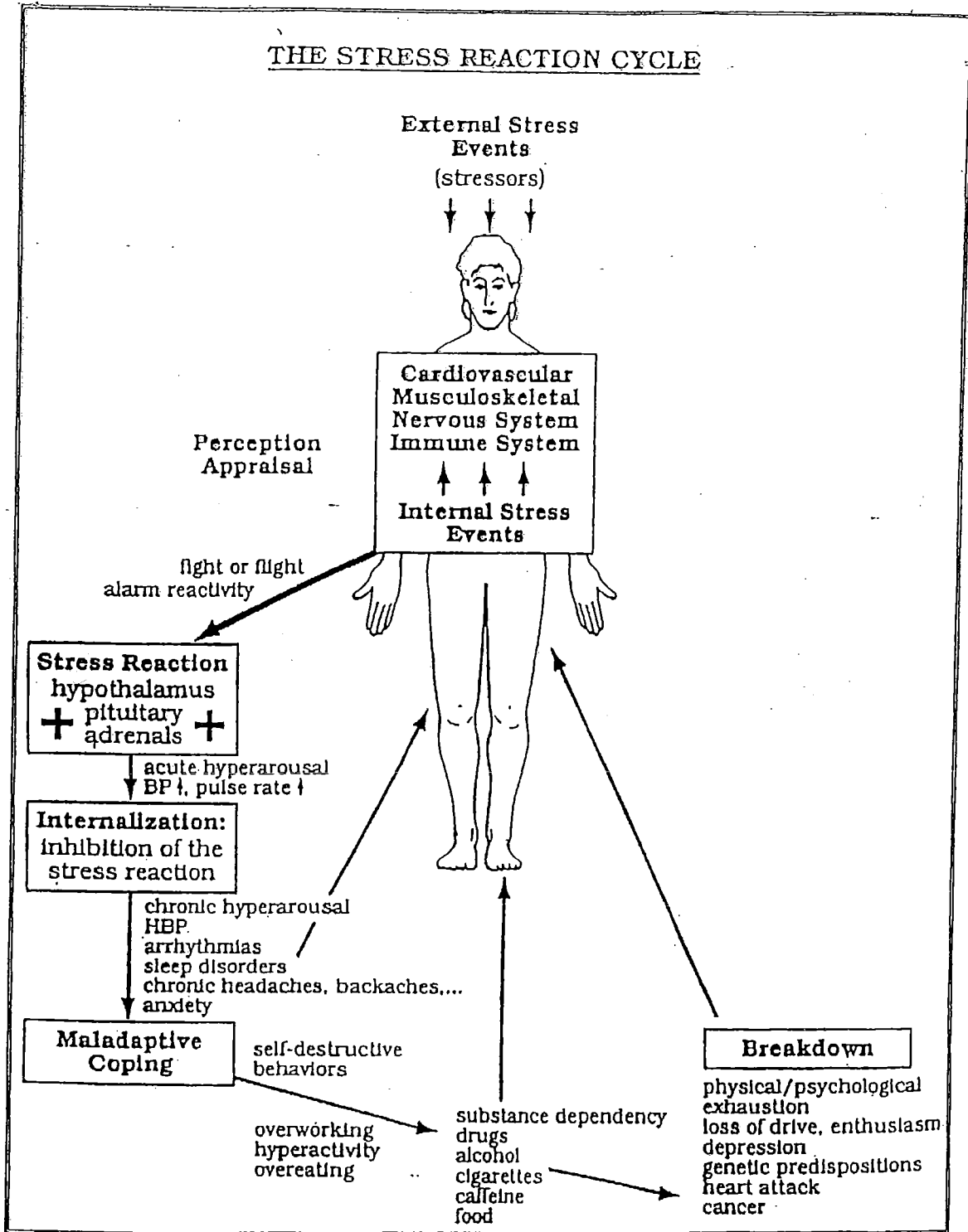
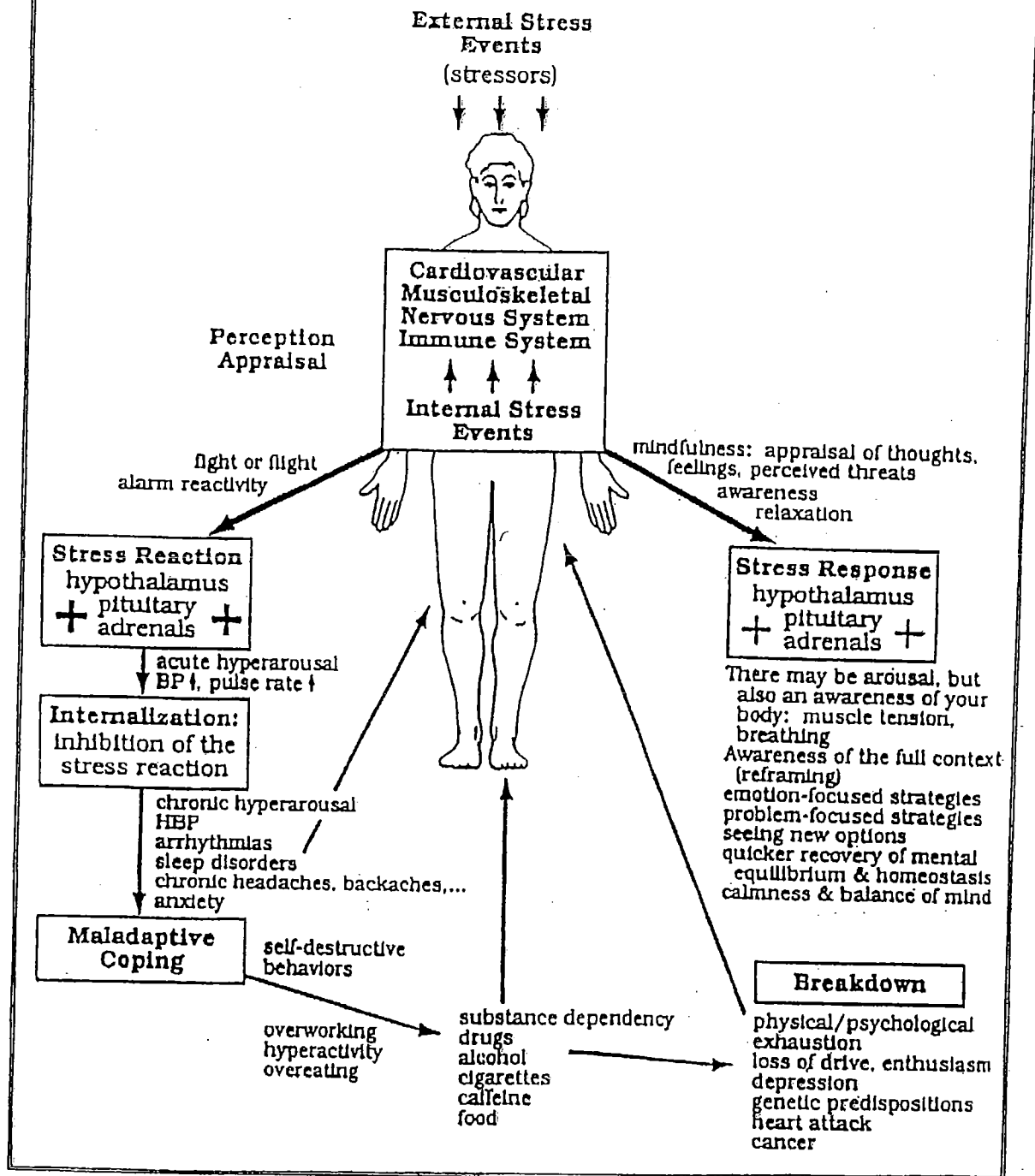


THE STRESS REACTION CYCLE



COPING WITH STRESS
RESPONDING VS REACTING



Oceans

I have a feeling that my boat
Has struck, down there in the depths,
against a great thing.

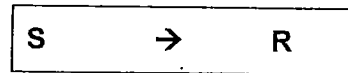
And nothing
Happens! Nothing... Silence... Waves...

Nothing happens? Or has everything
happened, and we are standing, quietly, in
the new life?

~ Juan Ramon Jiminez

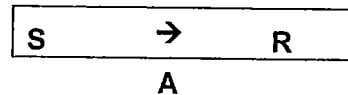
"80 percent of success is just showing up"
~ Woody Allen

Our normal reaction to difficulties might be
completely habitual and mindless:



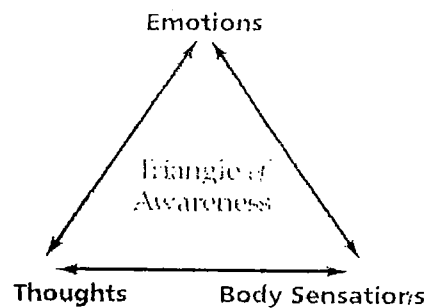
Stress → Reaction

But there might be another way of responding
when we're stressed:



Stress + Awareness → Choice of Response

Triangle of Awareness:



REACTING freezes your choices and shuts down your brain.

RESPONDING opens up your choices and jump starts your creativity.

REACTING creates more problems.

RESPONDING solves problems.

REACTING says things like "Why does this always happen to me?" "This is just not fair" or "This shouldn't be happening!"

RESPONDING says "I don't like what is happening, it's really inconvenient, so how do we best deal with this?"

REACTING escalates an argument and leads to no solutions.

RESPONDING defuses an argument and sets the stage to seek solutions.

REACTING creates anger and distance in relationships.

RESPONDING creates connection and intimacy in relationships.

REACTING keeps you dealing with the same problems over and over, without achieving any long-term solution or elimination of the problem.

RESPONDING allows you to consider the current problem, possible sources of the problem, and the multitude of solutions available when you respond with reasoned creativity.

REACTING demonstrates ignorance, which is applied lack of understanding.

RESPONDING demonstrates wisdom, which is applied understanding and knowledge.

REACTING causes us to act as if we have no knowledge, experience or wisdom.

RESPONDING allows us to use and apply our knowledge, experience and wisdom.

REACTING is the primary cause of road rage and doing really stupid things.

RESPONDING allows you to handle potentially dangerous situations in a way that keeps you safe.

REACTING causes us to say really stupid things to our kids, sometimes even sounding like our own parents. Nothing worthwhile is taught or modeled.

RESPONDING allows us to step back enough to realize that one of the main purposes of parenting is the transfer of values to the next generation.

REACTING causes us to jump into situations without considering the consequences.

RESPONDING allows us to step back, consider the context and all the available options.