



“We humans, quite fond of the illusion of control, tend to object to how our emotions rise up and tackle us out of nowhere. So we DRIFT... veering into long-term patterns of not feeling - doing ANYTHING but feeling.”

Julia Colwell, PhD

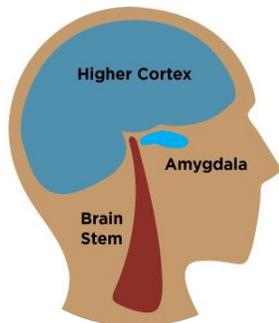
SHIFT YOUR DRIFTS STRESS-REACTIONS

DRIFTS ARE MALADAPTIVE PROTECTIVE BEHAVIORS THAT ATTEMPT TO CONTROL OR AVOID

We DRIFT when something happens that TRIGGERS feelings that we don't necessarily want to feel. TRIGGERS remind us that we don't have much control over what happens to us. In order to feel somewhat in control, we may blame ourselves or others - or we may grapple to control, avoid or 'hide' from our painful feelings (like shame, disappointment, or fear) with DRIFTS.

- DRIFTS disconnect us from ourselves - our truth, our real emotions, wants and needs (causes depression and loss of self)
- DRIFTS disconnect us from others - they are the main reason for **power-struggles, conflict, break-ups and divorce**
- DRIFTS disconnect us from feeling seen, heard, valued, understood - thus, not feeling loved and 'falling out of love'
- DRIFTS disable our rational Higher Cortex making conflict resolution and 'win-win' solutions near impossible
- DRIFTS are fear-based, reactive, addictive, habitual, self-sabotaging, and some are abusive or dangerous

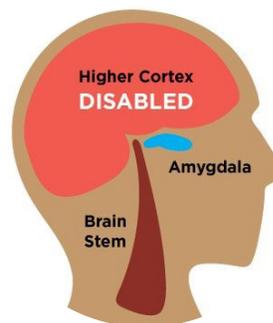
SELF-CONNECTED AND CALM HEALTHY RESPONSES INTENT TO LEARN



WHEN WE IDENTIFY & TAKE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROCESS OUR OWN EMOTIONS WE CAN SELF-CONNECT & CALM

RESULTS IN ABILITY TO CHOOSE IDEAL RESPONSES WITH ACCESS TO OUR HIGHER INTELLIGENCE

TRIGGERED DRIFTS and REACTIVITY INTENT TO DEFEND/BLAME/EXPLAIN



WHEN TRIGGERED WE ARE IN THREAT-RESPONSE MODE & 'AMYGDALA HIJACK' WITH ANGER, FEAR, RESENTMENT, ETC.

DISABLED HIGHER CORTEX, IRRATIONAL REACTIONS BASED ON 'LIZARD BRAIN' SELF-PROTECTIVE, SURVIVAL MODE

LEARN TO SHIFT YOUR DRIFTS

We all have DRIFTS. The key is to be aware of yours so you can begin to **SHIFT out of your DRIFTS.** When you are in a DRIFT you are in Reactive Brain (irrational). Reactive Brain tells you irrational, all-or-nothing beliefs that seem very convincing at the time. Drifts work in extreme ways. Their #1 concern is to 'protect' you from painful feelings, vulnerability and overwhelm. But they cause roadblocks, sabotage, shame and many behaviors that we regret and berate ourselves over later.

DRIFTS ARE REACTIVE HABITS: THEY ARE 'WIRED' INTO YOU



DRIFTS get stronger the more they are activated and utilized. Neurons in the brain strengthen and grow new synapses when activated by experience (neuroplasticity and neurogenesis). You may have DRIFTS activated throughout the day, every day without even knowing it! Imagine lifting weights every day, all day long. You would be a mega-muscle, body builder. Thus, DRIFTS can be very strong, over-powering, and automatic.

STEP 1: IDENTIFY YOUR DRIFTS

Awareness is key. The first step is to identify your DRIFTS. With awareness you can mindfully BALANCE your behaviors so they are ADAPTIVE choices instead of reactive and MALADAPTIVE. These are **examples** (although possibilities are endless).

EACH 'DRIFT' THINKS IT HAS A VERY IMPORTANT JOB, ALTHOUGH IT CAN BE EXTREME AND OVER-PROTECTIVE

We have **MANAGER DRIFTS** and **FIREFIGHTER DRIFTS**. **Managers typically work 'all day' and can become part of your personality.** **Firefighters** 🔥 detect 'emergencies' (possible overwhelmingly painful emotions) and 'extinguish' abruptly.

FAWN-TYPE DRIFTS/REACTIONS

Compliant DRIFTS: try to ensure you are connected to any extent. Need to feel needed! Care for others' needs before your own. You may be stuck in these insidious patterns without awareness, nor realize how catastrophic they are to self-worth.

People-pleaser - guards against disappointing others; uncomfortable asserting limits and saying No; lacks boundaries

Caretaker - guards against rejection; fears you aren't valuable to others unless you perform, impress, and rescue

Placater - guards against others' rage or abandonment by taking blame, apologizing, and taking over-responsibility

🔥 Fixer - attempts to calm or 'fix' others' emotions by giving unsolicited advice or making it their own problem

Mind-reader - attempts to read into/detect others' thoughts/feelings to people-please and prevent abandonment

Resenter - feels unappreciated, and believes others should know your wants/needs without you communicating them

🔥 Rescuer - avoids feeling guilt or purposeless by swooping in to take over-responsibility for others' emotions and needs

Intimacy DRIFTS: try to guard you from getting hurt, by managing closeness and vulnerability. They convince us that they can control the uncontrollable by crafting schemes, controlling, clinging, or acting certain ways - through getting and protecting behaviors. The underlying fears are typically either Fear of Engulfment (losing yourself) or Abandonment.

Avoidant - acts disinterested, disengaged, distant and apathetic - typically due to fear of engulfment or feeling judged

Clinger - needy, over-gives, craves closeness, fears space, needs to be needed - typically due to fear of abandonment

Overly-provocative - acts overly sexual and superficial in order to 'protect/control' from revealing your imperfect real self

Fantasizer - dreams of a perfect mate; refuses to accept anything less (if in relationship, tries to force them to be perfect)

🔥 Door-slammer - takes immediate action to end relationship as it detects pain of possible abandonment or engulfment

FLIGHT-TYPE DRIFTS/REACTIONS

Anxious DRIFTS: want to future-proof so you don't get hurt, fail or end up terribly surprised. They try to guard you from being oblivious or naive. These DRIFTS are distrusting and anticipatory. Anxiety ignites a physical, alarming feeling, ranging from subtle tugging of worry to full blown panic attacks of impending doom. These DRIFTS use past pains/traumas to anticipate the future.

Worrier - rails against feeling powerless by tugging at you with looping, insidious fears and 'what-if's' (thinks this is caring)

Busy-ing - distracts you by cleaning, working, etc. so you aren't present; distracts you from your feelings and connecting

Over-analyzer - over-thinks and goes into overtime-detective mode due to fears of feeling fooled or caught off guard

Obsessor - seeks relief from anxiety/stress with looping thoughts, perfectionism, compulsions/repetitive behaviors (OCD)

Hyper-activity - distracts from being present and embodied in your feelings, results in fidgeting and inattention (ADHD)

🔥 Alarmer - focuses on possible catastrophes, feels powerless, creates convincing crisis, and rings the alarm of PANIC

FREEZE-TYPE DRIFTS/REACTIONS

Dissociative DRIFTS: trigger neurochemicals and hormones to take you out of awareness, in order to 'hide' from REAL threats and abuse - and protect from PERCEIVED threats/triggers, numb feelings and flashbacks (PTSD). These DRIFTS are terrified of emotional overwhelm and don't trust your ability to process emotions in a productive, soothing way. You likely don't trust others' emotions either, as you've probably witnessed others' emotional immaturity, reactivity, angry outbursts or abuse.

FREEZE DRIFTS are the most subtle, yet the **most disconnecting**. They cause confusion and disconnection for BOTH in the relationship. Typically AUTOMATIC reactions to stress, fear, pain, shame, or pressure. Similar to 'deer in the headlights.'

Dismitter - minimizes your own and others' feelings and experiences ("Oh stop, you're fine."); emotional neglecting

 Fogger - clouds the mind, roadblocks clarity and ability to connect; shut-down from your emotions and instincts (ADD)

Withdrawer - protects from feeling pressured or enmeshed by forcing you into a sense of separateness and depression

Isolator - collapses you in feelings of aloneness, hopelessness as a way to self-protect from pressure and overwhelm

 Shut-down - tongue-tied, unable to form new thoughts, shocked into physical immobility like a deer in the headlights

Numb-out - guards against the painful electric shock of a trigger, stressful experience or unresolved past trauma

Procrastinator - rails against overwhelming pressure to complete tasks; known to rebel against success or over-working

 Self-deprecator - protects from feeling vulnerable/out-of-control by 'beating others to the punch' and self-berating

Low Profile Protectors: want us to remain 'hidden' under the radar. They do not like for you to 'shine' or be seen. They warn you that others could be hurt or envious of your success. They discourage ambition and try to keep you 'small.'

Limiter - discourages ambition; convinces you that attention or success is unacceptable; worries others will be hurt

 Sabotager - blocks you from reaching for goals, achieving desires, and feeling good about accomplishments

FIGHT-TYPE DRIFTS/REACTIONS

Power DRIFTS: rail against the fact that we're powerless over others. Yet, these DRIFTS convince us to 'power-up', in order to avoid the vulnerability of powerlessness. Paradoxically, attempting power over others, renders us powerless. **FIGHT DRIFTS** can be **well-intentioned**, but do more harm than good. Real power is having the Intent to Learn about what our loved-ones need, LOVING ACTION, our own choices, communicating our needs, wants and limits (boundaries), and keeping ourselves safe.

Controller - grapples for a sense of safety, predictability and control by trying to get others to be a certain way

Interrupter - attempts to derail a conversation that may trigger disappointment or emotions you're fearful of having

 Attacker - rails against perceived powerlessness by lashing out to regain a sense of 'rightness', power or control

 Exploder - repressing anger only works for so long - eventually it may explode verbally at inopportune times

Judging - attempts to feel 'powerful' by judging and labeling others as 'less than' (includes racism, sexism, etc.)

Stone-waller - represses anger within yet it burns slowly with smoke but no flame - Silent Treatment, Passive Aggressive

Grandiosity - promotes a 'perfect persona' to counter deep wounded feelings of being unworthy or rejected

 Gaslighter/Blame-shifter - denies, lies and attempts to devoid responsibility (ironically rendering you powerless)

Revenge - plots vindictive schemes to 'get back' your honor, as it thinks your identity/purpose are outside of you

 Defender/Explainer - albeit well-intentioned, renders you in 'defense' mode which is disconnecting

 Retaliator - drives you to seek immediate revenge and retaliation in order to feel a sense of purpose and justice

INNER CRITIC DRIFTS

Inner Critic DRIFTS relentless, self-critical, often humorless, self-berating, and controlling. Inner Critics use SHAME and BLAME to try to whip you into shape, make you act or be a certain way. You may not even be aware of your Inner Critics as they may have such a strong hold on your Inner Dialogue that you believe they are actually who you are as person. They use the word 'should' and 'hate' a lot.

Perfectionist - sets impossibly high standards for things and has difficulty saying something is complete

Guilt-tripper - stuck in the past and unable to forgive you for wrongs; uses guilt to control you in insidious ways

Underminer - makes direct attacks on your self-worth so that you will stay small and not take chances



Destroyer - makes pervasive attacks on your worthiness, lovability, and even your right to exist (shame attack)

Molder - tries to get you to fit into a certain mold based on standards held by society, your culture and family

Taskmaster - fears you may be mediocre or lazy and will be judged a failure; can trigger Procrastinator Part

Inner-controller - berates you and tries to control your impulses to a fault: eating, drinking, sexual activity, etc.

NOTE: Inner Critics trigger or ally with many other types of DRIFTS/Maladaptive Protective Reactions in complex ways. Learn more about your Inner Critic: <https://www.creatingyourbalance.com/innercritic>

ADDITIONAL FLIGHT DRIFTS

Food DRIFTS obsess about food; indulging or restricting as a way of distracting you from noticing exiled feelings or as a way to suppress painful feelings when they surface. Food also serves as a quick short-term fix for loneliness.

Food-controller - restricts calories or obsesses about certain diets and types of foods to gain a sense of self-control

Food-indulger - sees food as a reward and may overeat to try to protect you and 'save' you from painful emotions



Food-binger - detects possible emotional overwhelm or painful trigger and uses fullness as 'fire hose' to extinguish

Food-bonder - attempts to fill the human need for human connection, loneliness, and 'connection starvation'

Substance-Use DRIFTS encourage you to over-use substances, legal or illegal to 'protect' you from emotional pain and inner conflict - especially feelings of shame, regret, unworthiness, emptiness and loneliness.

Substance-user - talks you into over-drinking, smoking, or using drugs to escape emotional pain and inner conflict

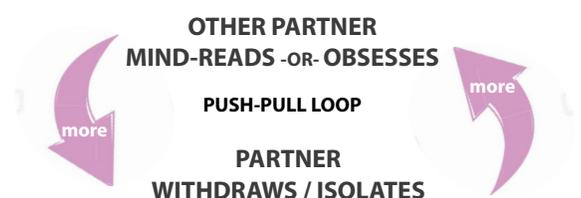
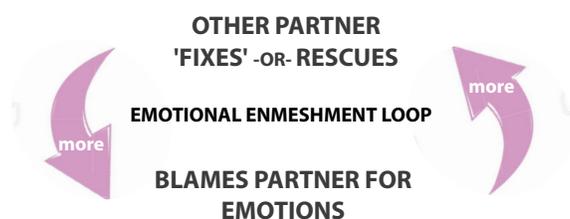


Substance-binger - detects possible painful emotional overwhelm, and essentially 'fire hoses' with alcohol to extinguish

Substance-socializer - attempts to numb social anxiety, and/or the fear of being 'boring' or not fitting in

STEP 2: IDENTIFY PARTNERING DRIFTS (MALADAPTIVE PATTERNS OF RELATING)

Things get more complex when DRIFTS occur in relationships. It's difficult for one partner to discontinue their DRIFT when the other partner is reliant on it to carry out their impulsive DRIFT. These patterns give a false sense of connection and are 'toxic' because, like an addiction, they give a jolt of feel-good, but over time they result in power-struggles and erode respect. Learn to SHIFT out of DRIFT PATTERNS, even though it **may feel lonely** at first, as you're not partaking in the pattern you've become accustomed to. **More about Power-Struggles:** <https://www.creatingyourbalance.com/power>



"If you find yourself in Reactive Brain [in one of your DRIFTS], do not try to process or solve the issue. Have a repertoire of ways to SHIFT back to your Rational / Creative Brain."

Kathlyn Hendricks, PhD

STEP 3: SHIFT YOUR DRIFTS TO PRESENCE, CALM AND CONNECTION

Ways to SHIFT YOUR DRIFTS:

1 BREATHE

2 GROUNDING EXERCISES

<https://www.creatingyourbalance.com/grounding>

3 OBSERVE AND NOTICE YOUR FIVE SENSES

What are you SEEING? What are you FEELING? What are you smelling? What are you tasting? What are you hearing?

4 FEEL AN EMPOWERING EMOTION: Gratitude, Compassion, and/or Curiosity

The Reactive Brain's job is to detect a threat and protect you from danger. To SHIFT out of Reactive Brain and into Creative/Calm Brain you can employ one of the Empowering Emotions. Gratitude, Compassion and Curiosity are scientifically proven to bring you into a state of connection and calm.

<https://www.creatingyourbalance.com/emotions>

5 MOVE YOUR BODY

Instead of fidgeting or trying to stay still, allow yourself to move around. Stretch, hold yourself, cross your arms, etc.

6 GO FOR A RUN OR WALK

End If nothing else works or perhaps you feel the need to leave go for a run or walk.

IF YOU ARE IN THE MIDDLE OF AN ARGUMENT WITH YOUR PARTNER, THESE ARE ADDITIONAL OPTIONS

7 COMFORTING TOUCH

End the conversation and simply embrace each other with a hug. Words are overrated.

8 OPENHEARTED LISTENING (with the Intent to Learn and Curiosity)

<https://www.creatingyourbalance.com/unarguabletruth>

9 STATE YOUR UNARGUABLE TRUTH

UNARGUABLE TRUTH = SENSATION + NEED-OR-WANT

<https://www.creatingyourbalance.com/unarguabletruth>

10 REMAIN OUT OF THE DREADED DRAMA TRIANGLE (DDT)

TAKE 100% RESPONSIBILITY FOR FEELING AND PROCESSING YOUR OWN EMOTIONS, AND KNOWING AND COMMUNICATING YOUR GENUINE NEEDS, WANTS, AND LIMITS (BOUNDARIES) IN EACH MOMENT

<https://www.creatingyourbalance.com/power>

LEAVE ASAP IF YOU ARE FEELING HIGHLY REACTIVE -OR- IF SOMEONE IS YELLING AT YOU OR ABUSING YOU