

# **“Coping Strategies and Stress Reduction for Brain Tumor Patients and Caregivers”**

Veronica Porche, Psy.D.  
Post-Doctoral Psychology Fellow  
Maxine Dunitz Neurosurgical Institute  
Department of Neurosurgery  
Cedars-Sinai Medical Center

*Presented at:*

**“Outsmarting Brain Tumors Patient Conference”**

*May 10, 2008*



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# Direct effects of stress for brain tumor patients:

Relationship with doctors, family, friends

Role functioning (parenting, employment, etc.)

Quality of life

May affect:

Response to treatment

Overall course of illness

Poor Stress Response & Prolonged Depression  
linked to:

\*Increased cancer progression

\*Reduced rates of survival



# Depression

**Many individuals suffer from a variety of emotional symptoms, especially those individuals who suffer from a medical illness.**

**Fortunately, there are proven techniques to help relieve and prevent these symptoms.**

**Some individuals with medical problems do not suffer from symptoms such as depression.**

**How do they do it?**



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# CBT

**Aaron Beck, M.D.  
Leading Expert on Depression in the World**

**Founder of Cognitive-Behavioral Theory  
(CBT)**

**Cognitive—Ways of Thinking  
Behavioral—Things that We Do**

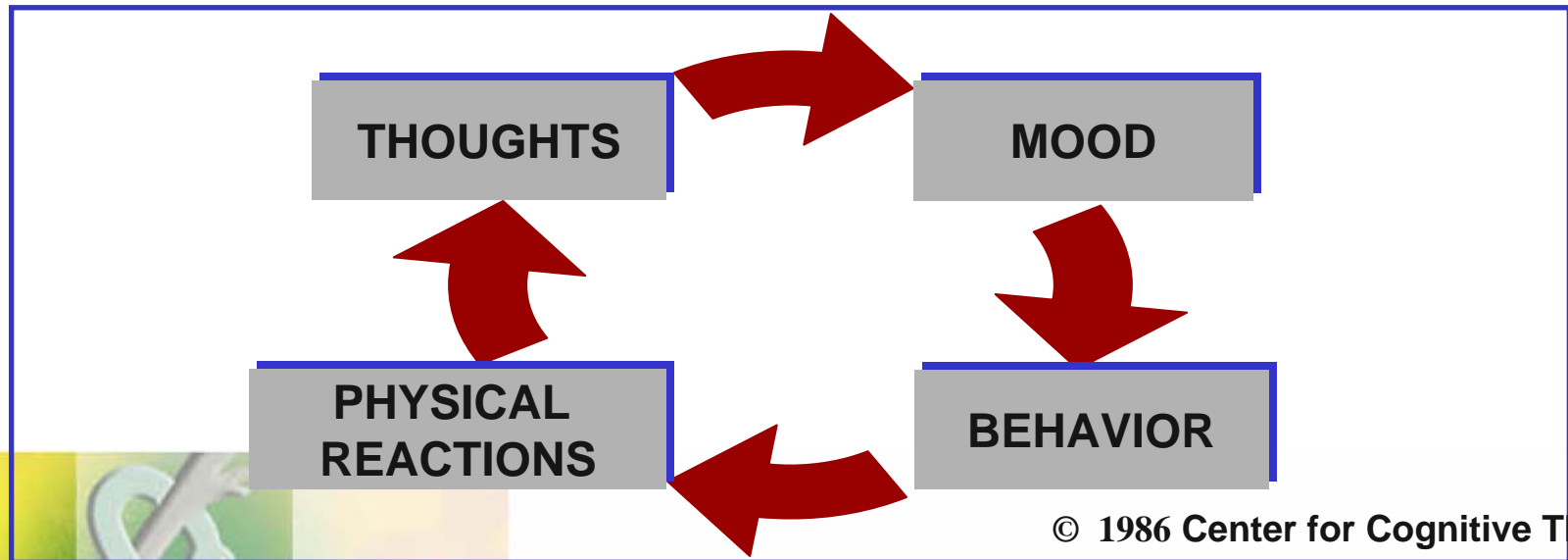
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# Beck's CBT Theory to Treat Depression

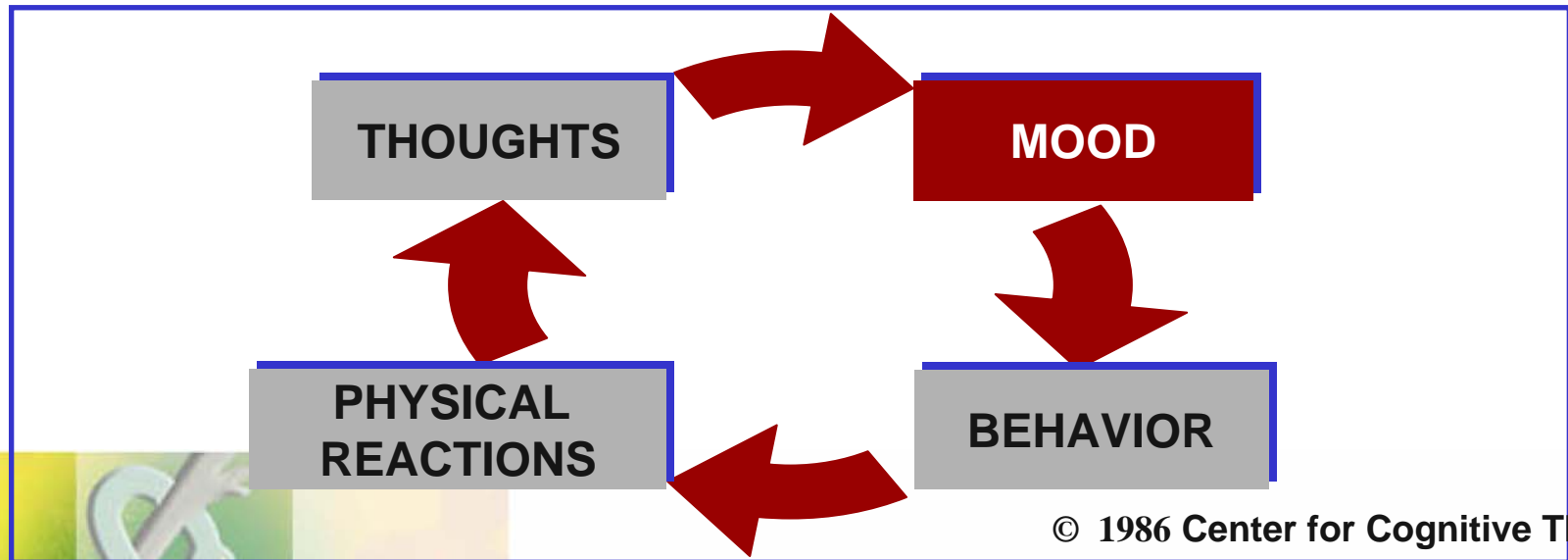
## Mind Over Mood by Greenberger and Padesky

- Factors that cause Depression
- Beck believes it is important to know all factors well



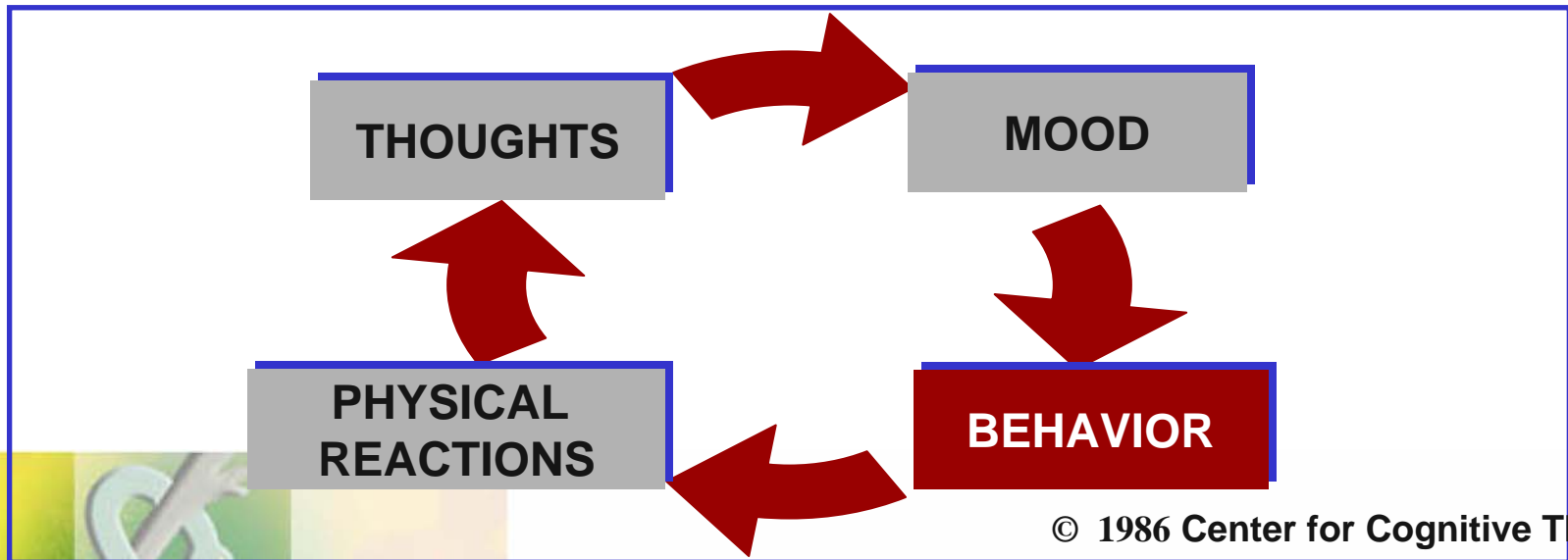
# Mood

- A mood/feeling can usually be described in “one” word
- If you describe a feeling in more than one word, it is usually no longer a feeling
  - Examples of mood or feeling when people are depressed:
    - Sad, Angry, Irritable, Anxious



# Behavior

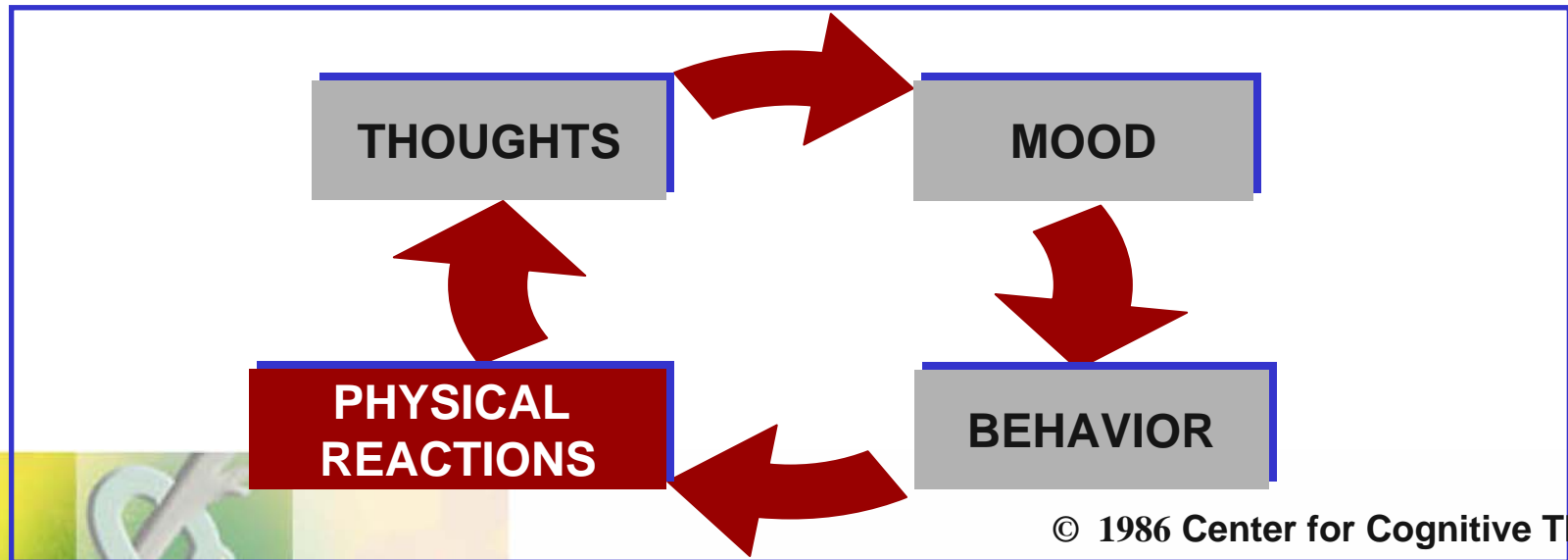
- Behaviors are *actions* or things people “do”
- People who are depressed tend to decrease pleasant activities:
  - Tend to Withdraw
  - Do Not Socialize (Social Support reduces stress)



# Physical Reactions

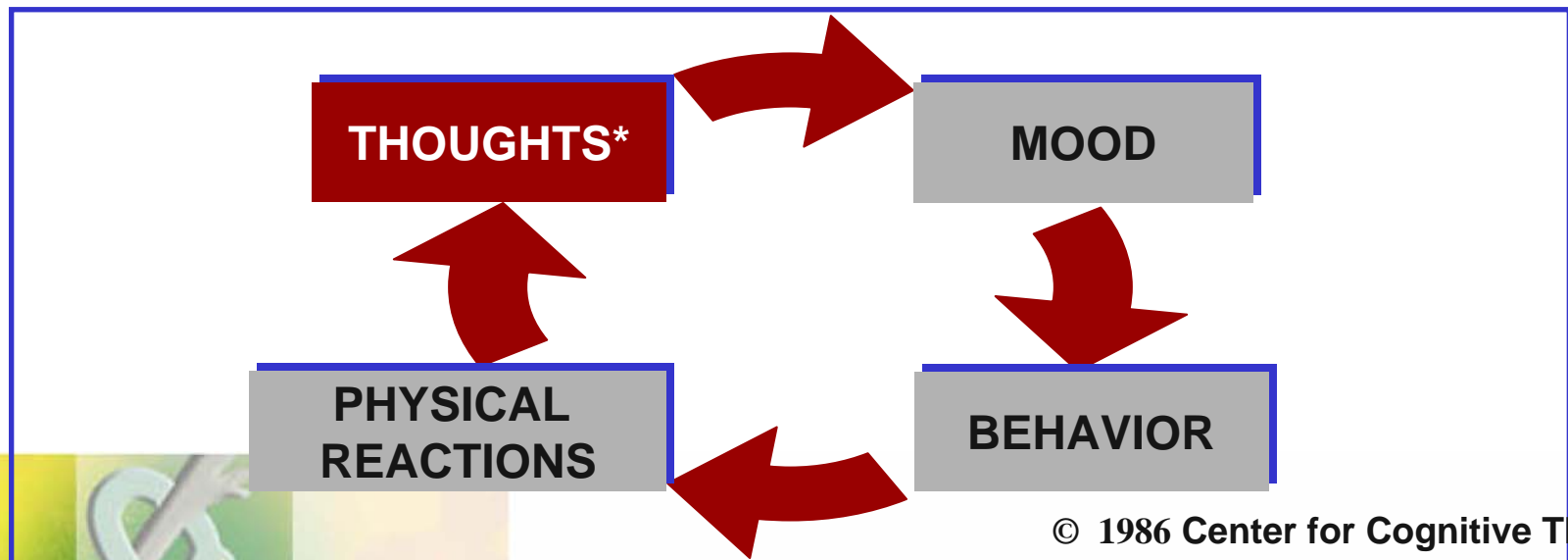
- Physical Symptoms have to do with “body” reactions
- Depression can cause some of these physical symptoms:

Fatigue, appetite change, sleep problems, pain, changes in sex drive, decreased immune system functioning, cognitive difficulties, shallow breathing, memory and attention problems, psychomotor slowing



# Thoughts

- Dr. Beck believes that it's the Thoughts\* that Count!
- People who are depressed tend to have certain automatic thoughts
- Automatic Thoughts are so fast that we are unaware of them (just like when you are unaware of driving)



# Thoughts

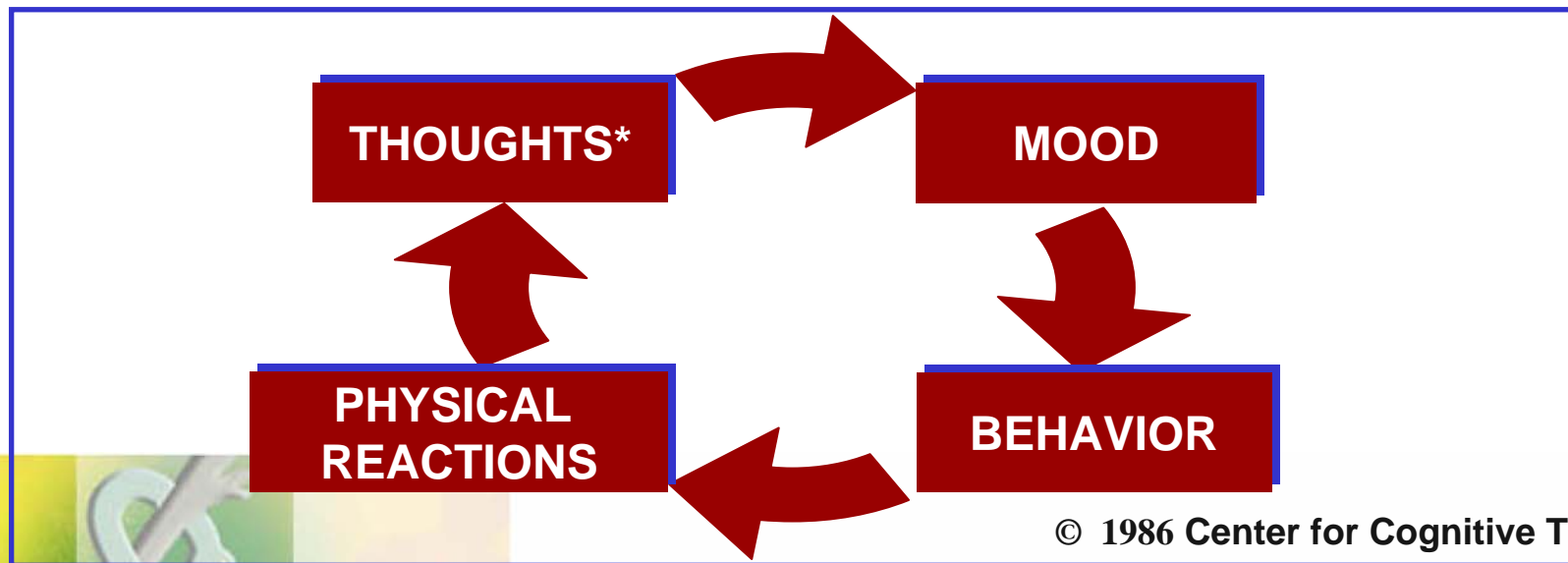
Beck identified 3 Core Ways of Thinking that cause emotional distress

1. **Critical to Self**
2. **Critical to Others**
3. **Hopeless about the future**



# Depressive Cycle

- Thoughts, mood, behavior & body reactions all interact
- Vicious Depressive Circle, spiraling downward
- We can control this!
- We can spiral it upward



# Mood

- Monitoring Mood Helps

- Monitor the way you would high blood pressure, calorie intake, or sugar levels
- Monitor mood at least once a day

- Rating Mood

- How do you monitor mood? (From 1 to 10)
- 1 Depressed and 10 Happy
- Use anchor points
  - Most depressive and happiest event



# Behavior

- **Increase Pleasant Activities/Social Support**
- **Identify at least 25 realistic pleasant activities**
- **Do a few everyday**
  1. Having Visitors
  2. Having somebody Read to you
  3. Having someone show you old Photographs
  4. Listening to a Relaxation Tape
  5. Watching a Movie
  6. Having someone give you a Massage
  7. Listening to Music
  8. Being taken Outdoors to a Park or Beach



# Physical Reactions

- **This area is usually treated by your MD.**
  - **Anti-depressants**
  - **Anti-anxiety medication**
  - **Pain medication**
- **Other Techniques to reduce symptoms**
  - **Relaxation Exercises**  
(Meditation, Yoga, Deep-Breathing, Mental Imagery, Progressive Muscle Relaxation)
  - **Healthy Habits, Diet, Sleep Hygiene, UV Light (being outside), Laughter**
  - **Physical/Occupational Therapy**



# Thoughts

- **Be Mindful**
- **Monitor your thoughts (positive and negative)**
- **Automatic Thoughts were learned**

**We did not believe or think this way when we were children.**

**We can relearn and replace thoughts with more positive ways of thinking.**

- **Change/ restructure your way of thinking**
  - **Replace negative thoughts**  
**For every negative thought, come up with a positive**
  - **Be more realistic about distorted thinking**



# Anxiety

**Some individuals suffer with Anxiety**

**We will take a look at  
The body's response to anxiety  
Ways to relieve symptoms**



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# Fear

- **Fear is a healthy response to a dangerous situation—it is necessary for survival (e.g., being assaulted, earthquake, tsunami, and other events that can be life threatening)**
- **A fearful (aroused/alarmed) response is activated to help protect the body**
- **Usual Responses:**
  - **Fight**
  - **Flight**
  - **Freeze**

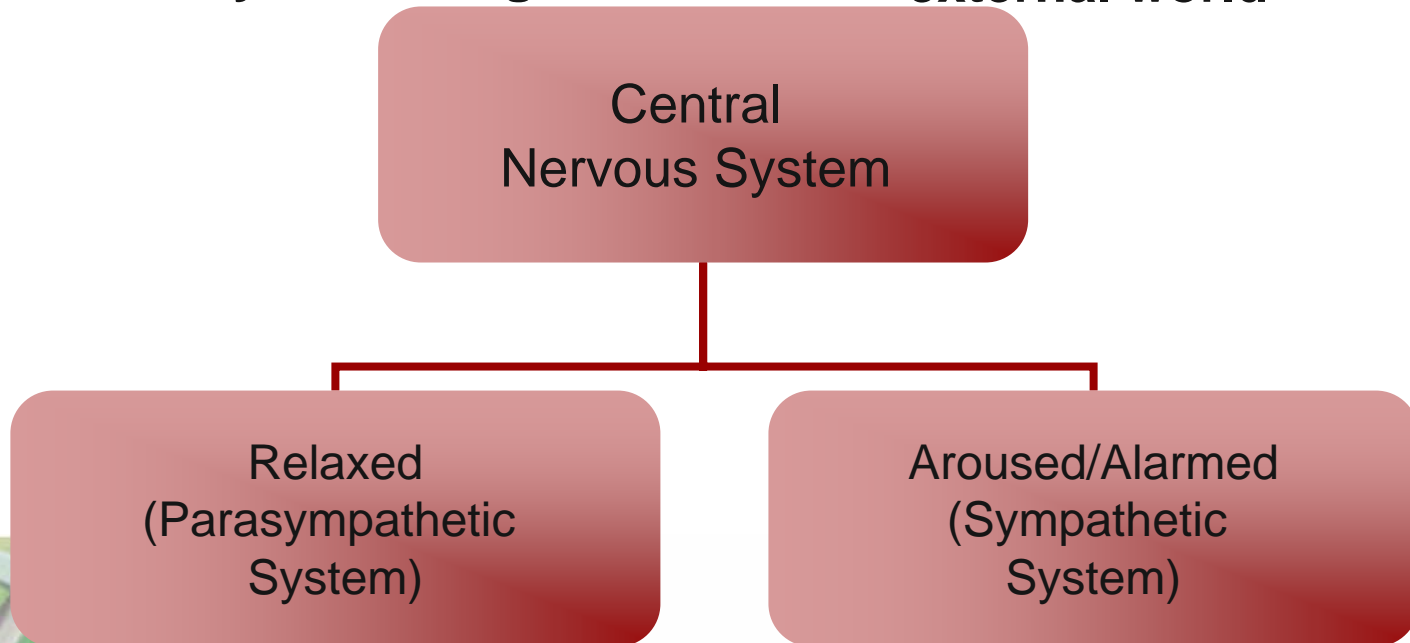


# Relaxation

- ↓ Heart rate & BP
- ↓ Muscle tension
- Senses duller
- Breathing deeper & rhythmic
- Focus on body and thoughts

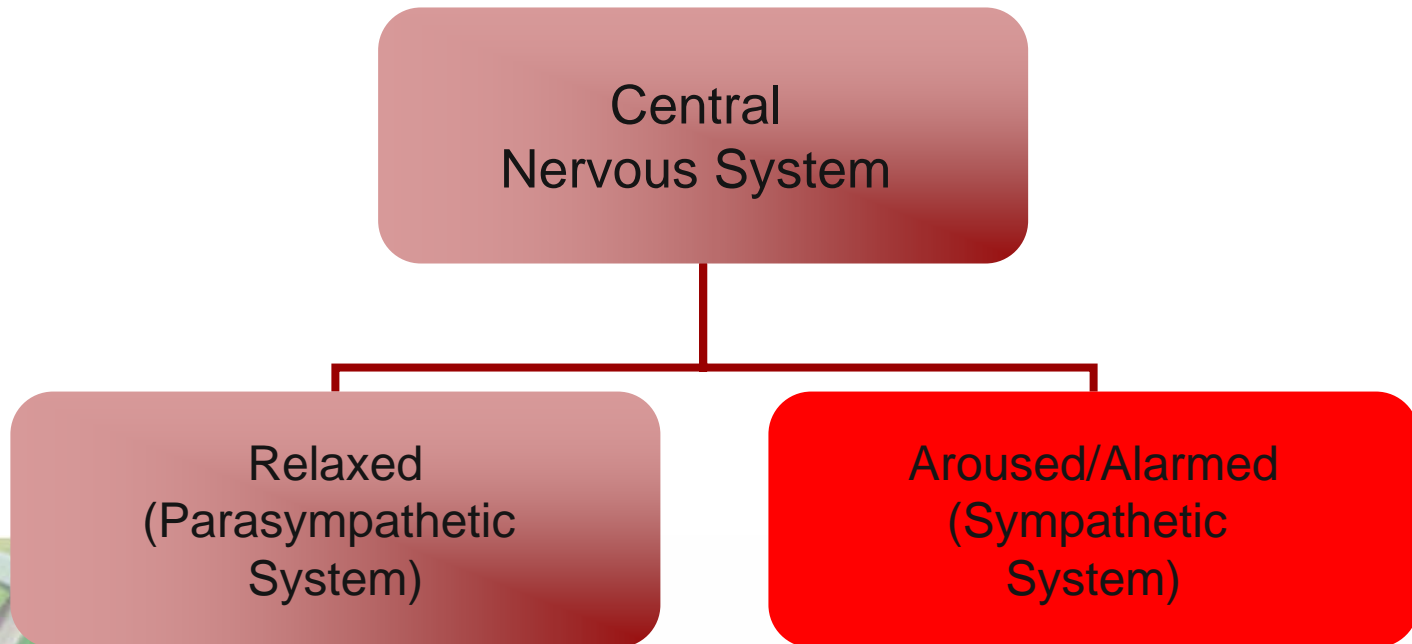
# Arousal

- ↑ Heart rate & BP
- ↑ Muscle tension
- Cold/sweaty hands
- Breathing shallow & rapid
- 5 senses keen, focus on external world



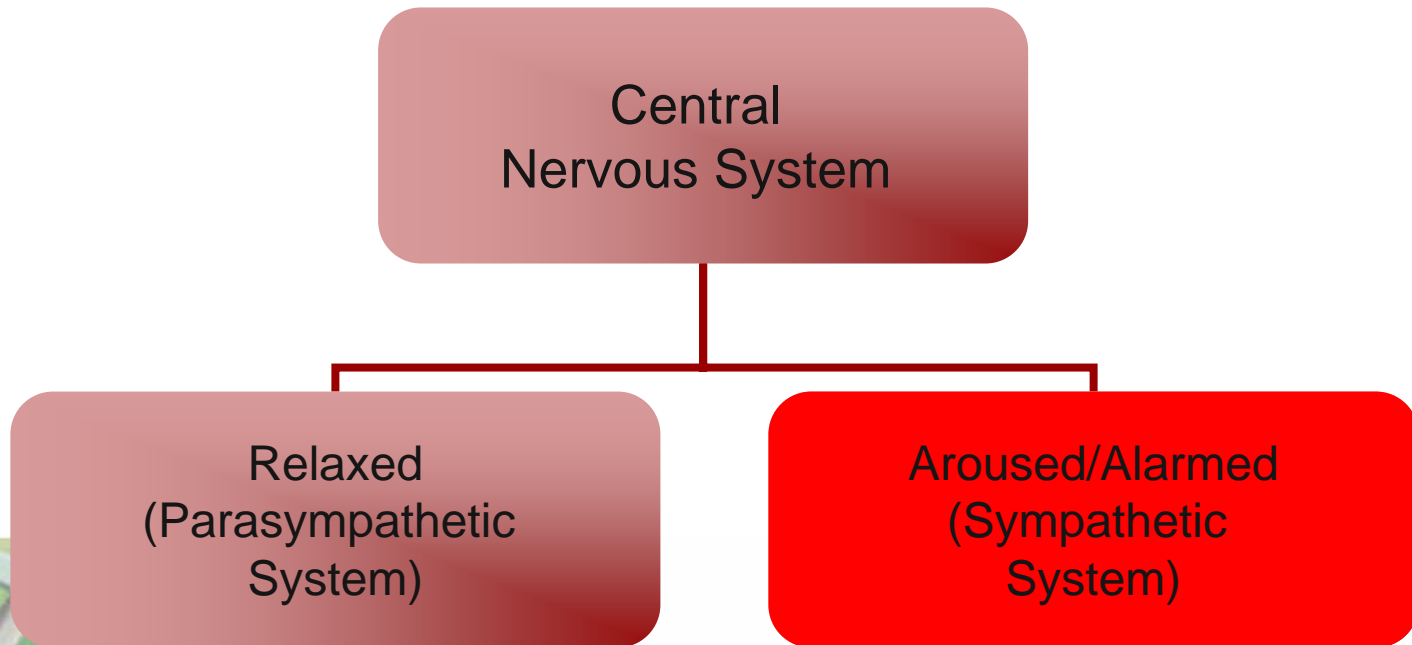
# Arousal

- **Helps us to deal with external demands**
  - **Make fast decisions**
  - **Act quickly**
  - **Immediate**



# CNS System

**BOTH RELAXATION AND AROUSAL CANNOT COEXIST**

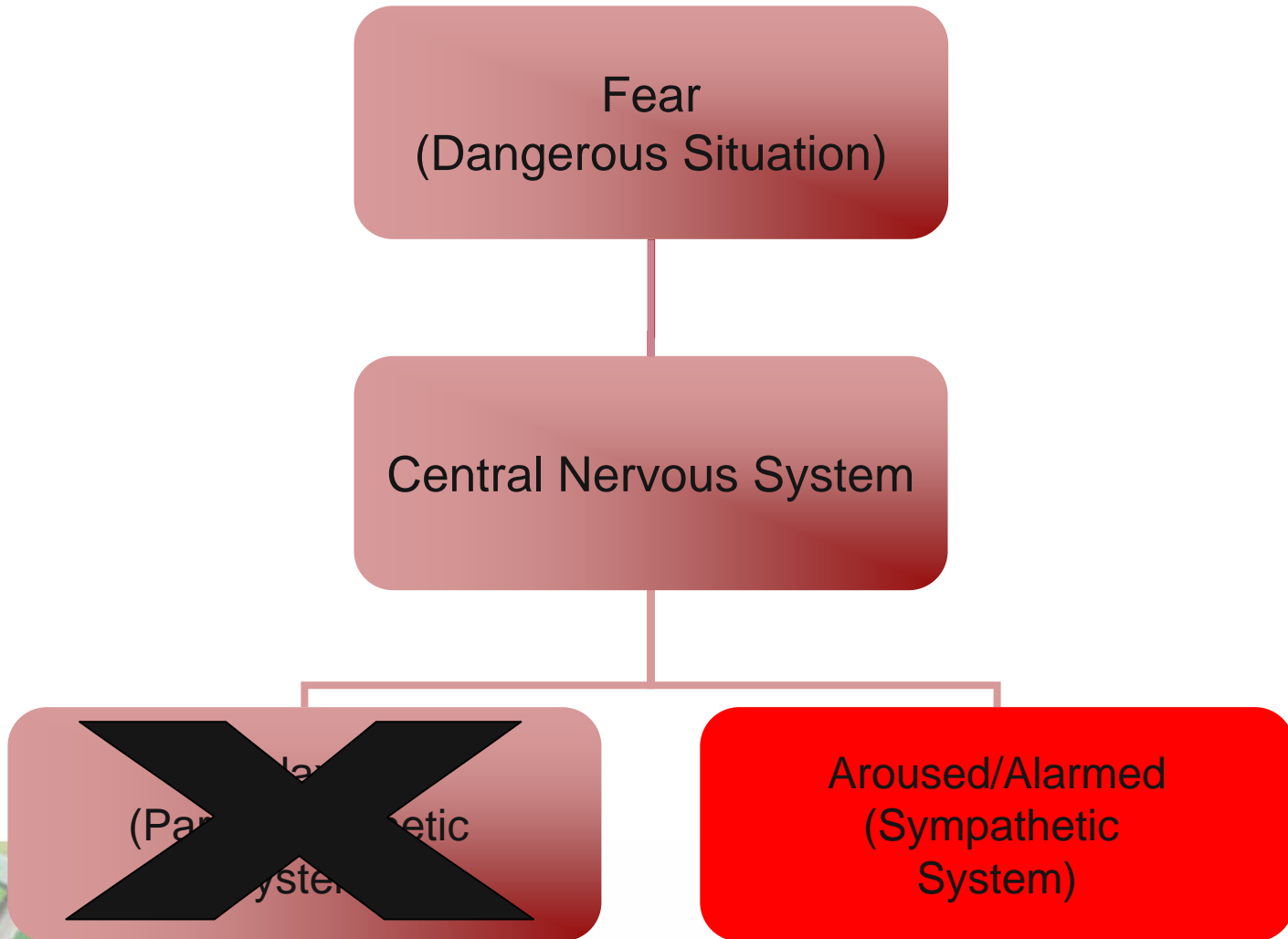


# Fear and Anxiety

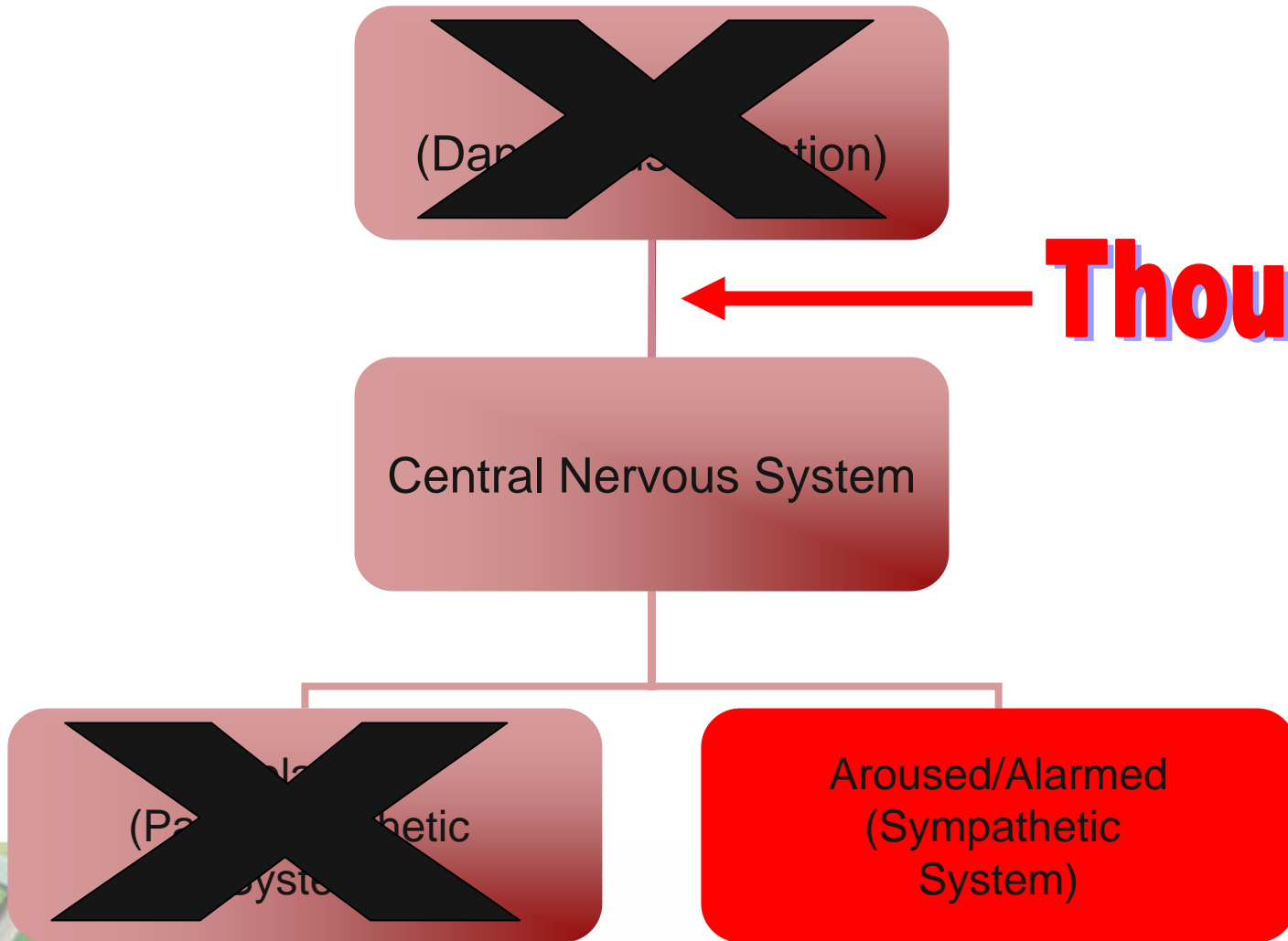
- **Fear and Anxiety have identical physical symptoms**
- **Fear**
  - Appraisal of danger**
- **Anxiety**
  - Provoked by “irrational thought” about being in danger**
  - In reality nothing is really happening NOW**
  - It’s usually a false perception**



# Fear



# Anxiety



**Thought**



# Treatment of Anxiety

## RELAXED AND AROUSED SYSTEMS CANNOT COEXIST

- If one learns to live in the relaxed state, the aroused/alarmed state cannot exist.
- This is the reason why Relaxation and Meditation are important
- Habitual arousal leads to burnout
- Calm people have mastered the relaxed state



# Exercises for Anxiety

- **Mindfulness Meditation (NOW)**
- **Deep-Breathing, Progressive Muscle Relaxation**
- **Exercise:**
  - **Make an Inventory:**
    - **Past Traumatic Memories (Depression)**
    - **Future Worries (Anxiety)**
  - **Rip them up!**
- **List things you are Grateful for today**
  - **Focus on NOW!**
  - **Cherish Each Moment Lived**



# Relaxation/ Coping Strategies

- Increase Pleasant Activities/ Social Support
- Monitor/ Rate Mood
- Monitor/ Restructure Thoughts
- Mindfulness
- Self-Coping Statements\*
- Progressive Muscle Relaxation
- Deep-Breathing
- Meditation/ Yoga
- Mental Imagery
- Education
- Healthy Habits/Laughter
- Psychotherapy/ Physical/ Occupational Therapy
- Medication

