

Natural Balance – Homeostasis

Functioning Without Stress and Tension

Remember how you feel after a good night's sleep? Research has proven that when the body is in natural balance, health is stronger, emotions are calm and the brain can think clearly. When we're not under stress (when everything is functioning like it should), it's called natural balance.

Homeostasis

The scientific name for natural balance is *Homeostasis*, a medical term meaning all functions of the human body are operating at their ideal, relaxed rates. The dictionary defines homeostasis as a relatively stable state of equilibrium between the many different and interdependent elements of an organism. Walter Cannon coined this term in 1932 by from the Greek *homoios* (same, like, resembling) and *stasis* (to stand, posture). The term is most often used in the sense of biological homeostasis and should be thought of as a general characterization of many normal processes in concert.

Natural Balance and the Sympathetic and Parasympathetic Nervous System

The sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems (collectively called the involuntary nervous system, because they are not control by our conscious will), send signals from the brain, throughout the body to the heart, resulting in beat-to-beat changes in our heart rhythms. When the sympathetic and parasympathetic nervous systems function in natural balance, they synchronize together and work at optimal efficiency, leading to periods of mental clarity and positive emotions. In addition, when heart rhythms operate in natural balance, they strengthen the cardiovascular, immune and hormonal systems.

Stress Destroys Natural Balance

When stress pushes your panic button, it causes a harmful imbalance between these two nervous systems, where the sympathetic nervous system is speeding up the heart, while the parasympathetic nervous system is trying to slow it down. The time interval between heartbeats is always changing. These changes are influenced by many different types of stimulus to the brain such as emotions, thoughts, sound, light, etc. When the mind/body process is out of balance, these changing heart rhythms result in extra wear and tear on the body, require up more energy, and generate incoherent heart rhythms -- which interfere with our brain's ability to process information. During intense mental and emotional stress, the brain is flooded with electrical signals, interfering with clear thinking, decision-making, problem solving, creativity, while also wreaking havoc on the body by putting dangerous extra strain on the heart, weakening immune system response and triggering excess cortisol release and ugly belly fat.

Feeling Grounded / Being Centered

We use the expressions "feeling grounded," and "being centered" to mean we're functioning in that natural, good place -- where everything within us is operating in harmony. One common misperception nowadays is to overdo our efforts -- trying to function at "110 percent." If you stop and think it over for a minute, you realize that this trend is an example of today's media "over-hype." Operating at "110 percent" is not only impossible, it's counter-productive. The ideal state for optimal productivity is to be focused and attentive without straining, to be alert without the nervous energy -- experiencing concentration and relaxation at the same time.

Measuring Natural Balance

We can scientifically measure natural balance. During homeostasis (natural balance), the brain produces low beta-wave activity (13-17 cps), indicating that the body is relaxed and the mind can focus and concentrate easily. The next section on brain waves will explain this phenomenon.