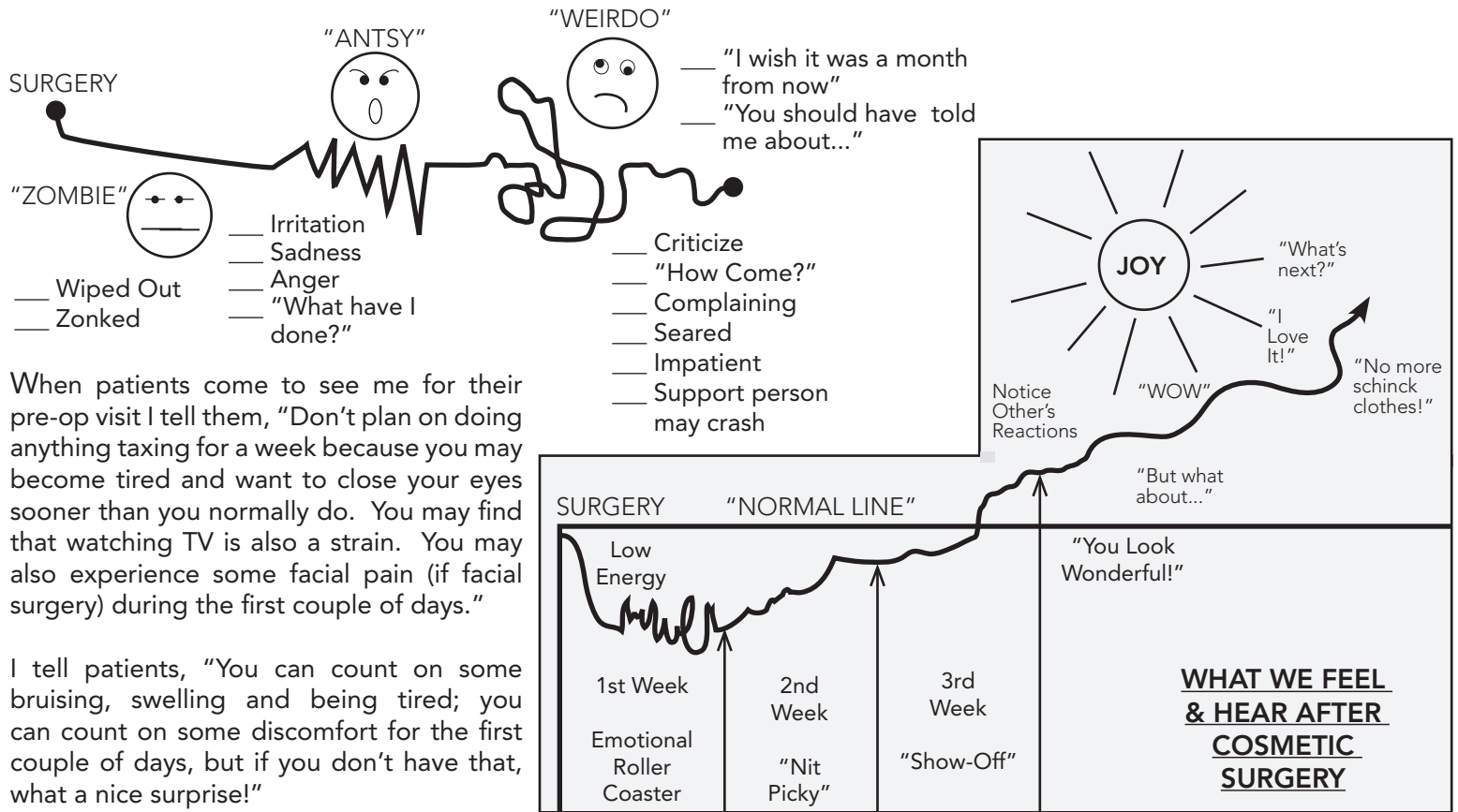


Emotional & Physical Reactions

EMOTIONAL ROLLER COASTER



When patients come to see me for their pre-op visit I tell them, “Don’t plan on doing anything taxing for a week because you may become tired and want to close your eyes sooner than you normally do. You may find that watching TV is also a strain. You may also experience some facial pain (if facial surgery) during the first couple of days.”

I tell patients, “You can count on some bruising, swelling and being tired; you can count on some discomfort for the first couple of days, but if you don’t have that, what a nice surprise!”

One of the things I ask people in a pre-op visit is “Who will take care of you?” Then I say, “ You want to have somebody who’s really going to take care of you, who won’t say to when you first get home: “What the heck did you do that for?” Get somebody who’s going to be really supportive and caring and who will be warm, because you’re really going to need that.

The emotional stages the patient is going through affects the caretaker too. At the end of the first week the support person may be tired and need to go back to work.

Surgery affects each person differently. These curves are just a basic outline. The most common reaction is to be depressed on the third or fourth day. However, some patients say, “Well, not me. I didn’t feel depressed.” But three weeks later, they may have a crying jag while driving to work.”

“Sometime near the end of the second week they’ve begun to feel good. And there’s a day in there when they realize that they look magnificent.”

“Patients experience feedback, both positive and negative. Some

people tell me that they’re a bit irritated because people are now paying them more attention than they did before.” And I say to them, “Isn’t that why you had the surgery? Because you wanted to be more attractive?” And they reply, “Yes, but why didn’t they like me the way I was?” But eventually people start to really enjoy the extra attention.

Anyone who has cosmetic surgery has shown they are a person of courage and they may now demand great deeds from themselves. They have given up the excuse called- “I’d be too afraid to do that.”

