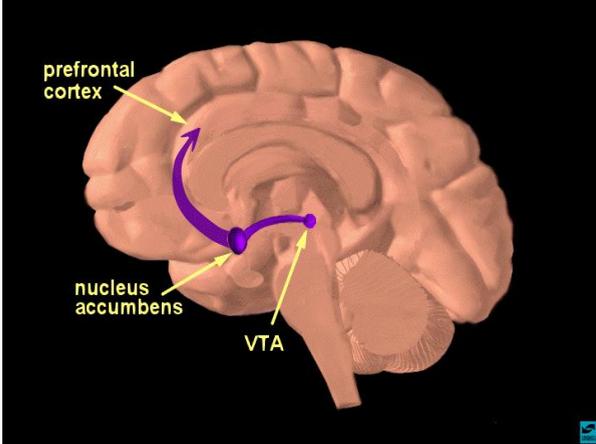
- Craving: an intense and distracting desire.
- Often associated with addiction and/or PTSD symptoms.
- Not associated with a problem in thinking.
- From the brain's perspective, tied to survival.
- Beyond reason.

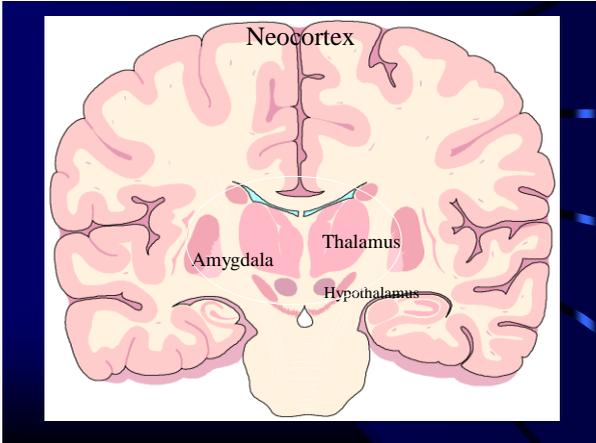
Craving Management

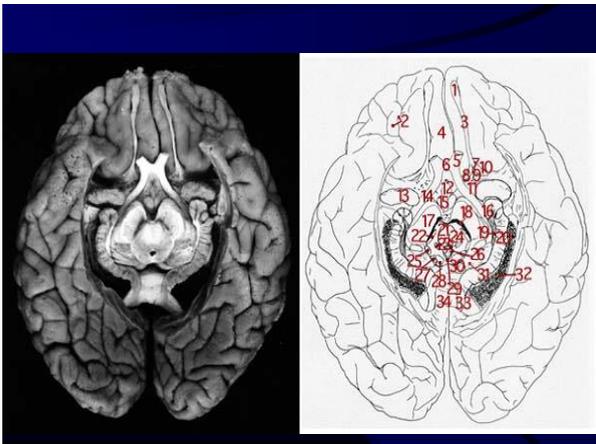
- While the intensity of a craving may vary its duration rarely lasts beyond 15 minutes

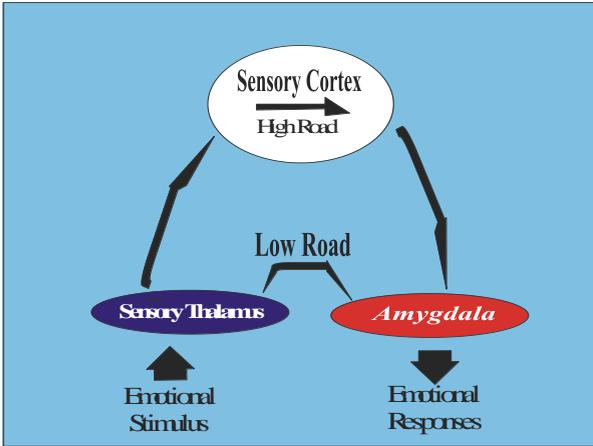
IF you act.

- Willpower will not usually work over time.
- You cannot out talk a craving.
- At its most fundamental level craving is a brain thing.



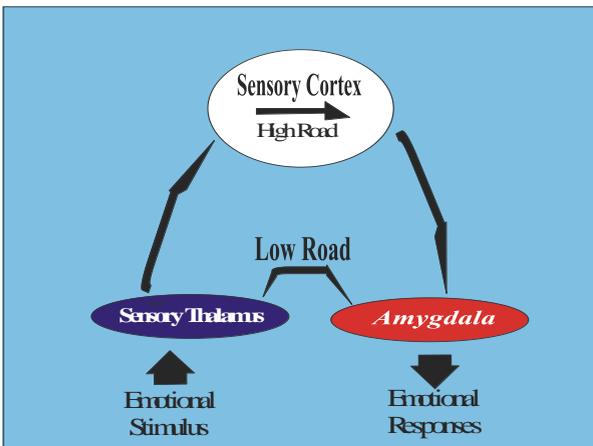


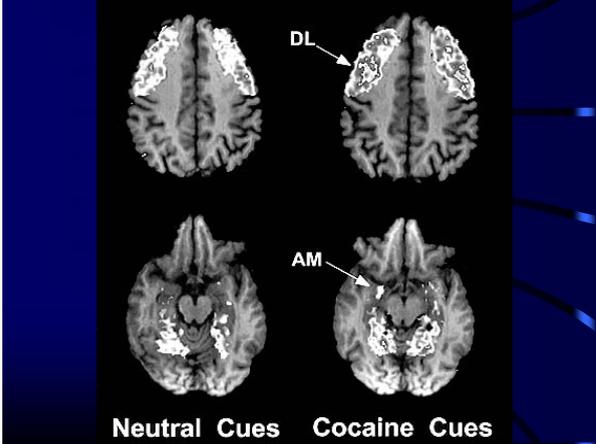




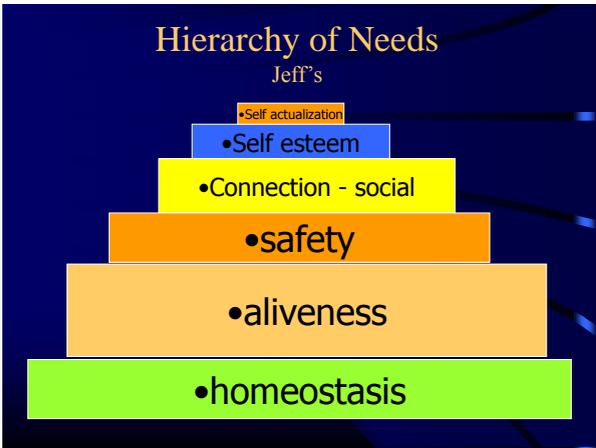
High Road

- Will respond to RBT intervention.
- Connected to thoughts.
- Not necessarily craving related.
- Has specific content.
- Has physical behavior/emotional behavior/cognitive behavior aspects.
- Find the self talk.











- **The Amygdala** - once you are consciously aware it, it's already too late.
- **And: The Amygdala** never forgets!

Low Road

- The “feeling” comes before the thought.
- Your body is ahead of your thoughts.
- Pay attention to your body and learn from it.
- Learn your physical cues for a craving, panic attack, rage attack or PTSD response.
- Be clear that your “self talk” is not critical, cravings etc.. are normal.

Low Road Escape Plan

- Move, do something that will change the environment even slightly.
- Change the channel - think of something different.
- Specifically get in touch with your healthy wanting/desire.
- Have a clear picture of the future you want for yourself and go there. Be specific.

Low Road Escape Plan

- Remember: a plan is not helpful if you do not use it so “practice.”
- Be safe and be prepared.
- DO NOT practice alone or in an unsafe environment.

Low Road Escape Plan

- Step one.
 - Imagine a craving.
 - Rate the craving (aim for a five or six on a scale of ten).
 - Describe what it feels like.
 - Where did it start in your body.
 - What is your body doing.
 - What is your self talk.

Low Road Escape Plan

- Step two:
 - BREATH!
 - What is your dream.
 - Go to your safe place (the image of safety and value you have created).
 - Ask yourself what can I DO to change how I am feeling.
 - Challenge irrational self talk.

Low Road Escape Plan

- Step three:
 - Evaluate the level of the craving.
 - Honor the work you have done.
 - If the craving has not reduced don't panic.
 - Repeat step two and invoke your high power.
 - If necessary practice a medial cross exercise.
 - If needed ask for help (practice this step).

Craving/Symptom Management measured breathing

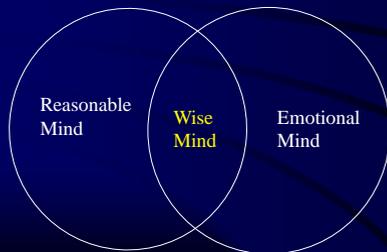
- Select a number based on your lung capacity (usually between six and 10)
- Inhale slowly to that number
- Hold your breath to the same number
- Exhale slowly to your number through the coffee straw or against another form of resistance
- With the last number exhale all your remaining air – the emphasis is on the exhale

Other Breathing Exercises

- Blow up a balloon until it bursts.
- Blow bubbles and try and catch one bubble with another, now try three
- Breathe in normally and then breathe out to the count of one, then two, then three, etc.
- Breathe in to the words “slow down” and breathe out to the words “let it go” and if you can’t let it go “let it be.”

Craving Management: Treatment basics provide coping skills

- Wise mind - Mindfulness



(Linehan, 1993)

Craving Management :Treatment basics provide coping skills

- Mindfulness Skills – **WHAT**
- **Observe**
- **Describe**
- **Participate**

Linehan, 1993

Craving Management: Treatment basics provide coping skills

- Mindfulness Skills – **How**
- **Non-judgmentally**
- **One-mindfully**
- **Effectively**

Linehan, 1993

The Safe Place Exercise

- Create a real or imaginary safe place.
- In your safe place create an experience that specifically involves all five senses.
- Visit your safe place.
- Intentionally focus on each sense individually until you are fully absorbed in your safe place.
- Anchor your safe place with the **smell**.
- Use the Q-tip kept in a small baggie.

Taste and Smell Distractions

- Hot peppers
- Candied ginger
- Coffee straws dipped in cinnamon extract and dried
- Cinnamon or peppermint Altoids
- Wasabi Peas

Craving Management :

Treatment basics provide coping skills

- Wise mind ACCEPTS
- **A**ctivities
- **C**omparison
- **C**ontributing
- **E**motions
- **P**ushing Away
- **T**houghts
- **S**ensations

(Linehan, 1993)

Craving Management :

Treatment basics provide coping skills

- Wise mind self soothes (senses)
- **V**ision
- **H**earing
- **S**mell
- **T**aste
- **T**ouch

(Linehan, 1993)

Craving Management :

Treatment basics provide coping skills

- Wise mind improve the moment
- **I**magery
- **M**eaning
- **P**rayer
- **R**elaxation
- **O**ne thing at a time
- **V**acation
- **E**ncouragement

(Linehan, 1993)

Recommended reading and partial bibliography

Amen, Daniel G., Sex on the Brain, Three Rivers Press, NY, NY 2007.

Andreasen, Nancy C., Brave New Brain : Conquering Mental Illness in the Era of the Genome, Oxford Press, New York, 2003

Brizendine, Louann, The Female Brain, Random House, Inc., New York, New York, 2006.

Goleman, Daniel, Emotional Intelligence, why it can matter more than IQ, Bantam Books, New York, NY, 1998.

Hallowell, Edward M., and Ratey, John J., Driven to Distraction:

Hallowell, Edward M., and Ratey, John J., Delivered from Distraction: Getting the most out of your life with Attention Deficit Disorder, Ballantine Books, New York, New York, 2006

Howard, Pierce J., The Owner's Manual for the Brain, Bard Press, Austin, TX, 2006.

LeDoux, Joseph, The Synaptic Self: How Our Brains Become Who We Are, Viking Penguin, New York, NY, 2002.

Linehan, Marsha, Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) for Borderline Personality Disorder,

LeDoux, Joseph, The Emotional Brain: the Mysterious Underpinnings of Emotional Life, Viking Penguin, New York, NY, 1999.

Lewis, Thomas, A General Theory of Love, Vintage Press, New York, NY 2001

Pert, Candace B., Molecules of Emotions: the Science Behind Mind-Body Medicine, Scribner NY, NY, 1997.

Pert, Candice B., Molecules of Emotions: the Science behind Mind-Body Medicine, Scribner, New York, NY, 1997.

Pinker, Steven, How the Mind Works, WW Norton, New York, NY, 1999.

Sells, Scott, Treating the Tough Adolescent: A Family-Based, Step-by-Step Guide, Guilford Press, New York, NY, 2004.

Wandzilak, Kristina, Curry, Constance, The Lost Years, surviving a mother and daughter's worst nightmare, Jeffers Press, 2006.

White, Aaron, Keeping Adolescence Healthy, BookSurge Publishing, Charleston, SC, 2008.
