

The Success of Your Walk With Christ Could Depend on This Part of Your Body

Neurological peace is our body's response to us being at peace within our thoughts, emotions and our overall state.

Our entire nervous system is tied to how well we are living at peace and maintaining healthy thinking within. More specifically, we want to examine the autonomic nervous system, a critical part of the central nervous system.

The autonomic nervous system (ANS) is a part of the peripheral nervous system and works to control the activity of the body and especially internal organs. The ANS operates beyond "conscious" thinking, meaning it can be influenced by the background thoughts we carry.

Behind the Scenes

This system sends involuntary signals; they are without our knowledge or permission. Overall, our nervous system enables our bodies to send *voluntary* and *involuntary* impulses. Voluntary impulses are the actions we are aware of and do daily, such as grabbing a pen, moving our mouths and walking, to name a few.

There are also involuntary impulses being sent—ones that we are not always aware of, but occur nonetheless. These include heart rate, breathing, digestion and more. The autonomic system is like a control center that governs the involuntary impulses. It also governs the impulses sent to our internal organs. This is very critical, because our internal organs are where battles of diseases are fought. The ANS is important to understand because our deep thought systems affect the nervous system, which in turn, can deeply affect even our human

organs.

Homeostasis

The goal of the ANS is homeostasis, which is internal peace. Possessing a healthy thought life is critical for the body to do its job of remaining in homeostasis. Our body's level of peace is dependent on the level of healthy thinking established within. This is important to know, because the ANS has an effect on regulating muscles and affects the skin (around hair follicles; smooth muscle), around blood vessels (smooth muscle), in the eye (the iris; smooth muscle), in the stomach, intestines and bladder (smooth muscle) and the heart (cardiac muscle). The ANS also influences glands within the body.

Neurological Sympathy

The autonomic nervous system is divided into three main areas. The first part is the sympathetic division. This is where the body is trying to "sympathize" with our challenges. It is involved in "gearing us up."

We also have the parasympathetic which is involved in bringing us back down and keeping us at peace. The third one is the enteric system, which has just been discovered in recent years.

Gastrointestinal Peace

The enteric system is a separate system of nerves that surrounds our digestive track. In dealing with any kind of stressor, the enteric system is affected. From our mouths to the exit of our digestion, the whole pathway is affected by whatever stressors are at work in our life. Where there is a lack of true peace in operation, the gastrointestinal tract is reacting. In helping address all kinds of GI issues, we have to look at how stress, anxiousness and overall oppressive thinking are affecting the person.

Our sympathetic system contributes to controlling fight or flight, yet the true goal is for the body to establish and maintain homeostasis. The sympathetic system gears us up to deal with the relational challenges, pressures and disappointments of life.

It is not totally wrong if this system is kicking up initially. It is gearing up with the mindset that soon the body will be brought back down to a place of rest. When you are truly at peace with yourself, God, and others, your body hears this and says "this is what I was meant to live in."

Chronic Unease

When the sympathetic system continually engages, we will eventually have trouble. The problem for many people is that coming back to true peace is not taking place. We do not know how to come back down in a healthy way.

Keeping in mind that homeostasis speaks of peace within, it is critical to know that our bodies flourish when we cultivate continual peace. This peace involves being at peace with our past, present and future, especially when it comes to our relationships. It has little to do with the outside circumstances and more to do with how we process them and come to peace. The body truly knows if we are not living in this condition.

How We Think And Feel

Sometimes in Christianity, we negate feelings and ignore them completely. Yet what we think and feel deep down inside is critical to understanding how our body can and will react.

The sympathetic system's ability to keep the body at peace is determined by how we think and feel about people and the circumstances of life. The sympathetic will kick into gear to deal with any potential "peace robber." Regardless of whether it is a real danger or a perceived one, the body will respond

the same way.

Peace Robbers

A peace robber could be anything from a toxic relationship, a past wound or a present insecurity. If we perceive a past event in life through unresolved anxiousness, worry or guilt, to name a few, the sympathetic system will respond and become overused. Hostile relationships in the home, at work or at church can open the door for peace robbers, if we do not have the proper tools to resolve these situations in our hearts.

The sympathetic system becomes overworked and compromised when we allow toxic thought systems (strongholds) to have a work in our lives. Restoring our health is going to involve confronting these thought systems head on and overcoming them. An important truth to know is that our health is greatly dependent on how we process through our relationships in life—with God, others and ourselves. These are the key areas that the enemy tramples on, if he can, to prohibit us from a healthy life.

Toxic Thoughts and Stressors Need Energy

When the sympathetic system kicks in, it says, “I need energy,” so it starts tapping in to other body systems, the first one being the heart. It tells the heart to beat faster and the cardiovascular system to start adjusting because the body is gearing up. This can be as simple as a low level area of resentment, a pressure filled lifestyle or pent-up anger. Just a little lack of ease over the course of time is picked up by your body.

The sympathetic system also affects the respiratory system, the gastrointestinal tract, the urinary tract, the reproductive organs and more. Compromises in these body systems quite often can be effected by toxic thoughts, feelings and perceptions that have accumulated over years. When we carry a continual undercurrent of these strongholds,

we will certainly be affected by them at some point.

Renewing How We See Ourselves

We have to start becoming renewed in how we think and how we perceive ourselves. Our health depends on it. When we don't operate according to God's way of thinking, the body suffers and manifests the results of that.

Speaking on the autonomic nervous system, Dr. Don Colbert, a well-known Christian doctor, states the following:

"One of the ways that physicians can measure the function of the autonomic nervous system is by what we term "heart rate variability." A person's heart rate variability is the measure of the beat-to-beat changes in the heart rate as the heart speeds up and slows down in different patterns. Heartbeat changes are especially influenced by a person's emotions and attitudes. Thoughts, perceptions and reactions can greatly affect heart rhythms, and heart rate variability is a good measure of the impact that various emotions have on the body.

Appreciation, joy, and love create a coherent spectrum on the heart rate variability EKG tracing. These emotions and attitudes enable a person to enter into a healthy state called "entrainment." When a person has entered into entrainment, the sympathetic nervous system and the parasympathetic nervous system are fully synchronized or balanced. This allows a person to enjoy just the right amount of stimulation and the right amount of relaxation. If a person consciously chooses to focus on things that evoke a sense of appreciation or gratitude, the nervous system comes back into balance, and all systems of the body—the brain included—function in greater harmony.

Mark DeJesus has been equipping people in a full-time capacity since 1995, serving in various roles, including teaching people of all ages, communicating through music, authoring books, leading and mentoring. Mark's deepest love is his

family: his wife, Melissa; son, Maximus; and daughter, Abigail. Mark is a teacher, author and mentor who uses many communication mediums, including the written word, a weekly radio podcast show and videos. His deepest call involves equipping people to live as overcomers. Through understanding inside-out transformation, Mark's message involves getting to the root of issues that contribute to the breakdown of our relationships, our health and our day-to-day peace. He is passionately reaching his world with a transforming message of love, healing and freedom. Out of their own personal renewal, Mark and Melissa founded Turning Hearts Ministries, a ministry dedicated to inside-out transformation. Mark also founded Transformed You, a communication platform for Mark's teachings, writing and broadcasts that are designed to encourage people in their journey of transformation.

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