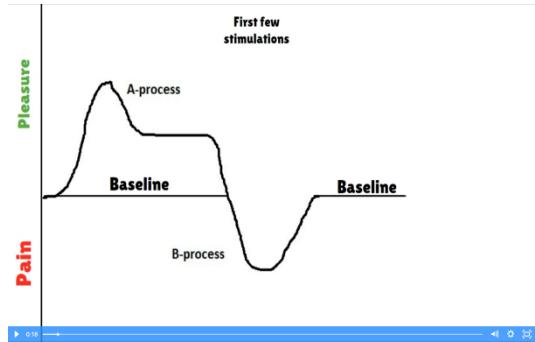


PUSH THE VOID: Understanding this graph could change your life

The graph is also known as **Richard Solomon's opponent process theory**. And it's now obviously more than just a theory, but anyway... As you can see, we have an "A - process" to the left, and then we have a "B-process" to the right. Process A is the result in brain dopamine from everything that gives immediate pleasure without effort: video games, scrolling social media, alcohol, drugs etc. Process B is what follows in order for the brain to gain homeostasis.



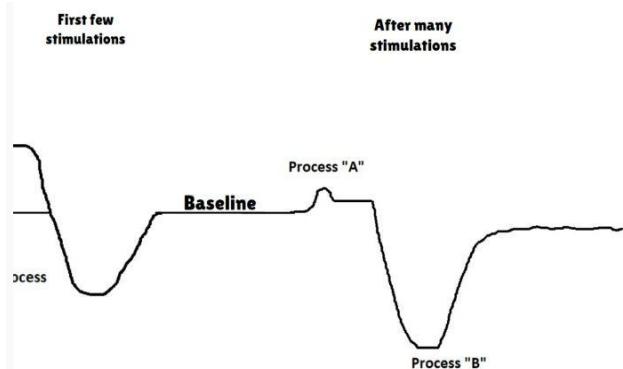
Pain and pleasure are co-located in the brain....

So, then the **y axis** here is how you're feeling. The higher up, the better you feel, and then the lower we go down here, the **WORSE** you feel. Here in the middle is your **baseline**. Your baseline level of pleasure, happiness or awesomeness or whatever the heck we want to call it. This graph is actually pretty old, but recent studies have found that it is really super accurate, because brain scientists have now found that pain and pleasure are co-located in the brain. And before I continue here, I'm going to give you a phrase to remember for later on.

Push on one side - and the other side will respond... If you push on one of them, the other one will respond because... Pain and pleasure are co-located in the brain!

The graph changes with repeated stimulations / exposures...

Now, the graph we were just looking at below shows what **the rebound effect** in dopamine looks like on your system after engaging in **many stimulations**. And as you can see, now the graph has changed! Now that you've been doing the activity, repeatedly, over and over again, **NOW** you actually are desensitized. **Process A doesn't give the same "high" anymore.**



And when you look at the graph now you can literally see the desensitization. Because now you get less enjoyment and pleasure

from the stimuli, and then even worse, **the B-process gets even longer and deeper than previously.**

A new - lower dopamine 'set point'...

And the worst of all, when you start to recover from your alcohol binge or video games (or whatever stimuli) after a day or two **you no longer reach up to your former baseline.** Can you see that? So, you are now stuck below your former baseline. In other words, you have now permanently changed your set point so that you have a lower level of motivation, happiness and awesomeness.

It is reversible...

Well, permanent is perhaps not the best word, because **you can reverse it**, by getting away from all that low value dopamine stimulation for a while. **But if you ignore** that and you just keep blasting your brain with more **low value dopamine stimulation**, well then, it's permanent - because you're stuck there, below your former baseline levels.

You can FLIP the graph and do amazing things....

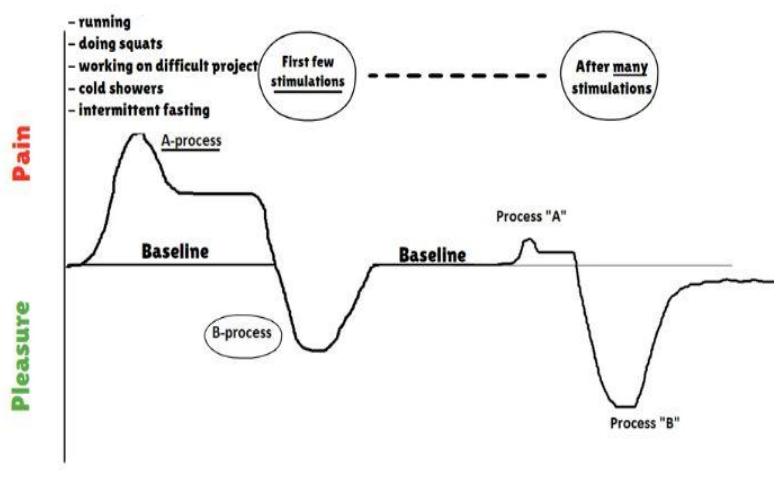
You can actually flip the Richard Solomon's graph to help speed up the resetting process. Yes, we can turn everything upside down to speed up the growth of new D2 receptors. If we go back to the first graph here, remember that your brain doesn't like extreme things and that it wants to maintain homeostasis?

Well, this means that the graph works the other way around as well.

If we go to the Y-axis and flip the emotions there, and we put the pain and effort up here, and the pleasure and happiness down here.

Swap pleasure with pain...

Ok, great, so if we now present the brain with a stimulus that is quite painful or takes quite a lot of effort, like for example going for a fast 30-minute run...well then you will feel pain in the moment (*pain is now the stimulation / the exposure*), so the pain is now the A-process. But then the counter mechanism, which is the B-process, kicks in after you're done



so then you'll actually start feeling really good... **The good and the bad are now on different sides of the X-axis...**

This, is what I call a **high value dopamine activity**, because you get lasting dopamine levels that don't drop your baseline levels in the long run.

In fact, it is the very opposite of an addiction!

And here comes the coolest part of everything so far...Remember the first few simulations line here?

Here too, repeated exposures change the graph - but this time something amazingly good happens... because remember how the graph will change after many stimulations? Well, the coolest thing here is that the second graph now also works when we have flipped the Y-axis.

So, the more often you do stuff that takes effort and are a bit painful, like for example...

Running hard for 20 minutes
Doing heavy squats
Doing intermittent fasting
Taking cold showers
Working on a project
Studying hard
And on and on, all those effortful things...

...the more of those you do, the less painful they will start to feel in the moment. And the cool part here is ***that after you are done,*** when the B-process kicks in, ***you now feel even more pleasure and enjoyment after you're done.***

Yeah, because remember, the B-process always becomes deeper and stronger and longer after we have been logging in ***ongoing repeated stimulations***.....no matter which way you flip the y-axis. **You have created a new happiness / badass set point...**

But hands down, the absolute best part about the repeated stimulations after flipping the y-axis is that, ***when the B-process finally comes to an end, you remain on this side of the baseline,*** which is now the happiness and pleasure side.

It's the complete opposite of an addiction...

This is literally the exact opposite of the addiction and desensitization process. Showing how you permanently create a new baseline level of happiness, drive and motivation, as you can see in the picture right here.

You now also have a lower baseline level of pain (this is good) ...

And since pain and pleasure are co-located in the brain, in other words if you push on one side, the other side counteracts, that means you now also have a lower baseline level of pain. Or, perhaps a better way to put this is, you are now a dude walking around feeling happier while you at the same time have a much higher pain threshold. Just how badass is that?

You're suddenly

- *Happier*
- *More awesome*
- *And on top of that you now also have a higher pain tolerance.*

You can really supercharge your dopamine system here...

Not only can this help reverse desensitization, but by *adding a bit of painful stuff into your fasts (self control)*, you can actually *grow more receptors* than what you had even before you started using those instant gratification simulations.

Even more than what “normal people” have, who are not desensitized. This is where I got the term **“supercharge your dopamine system”** from, because if you can get your dopamine system in way better shape than a normal functioning brain, oh man, supercharging is *not* a stupid term at all. In fact, it is quite appropriate.