



Stored Responses

QUICK SUMMARY

1. Our neocortex is the rational part of our brain
2. The limbic system is the 'fight or flight' instinctive part
3. Having stored responses ready helps us to remain calm and focussed when the limbic system might otherwise take over

Ever had a moment with your children where you look at them and wonder why asking them to clean the room has triggered an emotional response that you never saw coming? Ever wondered why they have gotten so upset that the friend from yesterday doesn't want to be their friend today? Ever gotten that call from the school and suddenly you are in combat mode because there is 'no way' your child would do that?

In every single one of these moments, it is best for your rational brain (the neocortex) to respond, rather than the emotional reaction that happens when your feelings brain (the limbic system) kicks in. When we are confronted with new or unexpected situations, our brains start searching for a response and it is much easier to work with people when they are using the neocortex.

Stored responses are those things that we upload to our neocortex so that we don't get emotional and say or do things that might make the situation worse or that we might regret after the moment is over.

You could say that we are conditioning ourselves to know how to react in a specific moment – we are uploading the right response for when moments are tough, giving ourselves the best chance to tilt the earth just a little to stay calm and be focused.

What does it look like?

Your child's bedroom is a rubbish tip – the emotional response might be to start yelling about the smell; threatening to throw your child out if they don't clean up; piling all of their prized possessions into garbage bags and loading the boot of the car! Saturday morning is for household chores and they won't do it!

Then, to top it off, they say to you 'Seriously, take a chill pill, it's my room!' Kaboom – your limbic system in full flight and you are about to have a heart attack. And it's likely the rest of the day has you out of sorts!

Some stored responses could be... Friday night place a washing basket at the door of the bedroom, loaded up with garbage bags, cleaning products and a checklist; when asked what this is all about have preloaded statements explaining what needs to be done on Saturday morning by 11am and how delighted you will be that everyone can then enjoy their weekend!

Stored responses are those things that we upload to our neocortex so that we don't get emotional and say or do things that might make the situation worse or that we might regret after the moment is over.

