

# We're all drug addicts

Understand the biochemistry of the upset client



Why do people love sports teams?

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Why do people find comfort with family and friends?



Why do people become aggressive when they get angry?



Why do  
people love  
their pets?

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Our biochemistry drive  
these behaviors.

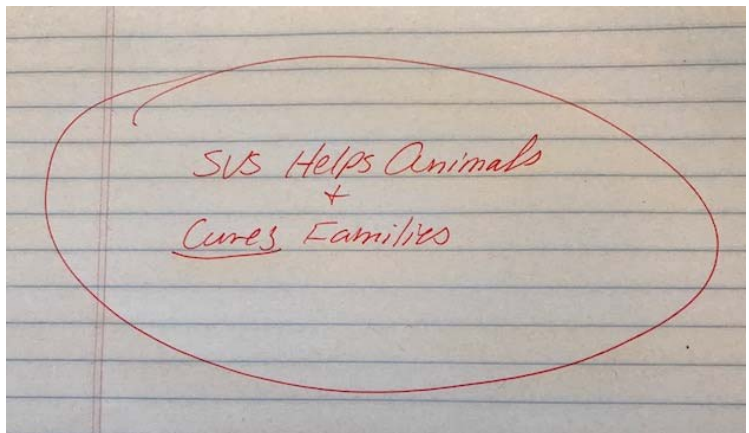
We're wired this way!

## Objectives

- Understand the evolution of human biochemistry
- Understand what motivates behavior.
- Identify positive and negative biochemicals in the body that drive behavior.
- Identify actions you can take with clients to increase positive chemicals and reduce negative ones.

## Vistage

- We are treating two patients
  - The pet and the client



## The Client

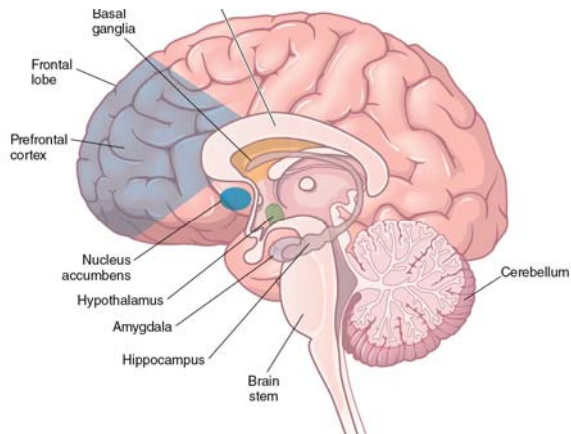
- Is not dealing with an illness.
- They are dealing with emotions that release chemicals in their body.
  - Physiologic effects.



## Evolution

- Human's evolutionary success is largely due to:
  - Large cerebral cortex
  - Biochemicals that dictate behavior





Let's talk brain...

- Cerebral cortex
  - Language, memories, thinking
- Build neuropathways based on past experiences
  - Habits
- Limbic brain
  - filter => reacts by releasing chemical (subconscious)

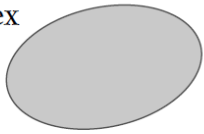


## Hard Habits to Break




- Neuropathways are connected by neurotransmitters during stimuli
- Once pathways are connected, it is easier to follow that path.






# Neuropathways



## Comparing brain parts

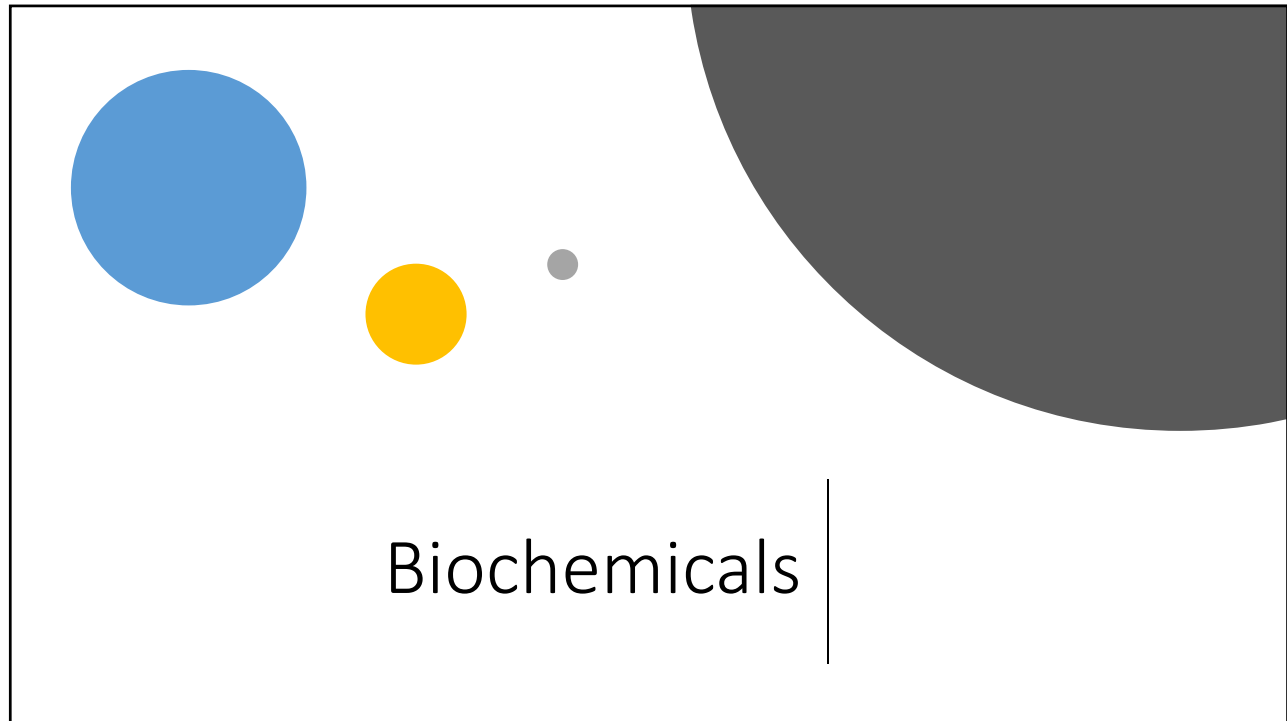
cortex 	extra neurons that store life experience by growing and interconnecting (language)
limbic system 	structures that manage neurochemicals, such as the amygdala, hippocampus, hypothalamus
reptilian brain 	the cerebellum and brain stem (medulla oblongata and pons), which manage routine bodily functions

Comparing brain parts	
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human	
chimpanzee	
gazelle	
mouse	
lizard	







Biochemicals

Why do we  
behave the  
way we do?

- Social acceptance or status
- Seeking companionship
- Love for our family and friends
- Fear and avoidance
- Survival Traits

## Biochemicals



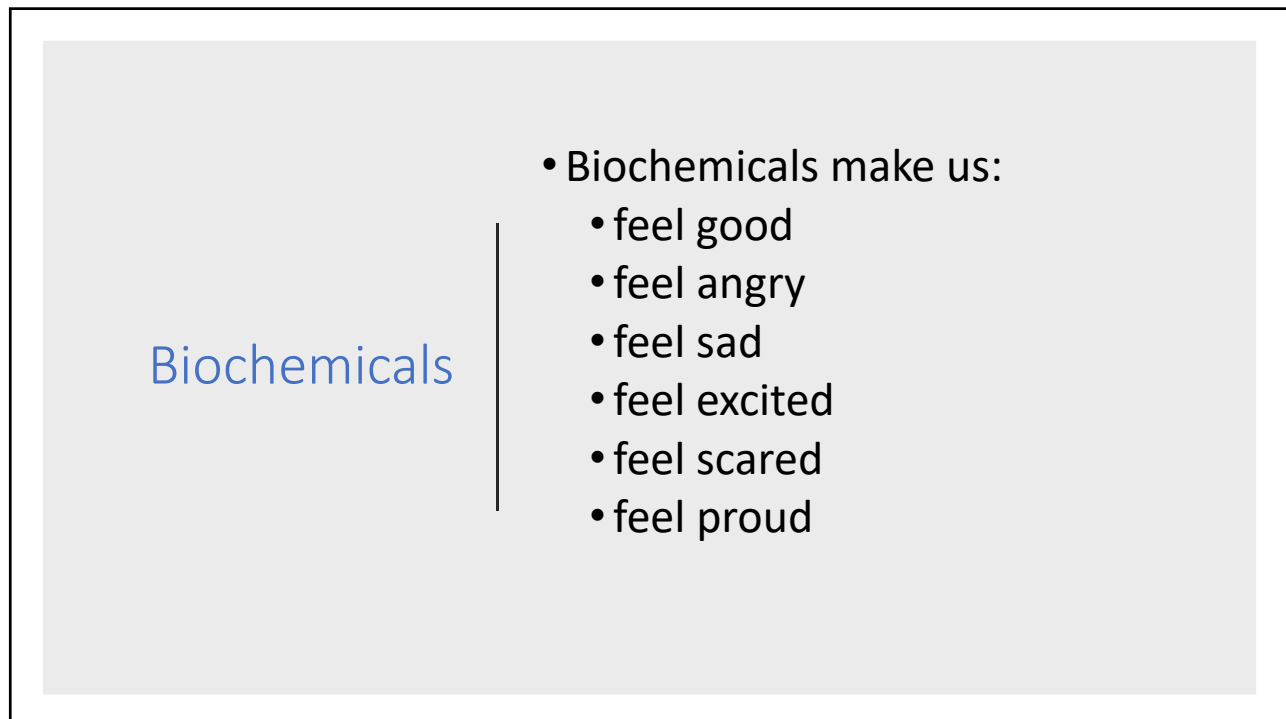
REWARD US WITH  
PLEASURABLE FEELINGS

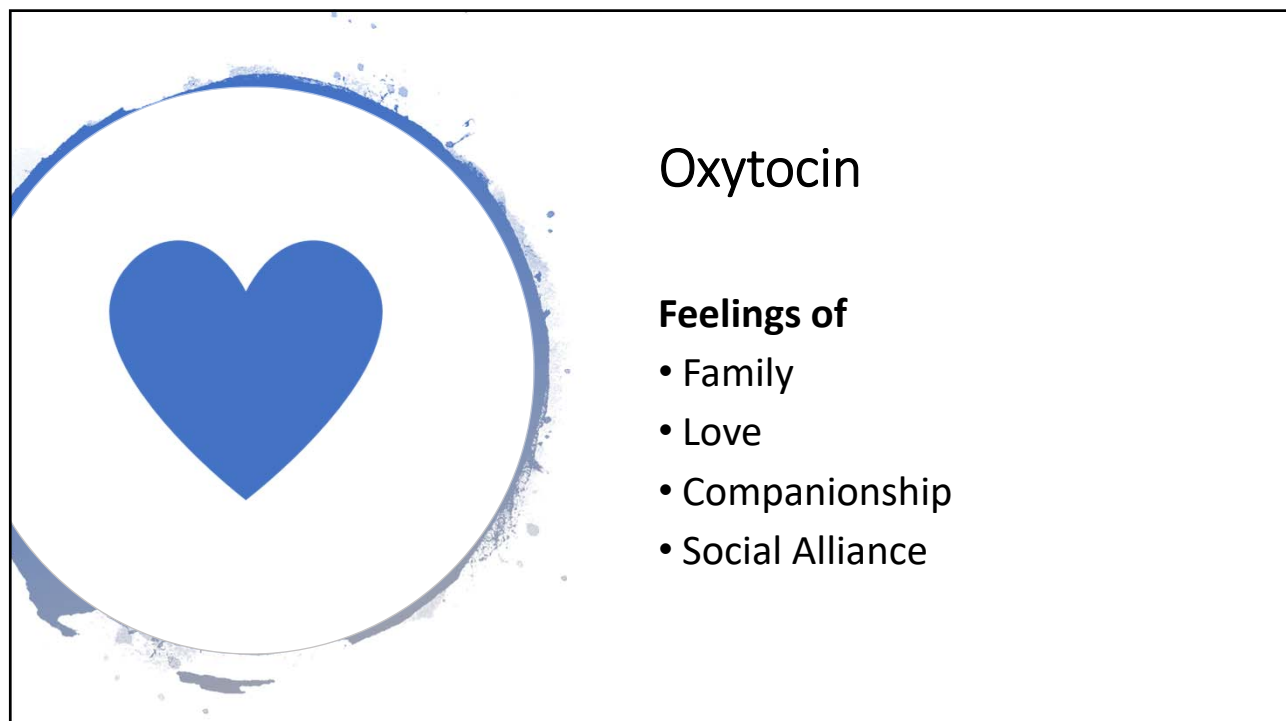
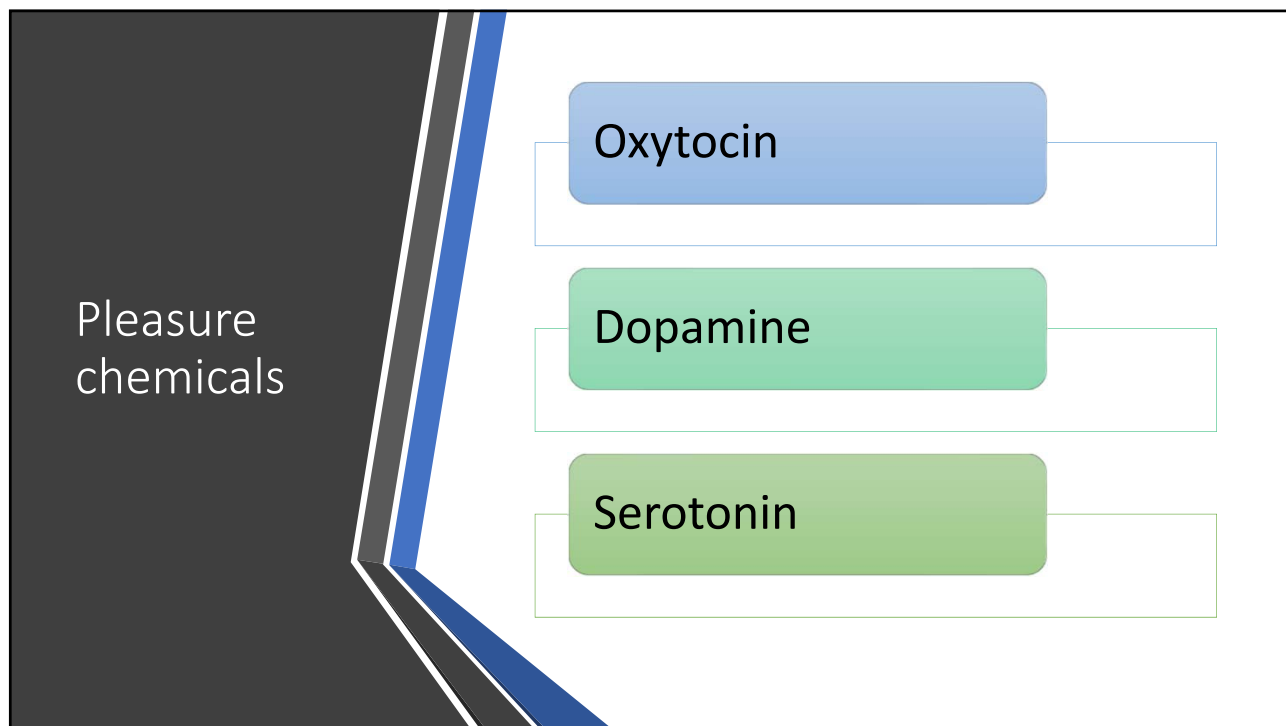


PUNISH US WITH PAIN OR  
DISCOMFORT

## Chemicals

- The following biochemicals are responsible for the majority of our behaviors:
- Dopamine
- Oxytocin
- Serotonin
- Cortisol
- Adrenaline
- Endorphins





## Dopamine

### **Feelings of**

- Pleasure
- Euphoria
- Anticipated reward

## Serotonin

### **Feelings of**

- Importance
- Proud
- Elevating your status
- Low serotonin leads to depression



## Pleasure chemicals

- Vital to survival
  - If we feel good we will repeat these behaviors
    - Eat high caloric foods
    - Social acceptance
    - Elevates social status
    - Companionship
    - Love

## Stress chemicals

Cortisol

Adrenalin

## Cortisol

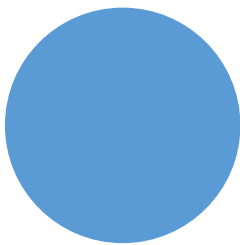
- **Feeling of**
  - Anxiety
  - Fearful
  - Tightening of the chest
  - Sweaty
  - Increase BP

## Negative chemicals

- Vital to our survival as well
  - Fearful
  - Reluctant
  - Freeze, Flight
- Prepare us to Fight



Perspective



Clients



## Pets are family members

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- Pets provide Oxytocin to their owners
- Pet owners feel the need to protect their pets



Why do clients bring their pets to the your hospital?



Do clients want to come to a specialty hospital?



- Which chemicals do you think your clients are being exposed to before they call your hospital?
- Before we provide service, our clients are already in a stressed state.

Read your  
clients  
chemicals

- Put yourself in your their shoes.
  - You deliver this service every day.
- What are your client's concerns before seeing you?

Clients are  
contemplating

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Financial concerns

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Emotional concerns

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Physical concerns

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Comprehension concerns

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When burdened with these concerns, their  
limbic brain reacts.

Most of our  
clients love us.

- Because we reduced their cortisol.
- Clients understand we are trying to help them and their pet.
  - Oxytocin release
- Write positive reviews, thank you notes, give gifts.

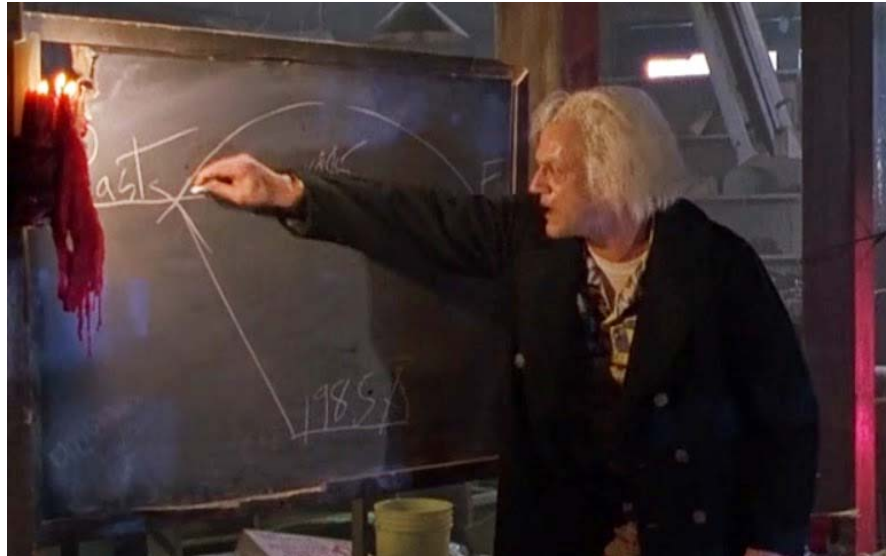
## The Upset Client

- Why are they upset (concerned)?
- By the time you realize they are upset, negative chemicals are flowing.
  - Difficult to get out of that rut.
- Once the cortisol starts flowing the cortex will look for reasons to stay in that rut.
  - The client will look for reasons to be mad.

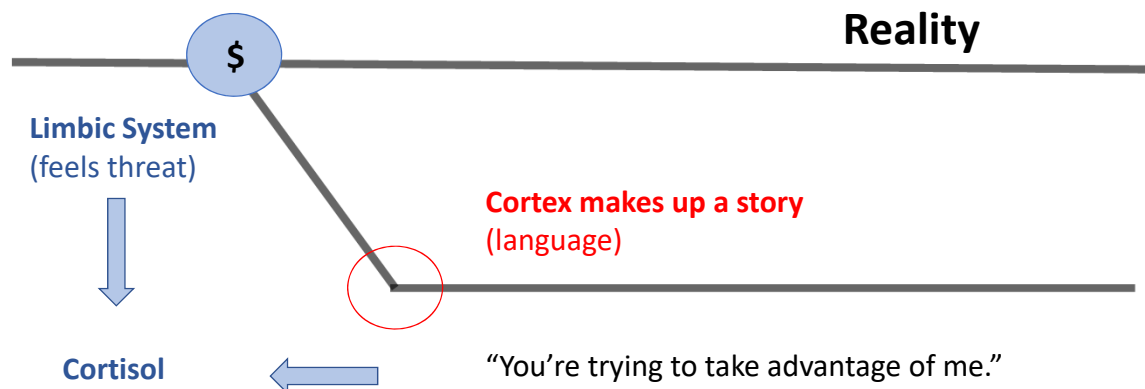
## Expectations and Assumptions

- If we don't clearly spell out expectations, the client will make up their own assumptions.
  - "It doesn't cost you this much to perform surgery."
  - "You should have called me back this morning."
  - "You should have offered an MRI."
  - "You don't care about my pet."
  - "You are trying to take advantage of me."

Dealing with  
assumptions



## Negative Assumptions



## Find Commonalities

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- Creates the surge of oxytocin
  - We're on the same team
  - We are trying to help you
- Before they get upset

What can we  
do to promote  
the happy  
chemicals?

- Build relationships from the beginning.
  - Housekeepers => Specialist
- Call them by their first names.
- Find commonalities
  - Pets, kids, hobbies, etc.



## Communicate Frequently

- Send texts updates
- Send images they can share with friends and families.
  - Oxytocin and Serotonin



## Repeat doses of the happy chemicals

Our bodies are wired to release the happy chemicals for short periods of time.



All this  
applies to  
your staff

They need constant surges of  
happy chemicals, especially  
millennials

## Conclusion

- You are treating two patients
  - The pet and the client
- Try to read their chemical status
- Provide frequent doses of oxytocin and serotonin by becoming part of their tribe.

## References

- L. Graziano Breuning, PhD, “Habits of a Happy Brain”
- S. Sinek, “Leaders Eat Last”
- R. Sapolsky, “Behave. The Biology of Humans at our Best and Worst”

