

## General Adaptation Syndrome of Hans Selye: How it Applies to Understanding the Nature of Autism

Dr. Hans Selye states that throughout the ages, healers have wondered if the vague symptoms of illness (i.e., looking ill, gastrointestinal complaints, aches and pains in joints and muscles, loss of appetite) translated somehow into measurable terms. Could these reactions point the way to explore whether there's **some non-specific defense system built into our body, a mechanism that fights any kind of disease?**

Could it lead us to a ***Unified Theory of Disease?***

Selye stated “disease is not the mere surrender to attack but also a fight for health; unless there is fight there is no disease.” Disease is not just suffering, but also a fight to maintain a homeostatic balance of our tissues. The non-specific syndrome described by Selye was called the ***General Adaptation Syndrome***. It consisted of three stages:

- 1) the ***Alarm Reaction***,
- 2) the ***Stage of Resistance***,
- 3) the ***Stage of Exhaustion***.

**Inflammation is the hallmark of the initial phases. It has structure and purpose.** It's something active: it's not merely the passive result of injury, but a ***positive*** reaction against it. By calling it a reaction, this implies that it has a purpose; apparently its object is to inactivate or eliminate the aggressor and mend whatever damage has been caused. The ***classic inflammatory responses are reddening, heat, swelling, and pain.***

What agents lead to an activation of the body's defensive inflammatory response? I believe that the primary agents affecting the body today are environmental pollutants, including heavy metals, chemicals, and pharmaceutical agents **(mainly antibiotics, steroids, and vaccinations)**. The secondary agents are the microbes. And microbes can only take root in an organism that has been weakened by the primary agents; infection can only occur in an organism

that is **susceptible** (likely to get). A thorough understanding of this point is critical in conceiving a support program for autism.

The observations of the non-specific response syndrome led him to develop a model of the body's response to damaging agents. He called this model the **General Adaptation Syndrome**, a syndrome that evolves through time and consists of the three separate phases that he delineated. He called the syndrome General because the damaging agents stimulated a general effect upon large portions of the body. It was Adaptive because there was a stimulation of the body's defense system, which, in turn, led to the acquisition, and maintenance of the capacity to increase one's ability to survive continued exposure to a damaging agent. It was clear that the body's responses to a damaging agent were such that any individual changes seemed to be both coordinated and dependent upon each other.

Importantly, he also discovered that it's only when the whole organism is exhausted that one enters into the final stage of exhaustion characteristic of the **General Adaptation Syndrome**. From his observations he coined the words **Adaptation Energy** and came to understand that each individual is born with a limited quantity of **Adaptation Energy**.

The body's defense mechanism has two parts: either overpower the damaging agent or coexist with it. One can defend himself against aggression by ignoring (or running away from) the threatening agent, or advance and attack him (it).

This is an extremely important point for you to understand. We all accept the notion that if we are attacked by another human being that what I just said represents the options that we have. That's clear and obvious to anyone. What isn't clear is that the body has a multitude of defensive reactions for use against different types of damaging agents. Therefore, the mucus and cough that may be associated with exposure to a bacteria or virus are, in fact, the body's defensive reaction against that agent. This type of reaction, however, is also useful as a mechanism to defend

oneself against exposure to an environmental pollutant as well.

Here's the rub: no one would deny the action of attacking or running away from someone trying to harm you. You'd be encouraged to perform either one of those actions. But, the creation of mucus or the action of coughing is always discouraged and an unlimited arsenal of weapons has been designed to stop the body from performing these defensive reactions. We'll discuss these ideas in much more detail later since understanding them is discouraged by modern medicine and, yet, if you don't understand them and encourage them through a stimulation of the body's defensive reactions, it'll be difficult to attain optimal health. All of these ideas have been well known to the armies of natural healers over the last several centuries.

The concept of the organism as reactive, self-healing, and adaptive has been well understood since the time of Hippocrates. The ancient belief in the healing power of nature, Hippocrates's *Vis Naturae Medicatrix*, is an expression of the faith that the complex, integrated, whole organism can respond in an adaptive manner to environmental assaults. Unfortunately, this philosophical concept has received little recognition, and its potential power for contributing to health will remain unexplored until our medical and scientific institutions accept it.

Although well over 2,000 years old, the notion of the "healing force of nature" continues to receive scant attention, and it appears that it will be a long time until our research engines begin to unravel some of the mysteries now well hidden within its framework.

The most critical step in designing a plan to attack autism is that its primary focus must be to strengthen "the healing force of nature." In my own work during more than forty years of study I've found that advanced homeopathy (not classical homeopathy) is the most powerful tool to achieve this goal.