

# The affective response to CO<sub>2</sub> in healthy volunteers : an instance of a primal emotion

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## Propositions belonging to the PhD thesis of Alessandro Colasanti

### **The affective response to CO<sub>2</sub> in healthy volunteers: an instance of a primal emotion**

1. Inhaling CO<sub>2</sub> evokes an acute, time-limited, dose-dependent feeling with high hedonicity and negative valence, in other words an aversive emotion.
2. The symptoms evoked by CO<sub>2</sub> inhalation are various. Amongst them, the feelings associated to respiration are the most distressing and fear-evoking.
3. The feeling of panic, experienced by certain individuals with Panic Disorder, is phenomenologically identical to the urge for breathing elicited by CO<sub>2</sub>.
4. Most of the times, it is possible to predict whether an antidepressant treatment is effective for a particular patient, after the first week of treatment, and in many cases, after the first dose.
5. Placebos are identical to pharmacological interventions, in that they affect neurobiological processes at the receptor level, and can be antagonized by appropriate blocking agents.
6. The use and abuse of illicit drugs in patients with substance-use related disorders originate as an attempt to self-medicate an underlying mental suffering, whose nature is accurately revealed by the type of substance abused, and the specific modality of administration of the drug.
7. Current psychiatric nosology is not based on neurobiological notions, however it dramatically influences the way scientists and physicians respectively investigate and prescribe treatments for psychiatric disorders.
8. The study of primal emotional systems provides the opportunity to conceive ideal translational models of psychopathology.
9. In the human brain, there are socio-emotional neural circuits that dictate the urge for caring and nurturance, and others that dictate the urge for power and greed (Jaak Panksepp). Music and dance, among others, give voice to the former, and silence the latter.
10. An absolute truth doesn't exist. The confine between virtues and vices fades for the impossibility to attain any form of certainty (Fabrizio De Andre').
11. Pleasure is a sign of usefulness (Michel Cabanac).