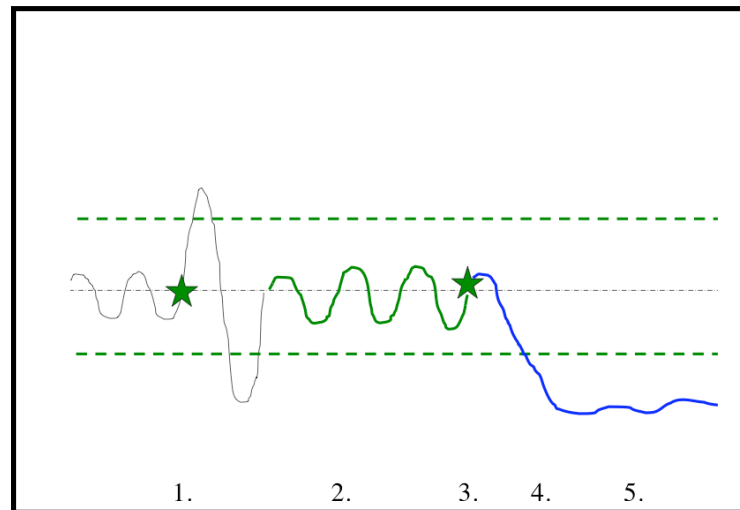


5 Phases in the Origins of Depression



1. Predisposition to a symptom or chronic illness such as depression

- affects risk by imprinting, conditioning & predisposing the nervous system to regulate in certain ways³
- appears to occur in early life such as during pregnancy, birth, and in childhood⁴
- is influenced by bonding and attachment relationships, which teach the nervous system to regulate^{5 6}
- is shaped by *trauma*⁷, which reduces sense of safety and trains the nervous system to regulate defensively⁸
- is influenced by timing: organs undergoing development are at highest risk⁶
- life experiences, including parenting care, can influence risk for symptoms by turning genes on or off^{9 10}

2. Latency Period

- represents a period during which conditioned responses grow and strengthen, without visible symptoms
- in the classic example of posttraumatic stress, symptoms occur days, months or years after trauma¹¹
- conditioned patterns are strengthened by events that stress the system, such as trauma, increasingly mild and seemingly unrelated stressors, and other environmental factors (pollution, infections, etc...)³
- greater intensity or frequency of stressors facilitates more rapid the kindling and shortens latency periods
- supportive and resourcing life experiences serve as buffers that lengthen the latency period, delay the onset of illness, or protect the organism and prevent illness³
- latency periods can last 10 years + in type 1 diabetes^{12 13}; 30 years in Alzheimer's¹⁴; 7 yrs in lupus¹⁵;

2. Unmasking or 'Reinstatement' of the Conditioned Pattern

- a final stressful event stimulates the conditioned response and makes it visible, dominant, symptomatic¹⁶

4. Symptom Onset: days, months, years after the "final stressor"

- clinical symptoms are unmasked, representing changes in nervous system patterns
- symptoms represent an intelligent, albeit magnified and prolonged "survival strategy" or defense response³
- the more severe the symptom the more intense the prior life experience(s) and perceptions of life threat³
- the type of symptom or illness is influenced the timing of the predisposing events⁶

5. Triggers

- symptoms vary based on the influence of past experiences (buffers and stressors) unique to each person³
- identifying triggers can help predict, understand & prepare for exacerbations, & may help reduce them

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