

EMOTIONAL CHANGES

Having a Stroke can lead to some intense emotional changes such as:

- Grief
- Depression
- Frustration
- Fear

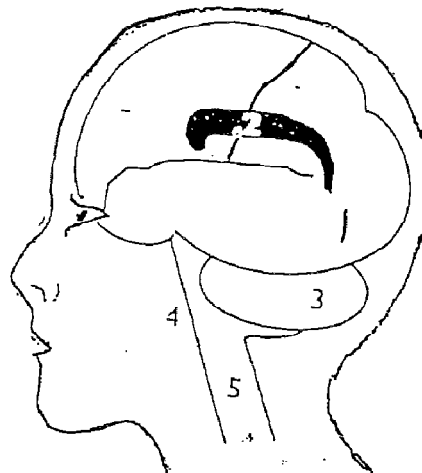
Some of these changes can be a result of a normal psychological reaction to a personal loss, and some of the changes can be due to injury to brain areas that are related to emotional functioning. The above diagram illustrates the parts of the brain associated with emotional aspects

Different parts of the brain control different functions

1. **Left side** of brain controls right Side of the body and speech, reading and writing.

Right side of brain controls left side of Body and visual memory, drawing and music appreciation.

2. **Limbic system** controls emotions, learning and memory



3. **Cerebellum** controls Co-ordination

4. **Brain Stem** controls breathing, heart rate, temperature and alertness

5. **Spinal Cord** acts as highway for messages between brain and nerves and vice versa.

MORE ABOUT EMOTIONAL ASPECTS.....

A. GRIEF

- When some people realise that they have lost some functions and abilities after a Stroke, they may experience a grief reaction similar to that of losing a loved one.

GRIEF

- Sometimes the rehabilitation process may make a person more aware of his/her losses. This awareness may become a major source of frustration, disappointment, and anger.
- The passage of time usually leads to a stage of acceptance and adjustment and the person will begin to cope with the losses.

B. DEPRESSION

- Depression is one of the most common effects of Stroke. Compared to grief, depression can be the longest lasting. Some symptoms of depression are listed below:

Symptoms of Depression may include:

- feeling sad, and hopeless
- loss of energy and fatigued
- change in appetite
- loss of energy, and interest in usual activities
- lowered self esteem
- sleep disturbance

Depression is usually most common between six months and two years after the Stroke. Most people find they need professional help to deal with this problem.

C. FRUSTRATION AND ANGER

- Frustration can result from difficulty completing everyday tasks as well and as quickly as one used to. It can also result from difficulties in communicating as clearly with other people.
- Frustrations can sometimes lead to anger. A lack of control of one's anger could lead to tension and resentment between the person with a Stroke and the persons who care for them.
- Feelings of frustration may be reduced by slowing down and accepting the limitations, by sharing with other people about one's feelings, and by becoming involved with group activities, where a person can reach out and draw on the experiences of others (For example: joining a Stroke Support Group)

D. FEAR

After a stroke, some people may experience fear because the stability of their lives is disrupted. Some symptoms of fear include confusion, numbness or shock. Fear can turn into anxiety, where there is no definite threat in sight but feelings of anxiousness just occur. Finding out more about the effects of a stroke and talking to other people who have gone through a similar experience could alleviate one's fear.