

# The Impact of Scarcity

*The Selfless Art of Self-Care*

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August 26, 2019*

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# The Selfless Art of Self-Care

Productivity  
Empathy  
Compassion

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All Scarcity is not created equal!

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## What is scarcity mindset?

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## Scarcity Mindset

- When our brain & body perceive something missing (scarce) we behave differently.
  - Tunnel vision
  - Perseverate (obsess)
  - Low bandwidth (less productive)
  - Emotional (irrational)



*"I know. But you can't choose who you love."*

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## How does scarcity affect us?

Neurobiology of Scarcity – Brain Hierarchy & State Dependent Functions

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Survival Brain vs. Innovative Brain

Old



Brainstem, Midbrain, Amygdala  
Strong – experienced

New



Neocortex - PFC  
Weak – too new

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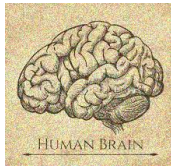
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- Autonomic problem solver
- Involuntary
- Impulsive & reflexive
- Habits & rewards



- Logical problem solver
- Voluntary & intentional
- Logical & reasonable
- "Rational voice," will power

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Scarcity & Brain Hierarchy



Survival Brain

Limbic Brain

Neocortex

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How do we engage all three?



HALT, Soothe/calm

Relate/Connect

Reason/Teach

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Scarcity Affects State Dependent Functions



Functional IQ



Behaviors



Memory

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Why does scarcity affect brain functions?

Survive & Evolve

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### Survival/Habit Brain

- Habit driven (minimize distress)
- Initially ↑ memory (short cut)
- Moves “experience” into “muscle memory”
- Free up memory for new learning

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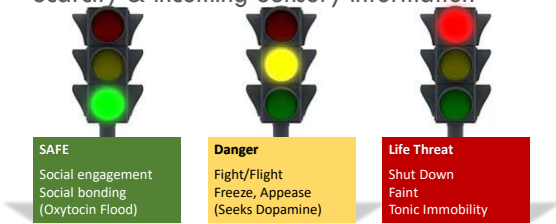
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### Scarcity & Incoming Sensory Information




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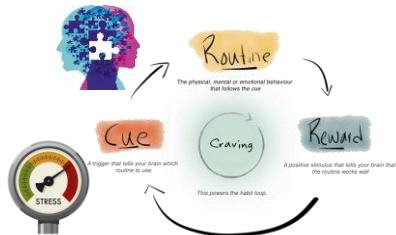
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### Scarcity, Stress & Habit Loops (RBL)




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# What can we do to facilitate healing and growth?

Pitfalls, Habit Loops, Cues & Reminders

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## Traditional Strategies - Willpower

### WILLPOWER



- Stress overrides willpower
- PFC powers down
- Stress lowered, GUILT kicks in
- ✓NO GUILT, PFC is "offline"
- ✓Stressor is still there

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## Traditional Strategies - Substitutions



- Craving for X, sub in Y
- Craving, trigger, cause is still there
- Habit loop is INTACT
- May go back to "X"

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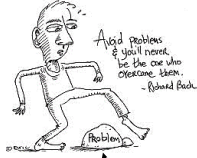
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### Traditional Strategies - Avoidance



- Requires planning & resources
- Keep "temptation" away
- Requires routine
- Can be socially isolating

Scarcity

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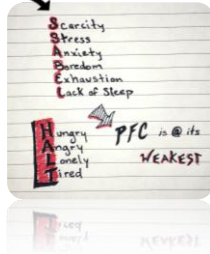
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### Identify Habits & Barriers

- What is the trigger/cause?  
*How strong is it?*
- What is my response (behavior)?
- What is the reward?




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### Identify, Relate, Connect – Framework

- Help identify the cause "what's missing" (scarcity), identify the barriers
- Eliminate or minimize barriers
- Connect with resources:
  - Food/Water
  - Safe Shelter/Housing
  - Healthy Relationships (recovery coaches)
  - Sense of Purpose – Motivation to live by good values

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## Empower Yourself & Others

- Reduce GUILT (neurobiology of scarcity)
- Create healthy habit loops
- Build healthy muscle memory
- Create pathways to our PFC
- Facilitate capacity for **AWESOME**

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*Marshfield Child Advocacy Center*  
[www.marshfieldchildadvocacycenter.org](http://www.marshfieldchildadvocacycenter.org)

## Thank You

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