

Water: A Bio-Psycho-Social Construct

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Stress, depression and anxiety are three very different conditions. However, many people experience a combination of these three. Sometimes the stress can lead to the other two, for example. There are many things that can be done to heal these emotionally tolling conditions, including removing stressors from our lives, taking medications, resting, exercising, meditation and yoga and more. However, did you know that water can also help?

The three of these disorders are mood disorders, perhaps stemming from the brain. Studies link depression to dehydration because 85% of brain tissue is water. Dehydration causes energy generation in the brain to decrease. So, lack of water can be the culprit in any of these disorders really. However, like in many other medical areas, contaminated water can also cause health problems. It is a known that lead in water can cause damage to nervous systems, with depression being one of the most common results of lead-filled water. A reverse osmosis filter is one the best ways to ensure that you are drinking safe water. Now, let's move on to more ways water can help.

There are several types of anxiety disorders, the most common being general anxiety disorder (GAD). Beverages with caffeine can increase anxiety. Replacing soda, tea and coffee with water is a good place to start. According to a holistic health website, water is a great “anxiety quencher.” When the body is dehydrated, it can actually induce anxiety and nervousness. According to the aforementioned site, when we are dehydrated our cells feel it at the molecular level and communicate this to the subconscious as an underline subtle anxiety or threat to survival. The key is to rebalance this deficit of fluids is to drink eight glasses of fresh water a day. Water alone may not cure GAD and other related disorders, but it can sure calm those nerves!

Depression is another mood disorder than cause someone to feel sad, helpless and hopeless for an extended period of time. There are many different levels and types of depression, and the length of time it lasts also varies greatly on the person. Treatment for depression is usually through medication aptly called antidepressants. Sometimes these pills can cause dehydration, which means they need to be taken with plenty of water. Eating healthy and exercising, like with most medical conditions, is a great way to feel and be healthy. Along with this would mean cutting out alcohol and caffeine, which can not only dehydrate, but also have adverse affects on the medication. And speaking of the drugs, one

major side effect of some of the popular antidepressants is constipation. Being hydrated is crucial to comfort with this.

Aside from drinking water, hydrotherapy is a calming remedy for stress and anxiety. Taking a warm bath with an herbal supplement can do wonders for the body and soul. Sounds like a cliché, but the hot water will literally ease muscle tension- the supplements also helping. And, the soothing herbs and the quiet time can just allow the mind to escape. You can literally wash those cares away!

An eight-year French study concluded that people exposed to water with high aluminum concentrates were more likely to suffer from Alzheimer's or dementia. It was noted that aluminum could damage nerve cells and their connectors. The major symptoms of this disease are progressive decline of memory and other higher mental functions. These changes are associated with the loss of brain cells and the development of two kinds of microscopic damage in the brain, which doctors dub the plaques and tangles. The plaques consist of abnormal deposits of a protein, beta amyloid, between the brain cells. The tangles occur within the cells. These are formed from abnormal thread-like deposits of a the protein tau, normally part of the cell's 'skeleton'.

There is much evidence that aluminum is associated with the disease. Studies note that there is a higher concentration of Alzheimer's where there is also a higher concentration of aluminum in the water. In animal tests, aluminum was shown to have negative effects on the nervous system. Also, drugs that remove aluminum from the body are said to decrease the effects of Alzheimer's. Much of this evidence is argued and great research efforts are still being put into the cause of this disease.

Although there is controversy surrounding aluminum, or any other metal, causing Alzheimer's, it doesn't hurt to play it safe by investing in a reverse osmosis water filter or other means to get safe drinking water. In fact, some doctors will state that it is just plain unhealthy for the brain. Also, certain foods contain this metal. In addition, doctors say the mercury is also bad for the brain- a metal found in the flu shot. A side effect of Alzheimer's, and rightfully so, is depression. When the body is dehydrated, it is more likely to go into depression mode (see related article). So, staying healthy and hydrated can keep an Alzheimer's patient in good spirits

To treat your headache naturally with water, it is a good idea to first find out what type of headache you have. First, there are chronic tension headaches that can result from stress overload, fatigue and even from physical problems, psychological and emotional issues and depression. Then, there are cluster

headaches, which are categorized by coming in groups of one to four a day in a set cluster periods that could be days or months. Hormonal headaches are similar to migraines in that they affect only one side of the head, and they are also frequently accompanied by nausea, vomiting and sensitivity to light and/or noise. Finally, there are sinus headaches, which can be experienced after a cold or other medical condition.

Water can aid as a treatment to all of these headaches. In tension headaches, it was noted above that a cause can be fatigue. Fatigue is a side effect of dehydration. So, if dehydration is the cause of the fatigue and fatigue is the cause of the headache- start by treating the fatigue and get hydrated. Tension headaches could also be a symptom of other problems, so if they persist it is a good idea to seek help from a medical professional.

Cluster headaches are also known to be cured by drinking water. A woman by the name of Margi contributed a piece of advice at clusterheadaches.com, reporting that her husband's headaches have not come back since he started drinking a glass of water at least every hour. Additionally, the hot water from a nice, warm shower or bath can help relax those tightened muscles. As far as preventing headaches, staying hydrated can help. In fact, a very common form of headache can come in the form of caffeine withdraw. Of course, having a coffee or soda can give the body what it wants and help ease the headache pain, but it could also begin a vicious cycle. Since caffeine dehydrates, the headache prone may be better off avoiding it and instead drink more water, juices and decaf teas, coffees and sodas.

The state of water in our world currently is endangered. Pollution, privatization, waste, climate change effects and lack of attention to this most crucial life crisis is bringing us to the brink as a species. And we have no one to blame but ourselves. In trying to assess in my own mind why something so basic and necessary to our lives is given such little attention it is frustrating to say the least. Epecially in this age of technology when we see through our modems and other devices so much more information than ever before being shared on this and so many other global crises.

When you look at the world as a whole and realize that 3/4 of it live in poverty and that the majority of those areas also do not have access to potable water/sanitation, the correlation is obvious. Yet, we as a species even in the 21st century are failing at even providing the basic necessities of life to ourselves and others. Why? Why is water so unimportant to so many even though they know they cannot live without it? Is it ignorance? Arrogance? Or is it because there are

those who have been made to believe that we will always have what we need because money can buy you anything even at the expense of taking it from others.

Think about it....