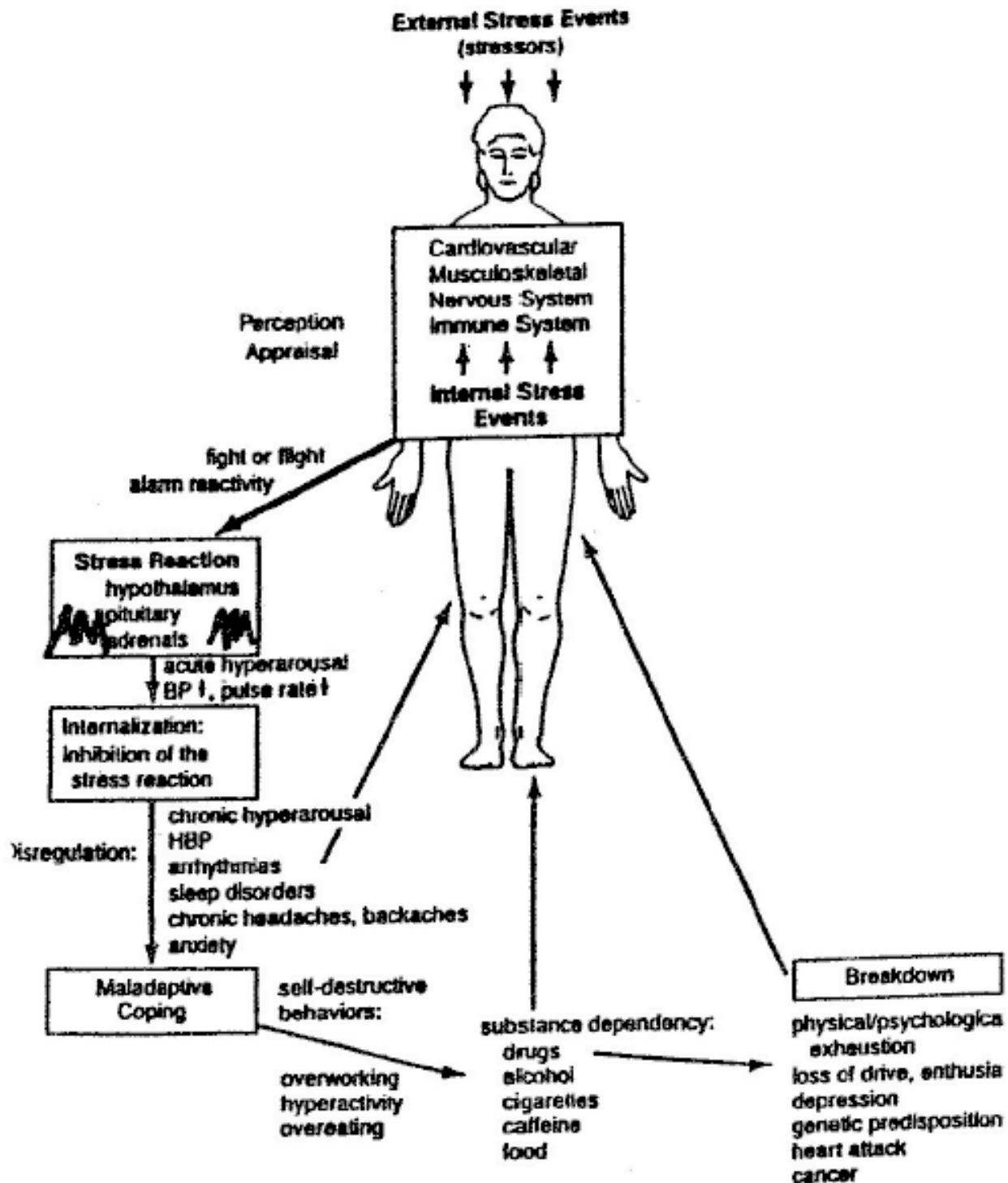


## The Stress **REACTION** Cycle -- how a ramped-up, highly activated nervous system reacts to stressful events (both internal and external)

The brain (hypothalamus and pituitary) sends **massive** signals to the adrenals: **ALARM, ALARM!!** The reaction to stress (whether actual or perceived) generates physiological reactions and behaviors that, in turn, generate more stress/stressful reactions. The system spirals into increasingly greater dysregulation. (The reversal of this negative spiral is on p. 2.)



Both illustrations from *Full Catastrophe Living: Using the Wisdom of Your Body and Mind to Face Stress, Pain and Illness*, by Jon Kabat-Zinn <http://www.mindfulnesscds.com/books.html>

**The Stress RESPONSE Cycle:** calming a highly activated nervous system can diminish an **overactive stress REACTION** (from p. 1)

We learn to access resources, both internal and external, that signal the brain it's safe -- no immediate danger threatens in this moment. This sends **calming** signals to the adrenals: **no need to create an uproar**. It's like removing the fuel from a blazing fire, or putting on the brakes in a runaway train.

This measured response to stress generates **grounding, stabilizing** physiological reactions and behaviors that, in turn, generate **more soothing, relaxing body-mind states**. The system spirals into increasingly greater **regulation**.

## Coping with Stress: **RESPONDING** rather than **REACTING**

