

# IT TAKES ONE TO KNOW ONE: UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY, DEPRESSION, & ANGER IN MEN

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# IT Takes one to know one: Understanding anxiety, depression, & Anger

1. The functions of anxiety, sadness, frustration, and anger
2. Understanding negative affect and neuroticism
  1. Emotional dysregulation
3. Anger in men?
  1. Sociocultural factors
4. Strategies





# WHAT IS THE FUNCTION OF AN EMOTION?

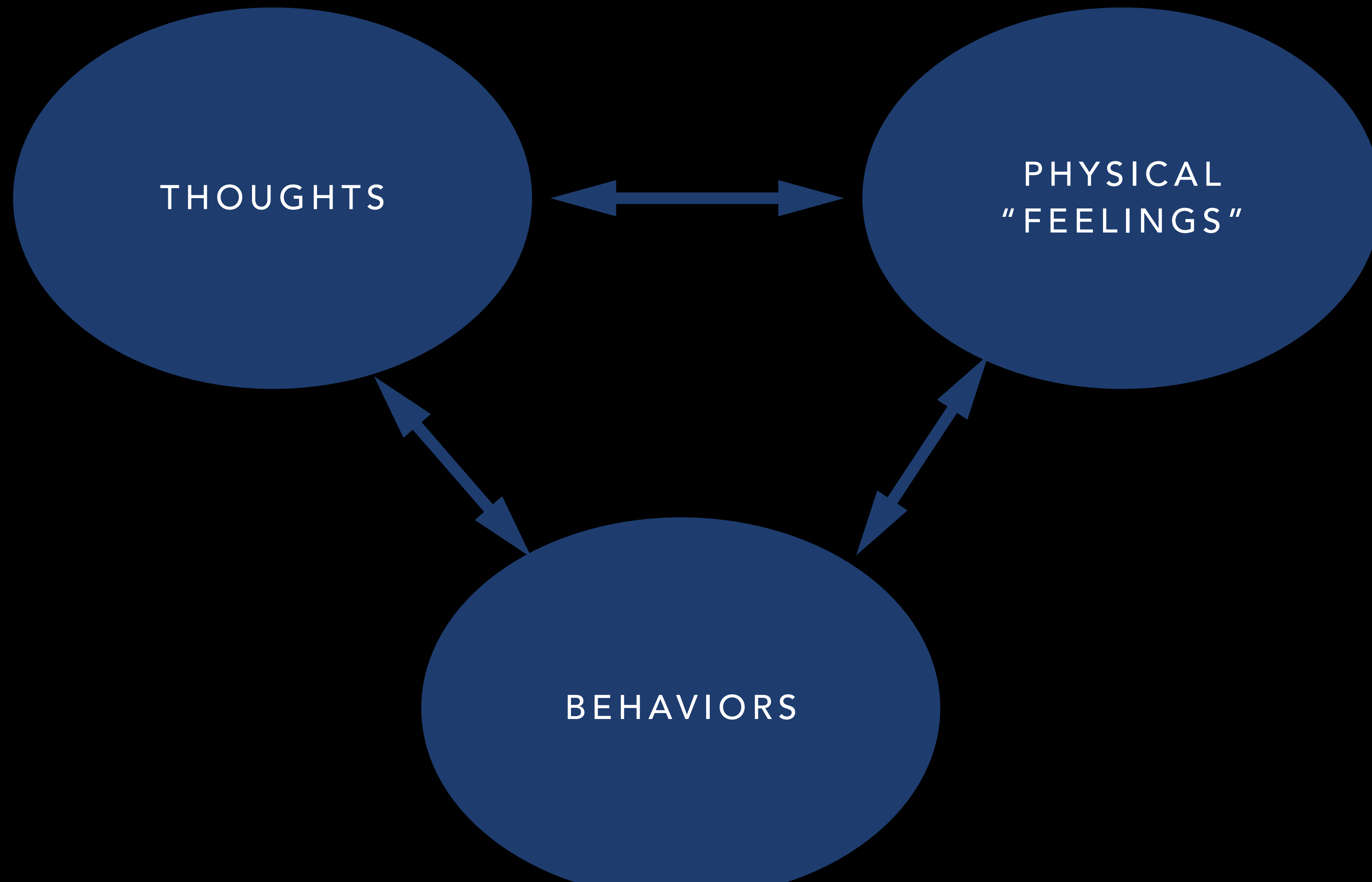
WHAT ARE EMOTIONS DESIGNED TO TELL US?

# THE PURPOSE OF AN EMOTION

To alert us to what's going on  
around us in order to get us to  
do things that are helpful or  
*useful for survival*



# THE THREE COMPONENTS OF AN EMOTION





**Emotions**  **Response directed at the perceived source of threat**



# THE PURPOSE OF ANXIETY?

ANXIETY SERVES AN ADAPTIVE PURPOSE



**A FUTURE-ORIENTED EMOTION THAT INVOLVES THOUGHTS OF UNCONTROLLABILITY AND UNPREDICTABILITY OF FUTURE EVENTS THAT COULD BE DANGEROUS**

**ANXIETY IS ALSO KNOWN AS “PREPARATORY COPING”**



# THE PURPOSE OF SADNESS

SADNESS IS ALSO ADAPTIVE



**A SENSE OF DEJECTION, MELANCHOLY, AND HOPELESSNESS  
WHICH IS A NATURAL RESPONSE *TO LOSS WHERE NO*  
SOLUTIONS ARE OBVIOUS**

**SADNESS PROMPTS US TO GATHER OUR RESOURCES SO THAT WE CAN MOURN OUR LOSS**



What is  
frustration?



# WHAT IS FRUSTRATION?

An emotional response  
associated with *unmet*  
*expectations*

**Frustration is Adaptive**



# THE PURPOSE OF ANGER?

ANGER SERVES AN ADAPTIVE PURPOSE



**AN EMOTIONAL RESPONSE TO  
*PERCEIVED* INTENTIONAL INJURY,  
VICTIMIZATION, OR MISTREATMENT**

**FRUSTRATION VS. ANGER**



**FRUSTRATION BECOMES ANGER WHEN UNMET  
EXPECTATIONS ARE DIRECTED TOWARD  
PEOPLE**

**FRUSTRATION VS. ANGER**

# THE FUNCTION OF ANXIETY, SADNESS AND ANGER

Anxiety



**Focus attention on possible sources of future threat**

Sadness



**Focus attention on mourning and gathering resources so loss can be processed**

Anger



**Focus attention on defending oneself or a loved one against a threat**



IF THESE EMOTIONS ARE ADAPTIVE,  
WHY DO WE STRUGGLE WITH  
MANAGING THESE EMOTIONS?

# THE ROOT: NEUROTICISM

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## • Neuroticism

- The tendency to experience negative emotions frequently and intensely
- Neuroticism is a significant risk factor in the development of emotional disorders (Frank & Davidson, 2014)





## THE PRIMARY SYNDROME: NEUROTICISM OFTEN LEADS TO EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION

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1. So what happens to those whose emotions are too intense for the situation?
2. People who struggle with emotional “disorders” experience core emotions in a “dysregulated fashion”

# UNDERSTANDING ANXIETY, SADNESS, AND ANGER: THE BOTTOMLINE

Individuals who struggle with strong emotions engage in behaviors that provide temporary relief but the behaviors *backfire and lead to more negative emotions*



An Upcoming Exam



Anxiety



Procrastination



Temporary Relief



Long-Term Anxiety!

An Upcoming Exam



Anxiety



Studying



Temporary Distress



Managed Threat/Reduced Anxiety

# VULNERABILITY MECHANISMS



# Understanding Vulnerability Mechanisms (Frank & Davidson, 2014)

- Vulnerability mechanisms are genetic predispositions or risk factors that contribute to emotional disorders
- Represent “deficits” in various brain functions, physiological arousal, and learning experiences
- Vulnerability mechanisms lead to various responses

# VULNERABILITY MECHANISM: DEFICITS AND RISK FACTORS

Arousal  
Regulation and  
inhibitory control

Emotional  
Regulation

Distress Tolerance

Informational  
Processing

Negative Schema

Negative Problem  
Orientation

Perceived Control

Conditioning  
(Learned  
Associations)



# UNDERSTANDING RESPONSE (MECHANISMS)

# Understanding Response Mechanisms (Frank & Davidson, 2014)

- Response Mechanisms are a pattern of responses to activation of vulnerability mechanisms
- They reinforce and “contribute to feedback loops” of the vulnerability mechanisms which worsen the presenting problems (ex: “being a hot head”)
- Response mechanisms are defining characteristics of emotional disorders
  - Avoidance = Anxiety Disorders
  - Rituals/Compulsions = OCD
  - Attributional bias (attacking others) = Several disorders



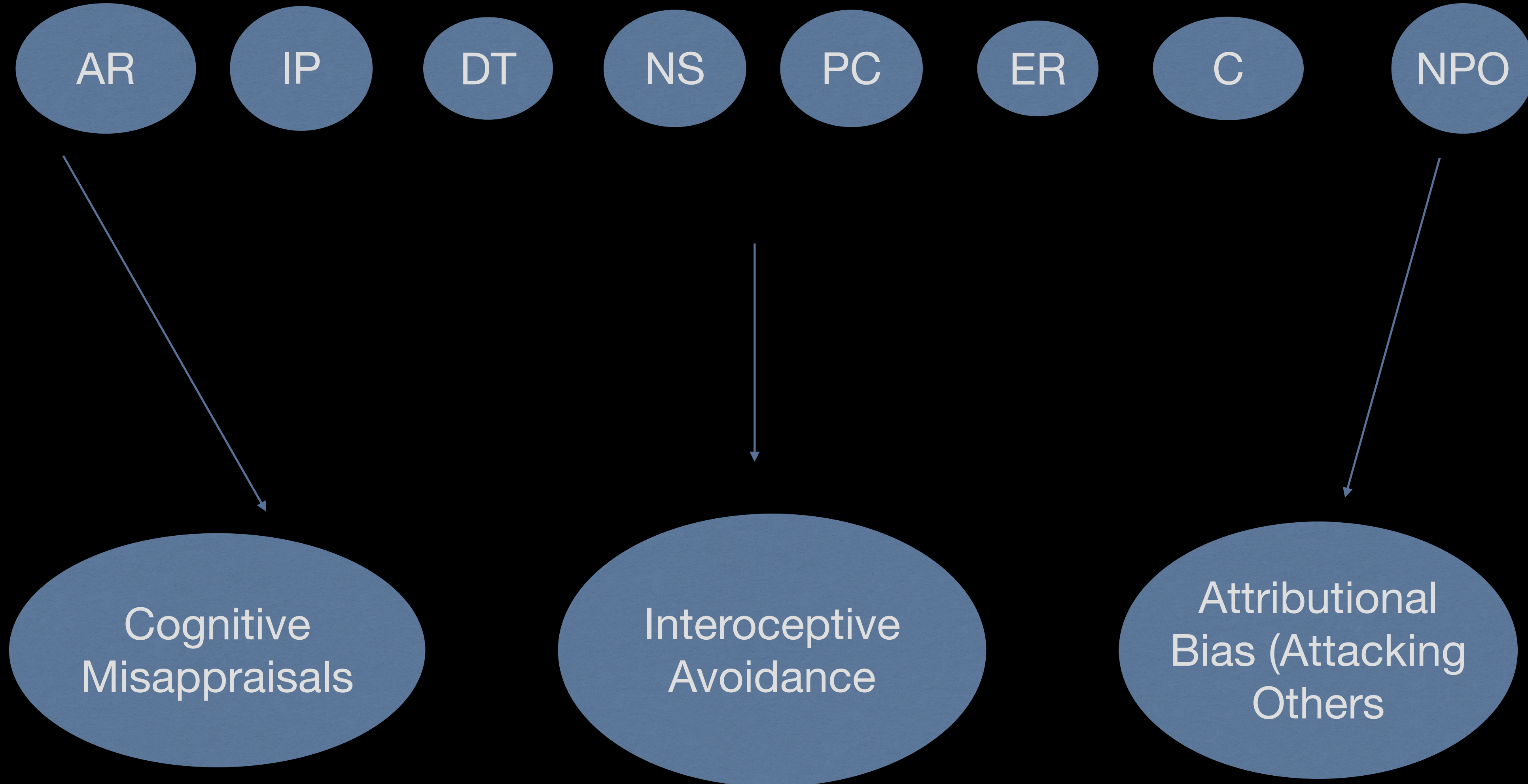
# RESPONSE MECHANISMS

Cognitive  
Misappraisals

Attributional  
Bias (Attacking  
Others)

Emotion-driven  
behaviors

# RESPONSE MECHANISMS





# EXAMPLE OF "DYSREGULATED ANGER"

**Thoughts**: "Are you freaking kidding me!? You could have killed me?!"

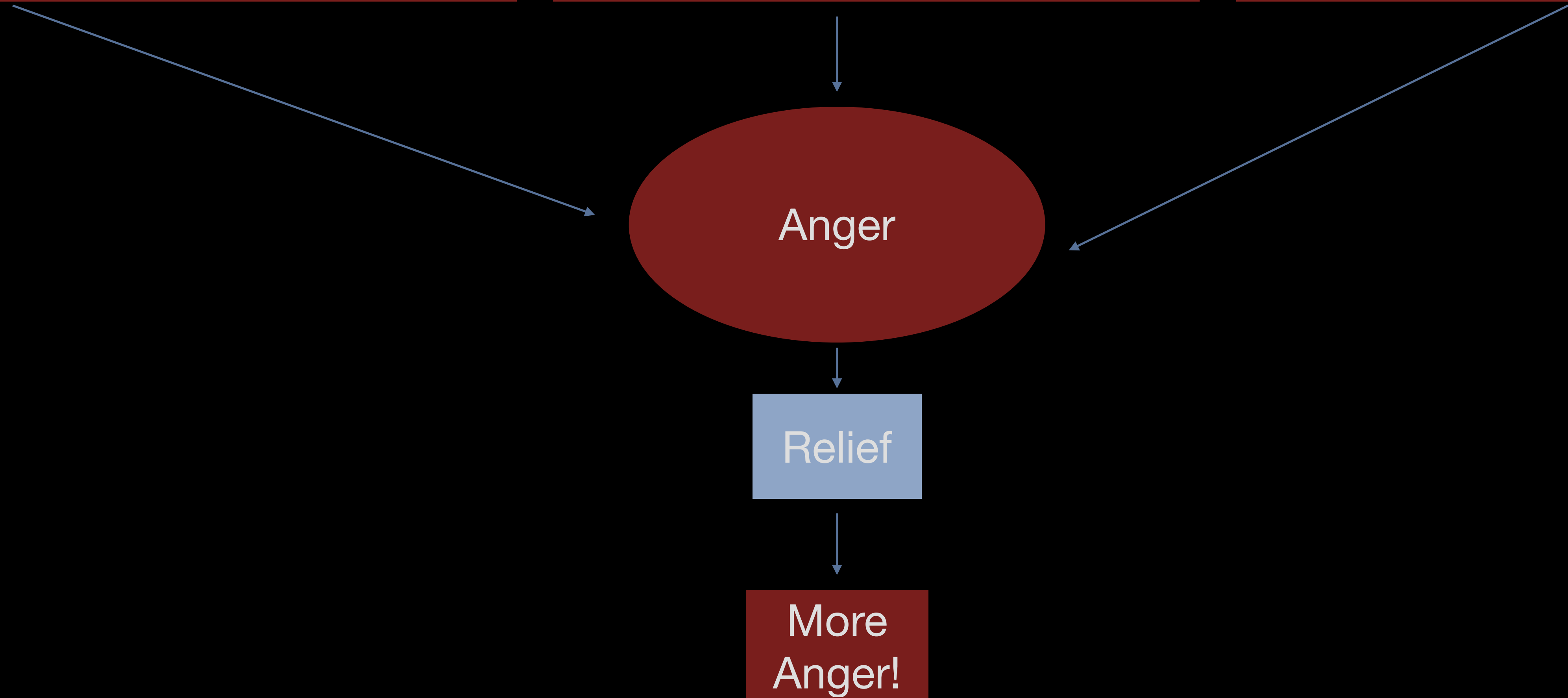
**Feelings/Physical Sensations**:  
Heart palpitations, shortness of breathe, increase in body temperature, muscle tension

**Behaviors**: @#!%\$^%&\*()

Anger

Relief

More Anger!



# **EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION IN MEN?**

**TAKES ONE TO KNOW ONE**





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## Anxiety Looks Different in Men

Instead of coming across as nervousness or worry, anxiety in men often appears as anger, muscle aches or alcohol use—leading many men to go undiagnosed

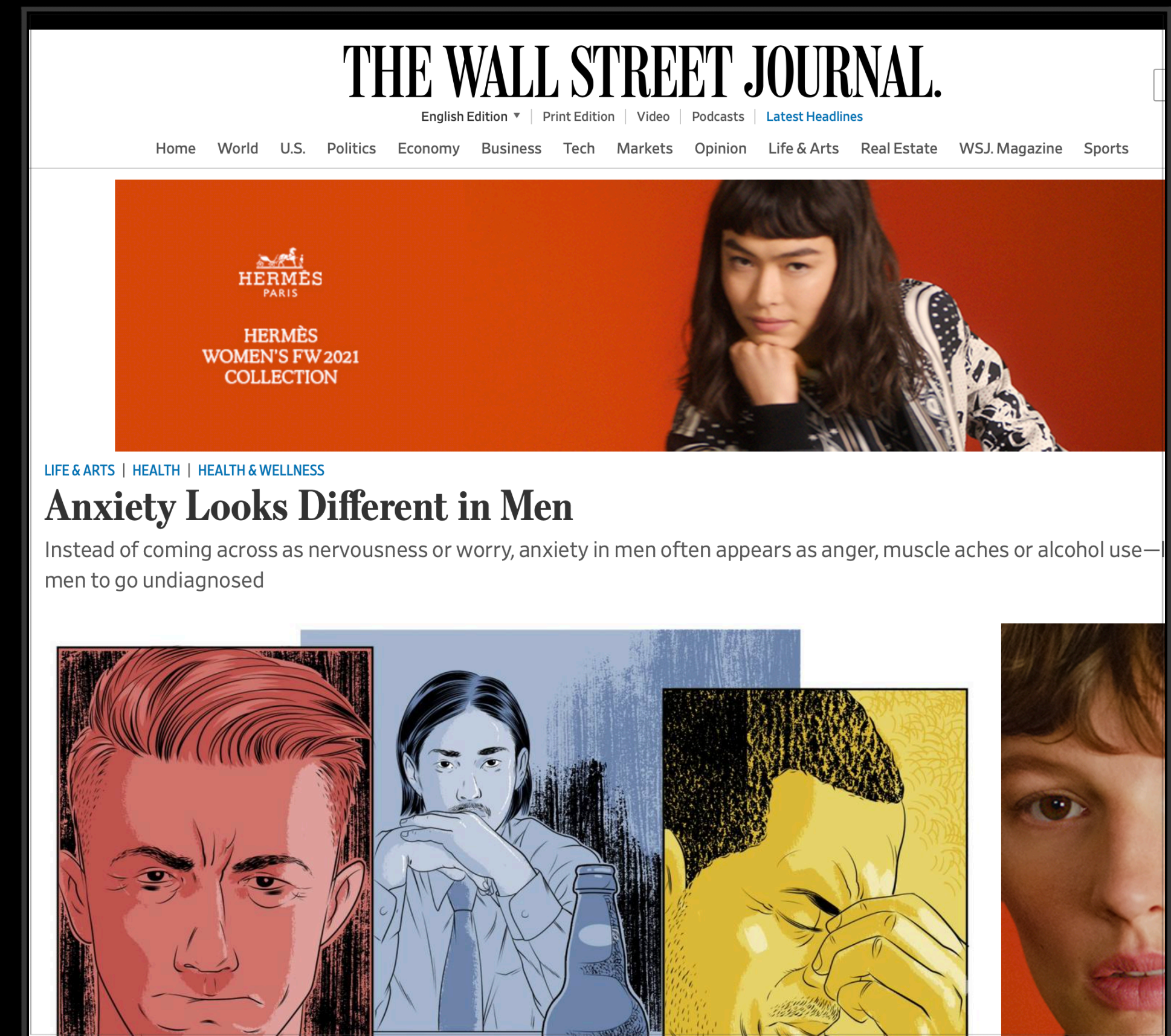
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# Emotional Dysregulation in Men (Chapman, 2019, WSJ)

- Men may present as 'loose cannons' but they are worriers
- Aggression tends to be more socially acceptable (historically) than anxiety
  1. 1 in 5 men diagnosed with anxiety disorder (often underreported)
- Anxiety and Depression co-occur and many men engage in alcohol abuse to regulate emotions
- Men socialized to view vulnerability as weakness
  2. Hypermasculinity, sports culture, etc
- Most men tend to seek treatment following a crisis or after urging from a partner



The screenshot shows the top portion of a Wall Street Journal article. At the top is the WSJ logo and navigation links. Below is a red banner for a Hermès advertisement. The article title is "Anxiety Looks Different in Men" with a sub-headline: "Instead of coming across as nervousness or worry, anxiety in men often appears as anger, muscle aches or alcohol use—men to go undiagnosed". The article features a collage of four images: a red-tinted illustration of a man's face, a blue-tinted illustration of a man in a suit with a bottle, a yellow-tinted illustration of a man's face, and a close-up photograph of a woman's face.

# STRATEGIES TO ASSIST MEN WITH SEEKING TREATMENT FOR "EMOTIONAL DYSREGULATION"

## 1. Avoid ultimatums

1. Can increase resistance and "stonewalling"

## 2. Frame therapy as a way to increase performance and pleasure

1. "Athlete mentality"

## 3. Express your own distress about theirs

1. Compassion is key

2. "I'm not sleeping seeing you like this"

## 4. Avoid labels

1. "Anger issues" or even "you're anxious"

## 5. Seek a therapist who engages in Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT)



# QUESTIONS?

- Thank you!

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