



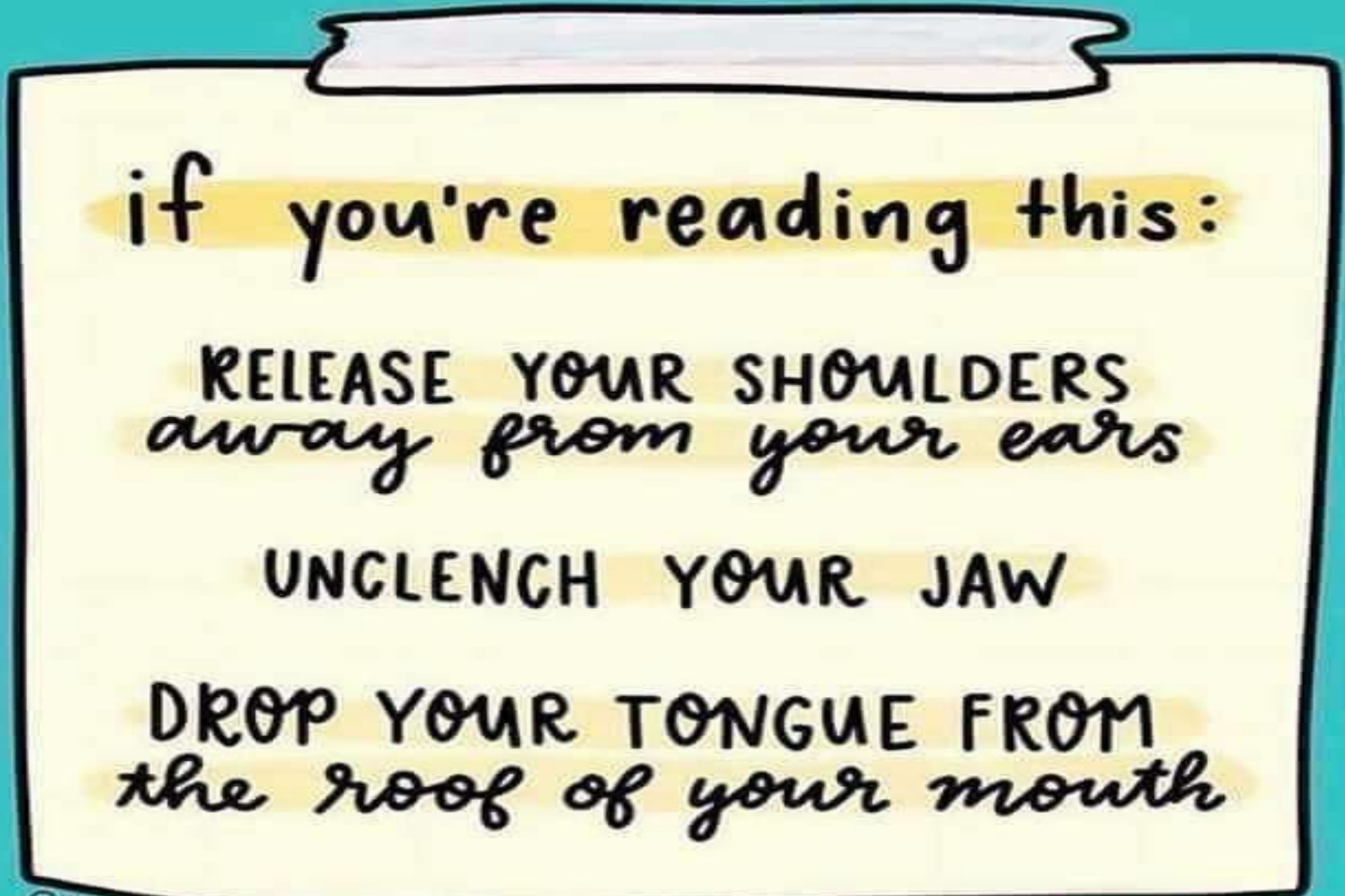
- ❖ Independent local charity established in 1989
- ❖ Promote mental and psychological support for young people aged 11-25 and parents connected to West Berkshire
- ❖ One to one counselling:
 - ❖ 8000+ one to one counselling sessions in 2025
 - ❖ 200+ sessions a week
- ❖ BACP accredited
- ❖ Supported online programmes
- ❖ Presentations, workshops, assemblies

However you are feeling... you are not alone.

We are a charity that delivers an emotional and psychological support service for young people aged 11-25 and parents connected to West Berkshire.



- ❖ **MENTAL HEALTH - A COMPASSIONATE UNDERSTANDING**
- ❖ **ADOLESCENCE – WHAT IS GOING ON?**
- ❖ **WHAT CAN I DO?**



if you're reading this:

RELEASE YOUR SHOULDERS
away from your ears

UNCLENCH YOUR JAW

DROP YOUR TONGUE FROM
the roof of your mouth

WHY PEOPLE SEEK SUPPORT

- ❖ Bereavement/loss
- ❖ School
- ❖ Identity
- ❖ Food/Eating
- ❖ Self-harm
- ❖ Bullying
- ❖ Relationships
- ❖ Friendships
- ❖ Anxiety
- ❖ Stress
- ❖ Self esteem
- ❖ Low mood
- ❖ Anger
- ❖ Family
- ❖ Trauma
- ❖ Abuse
- ❖

WHY PEOPLE SEEK SUPPORT

- ❖ Pounding heartbeat
- ❖ Feeling faint/dizzy
- ❖ Sweating
- ❖ Nausea (feeling sick)
- ❖ Chest pains
- ❖ Feeling unable to breathe
- ❖ Shaky limbs
- ❖ Tense muscles
- ❖ Tense/nervous
- ❖ Short tempered
- ❖ Sense of dread
- ❖ Busy crowded mind
- ❖ Negative thoughts
- ❖ Feeling restless
- ❖ Feeling numb



THE ANXIETY PARADOX

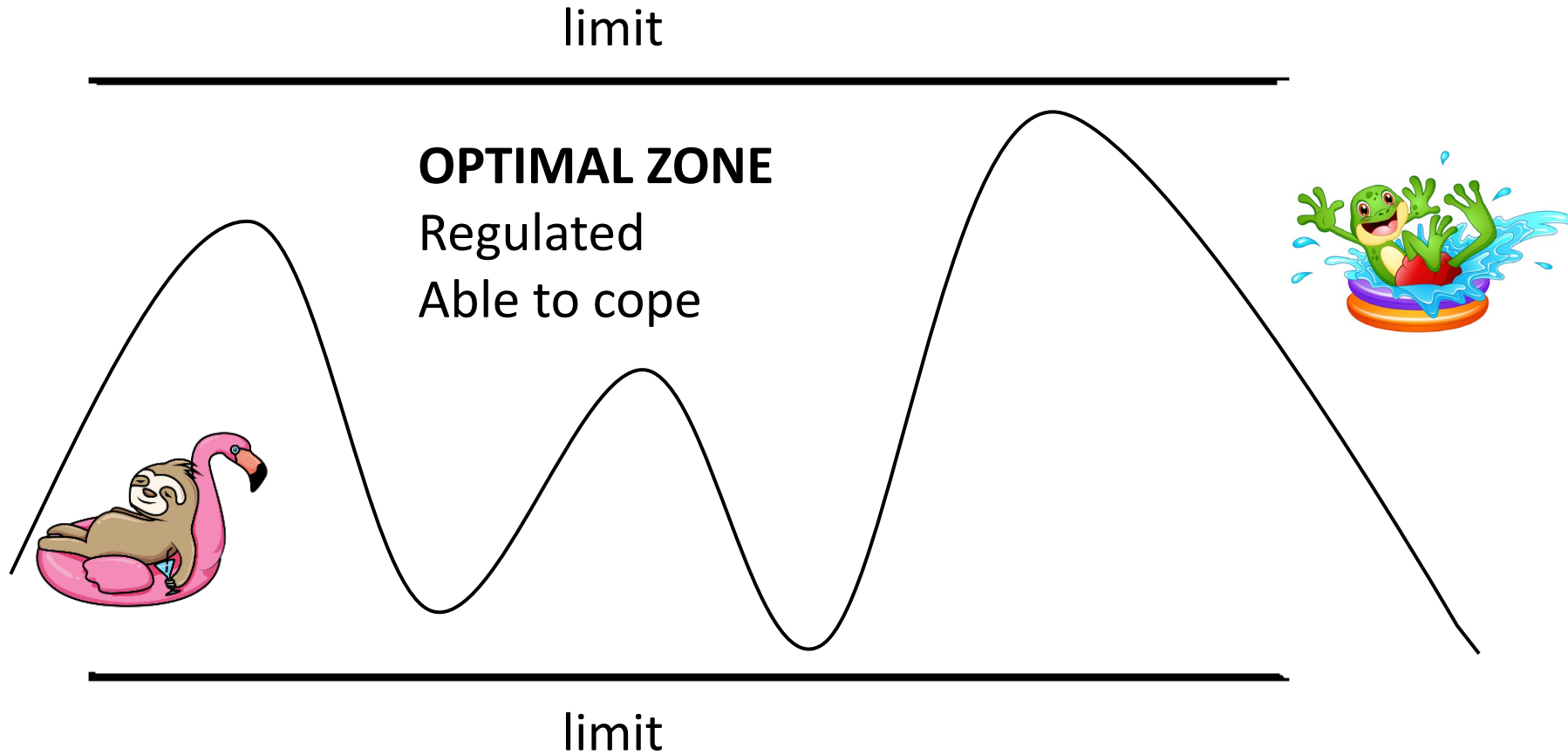
Makes us feel rubbish!

BUT.....

- ❖ Focuses attention
- ❖ Extra strength/energy
- ❖ Determination to succeed
- ❖ Provides learning opportunities
- ❖ Can be felt in enjoyable situations
- ❖ Keeps us safe

High stress/anxiety does not correlate with low happiness

“WINDOW OF TOLERANCE”*



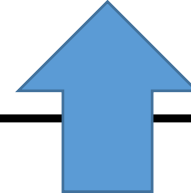
* Dr Dan Siegel

DYSREGULATED ZONE

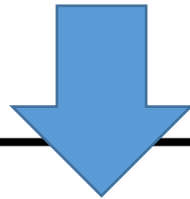
Less able/unable to Cope
Overwhelmed



limit



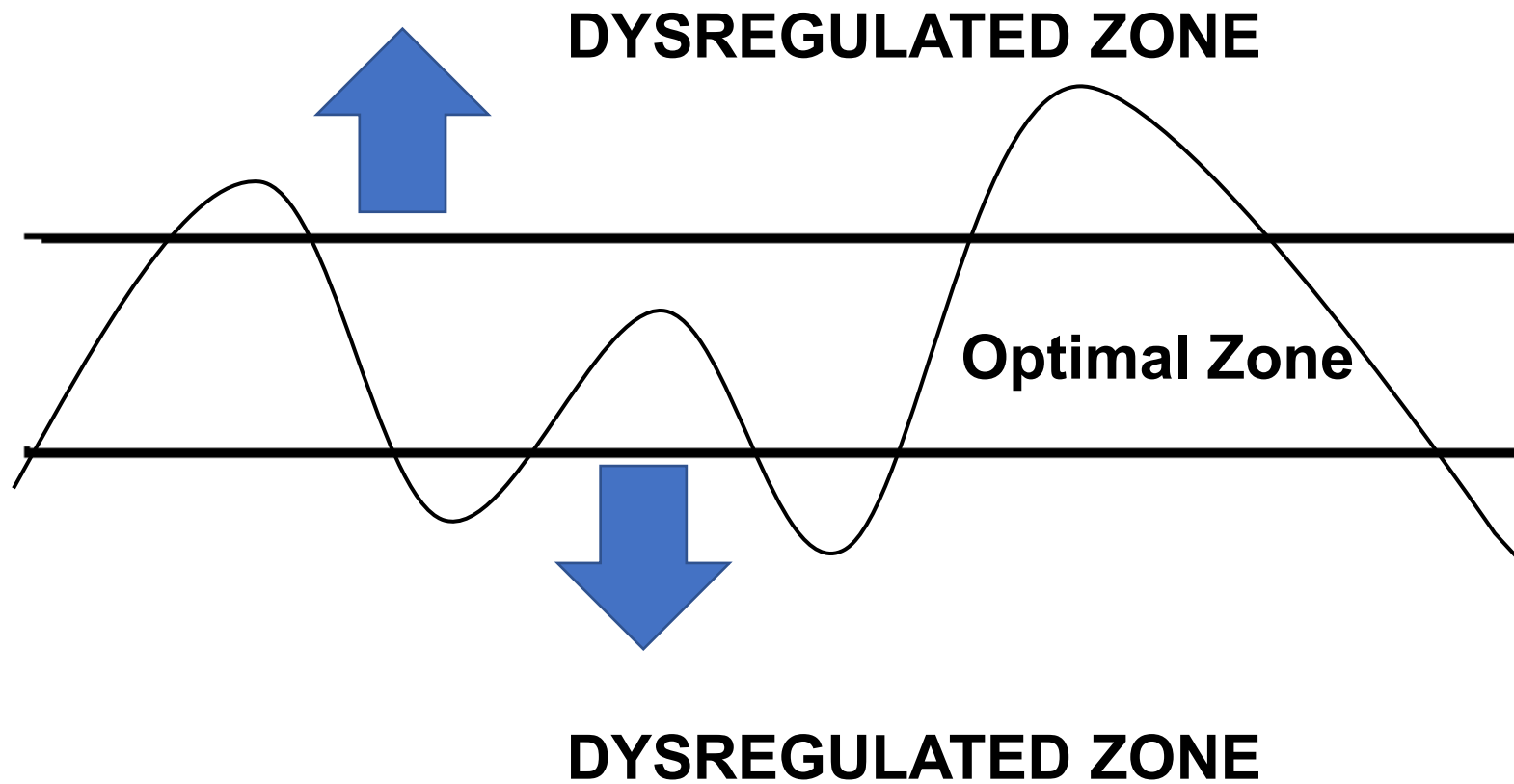
limit



DYSREGULATED ZONE

Less able/Unable to Cope
Overwhelmed







Prefrontal Cortex

- ❖ Allows us to think before we act
- ❖ Decision-making
- ❖ Control over emotions & body
- ❖ Focus/Concentration
- ❖ Empathy
- ❖ Self Awareness

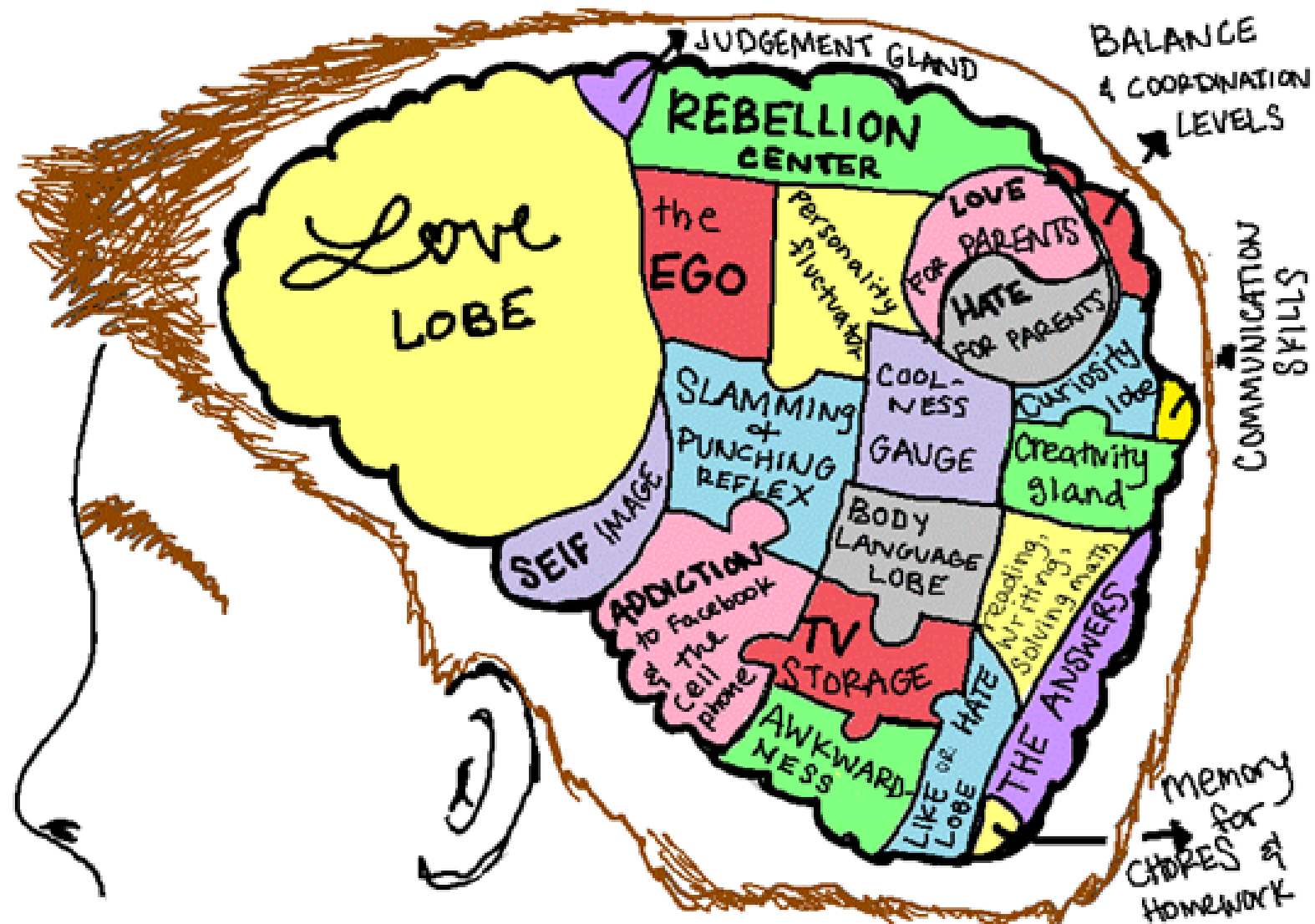


Limbic System

- ❖ Allows us to act before we think
- ❖ Fight/flight/freeze response
- ❖ Emotional reactions
- ❖ Bodily functions

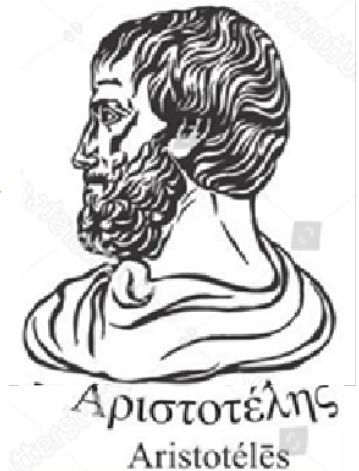
What is happening in the brain?

The Adolescent Brain



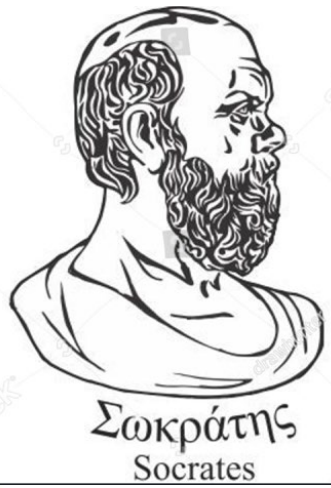
The children now love luxury. They have bad manners, contempt for authority; they show disrespect for elders and love chatter in place of exercise.'

Aristotle (384–322 BC)



lacking in sexual self-restraint,
fickle in their desires, passionate
and impulsive

Socrates (469– 399 BC)



Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development

Illustration by Joshua Seong, Verywell



**Sensorimotor
Stage**

Birth to 2 yrs

**Preoperational
Stage**

2 to 7 yrs

**Concrete
Operational
Stage**

7 to 11 yrs

**Formal
Operational
Stage**

12 and up

verywell



**Different aged
children will
process things
differently**



**All of them will
process things
differently from
an adult**

CAN'T NOT WON'T

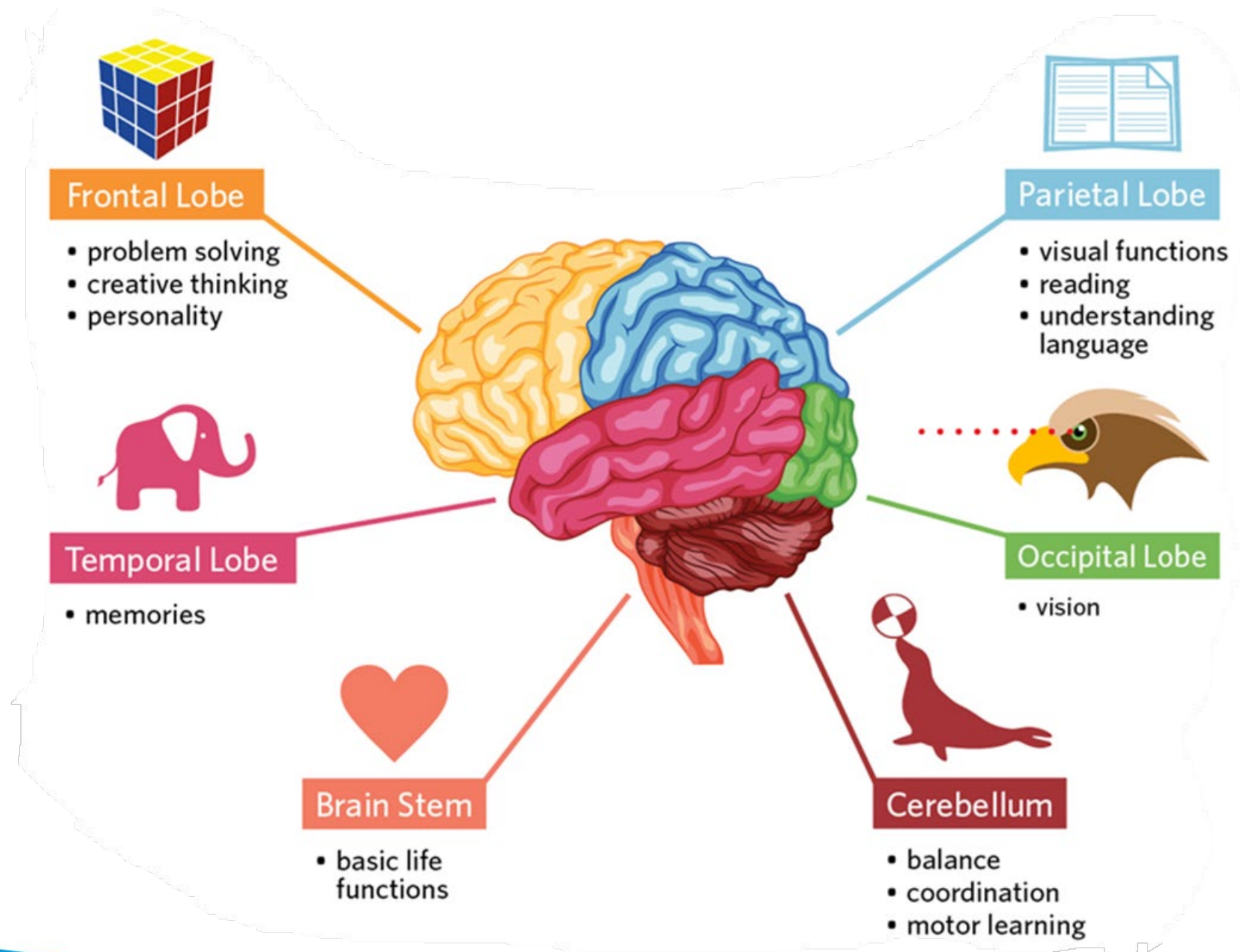
The Brain



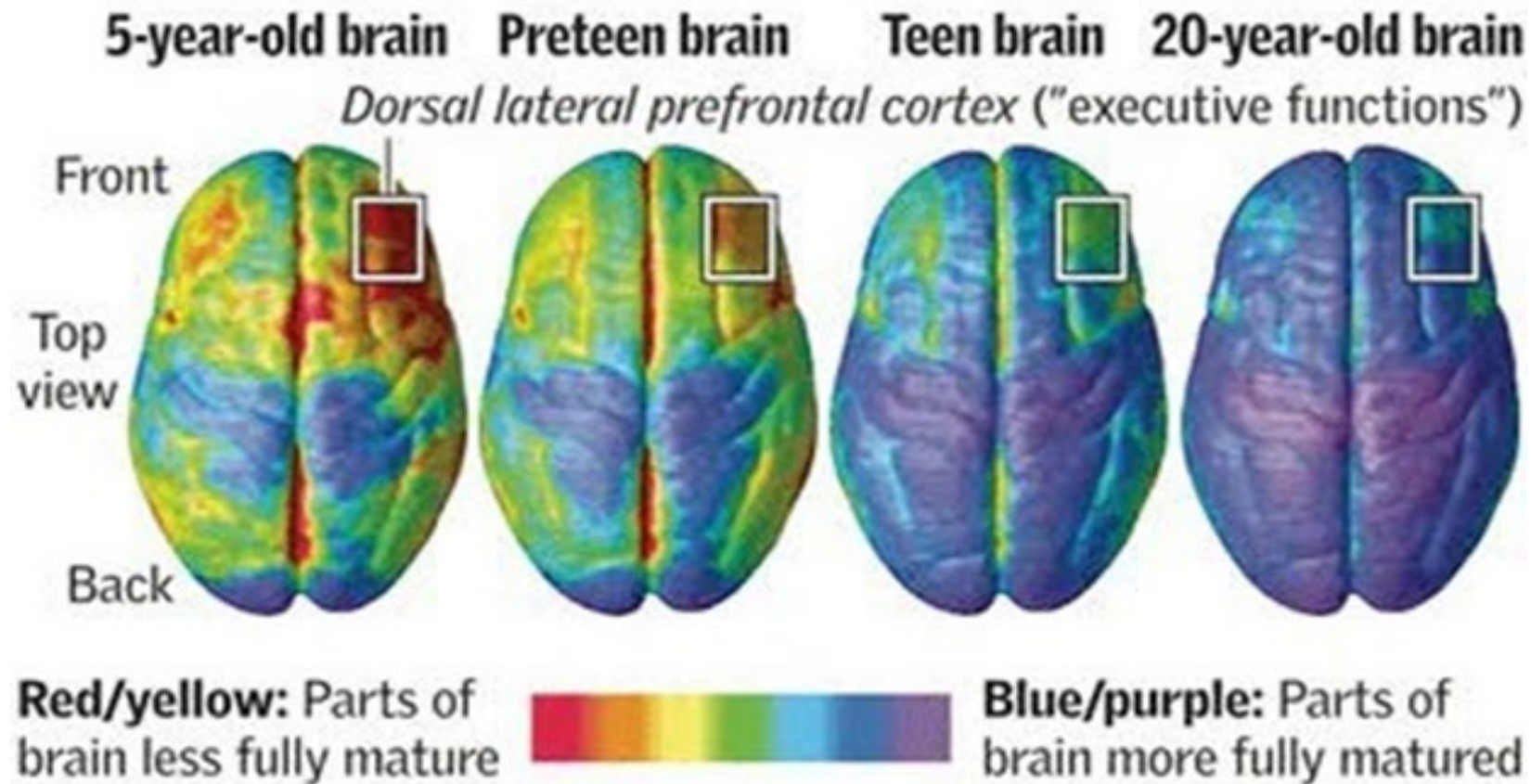
- ❖ The brain is the only organ that is unfinished when we are born - 25% of final brain size
- ❖ All brain cells are there but not connected



- ❖ Two big times of growth and change—terrible twos and the adolescent years
- ❖ Different areas of the brain develop at different times



BRAIN DEVELOPMENT

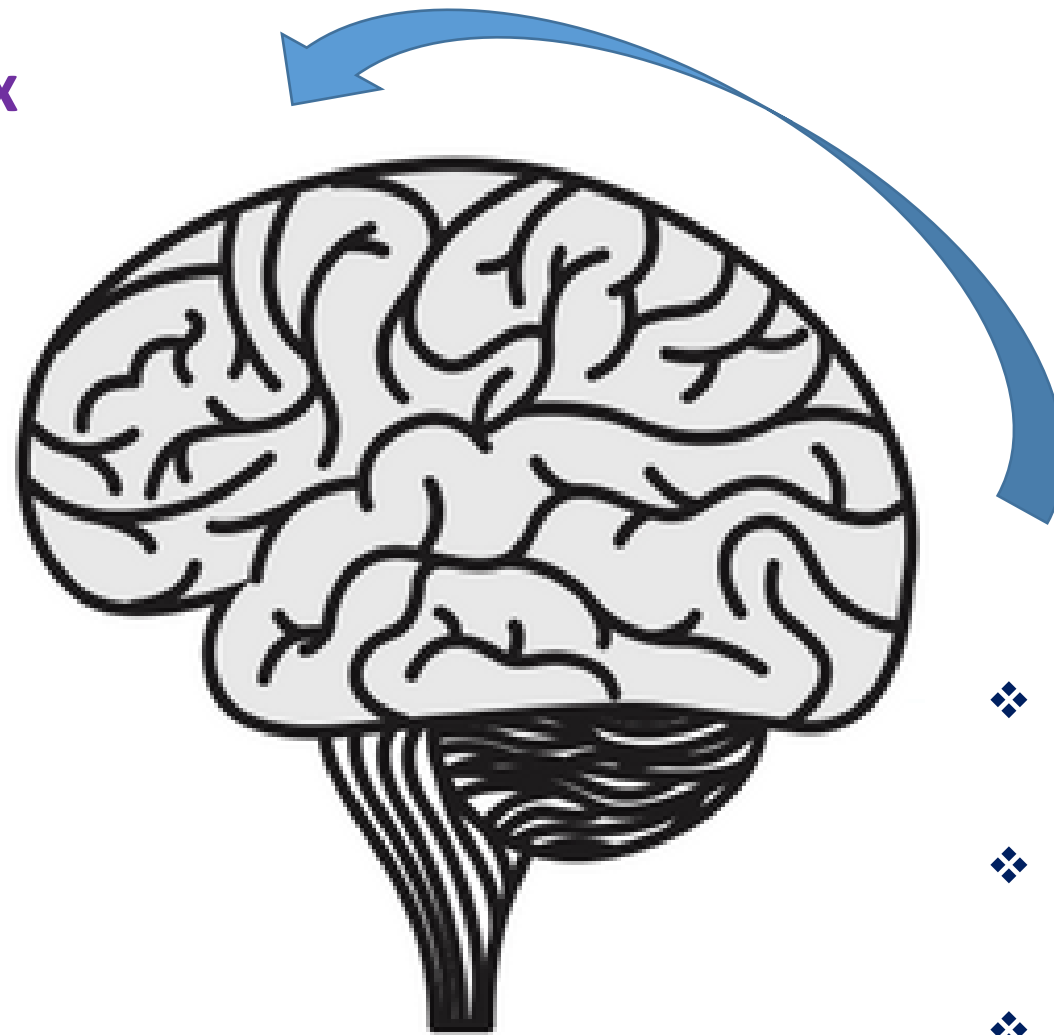


Sources: National Institute of Mental Health;
Paul Thompson, Ph.D., UCLA Laboratory of
Neuro Imaging

Thomas McKay | The Denver Post

Prefrontal Cortex

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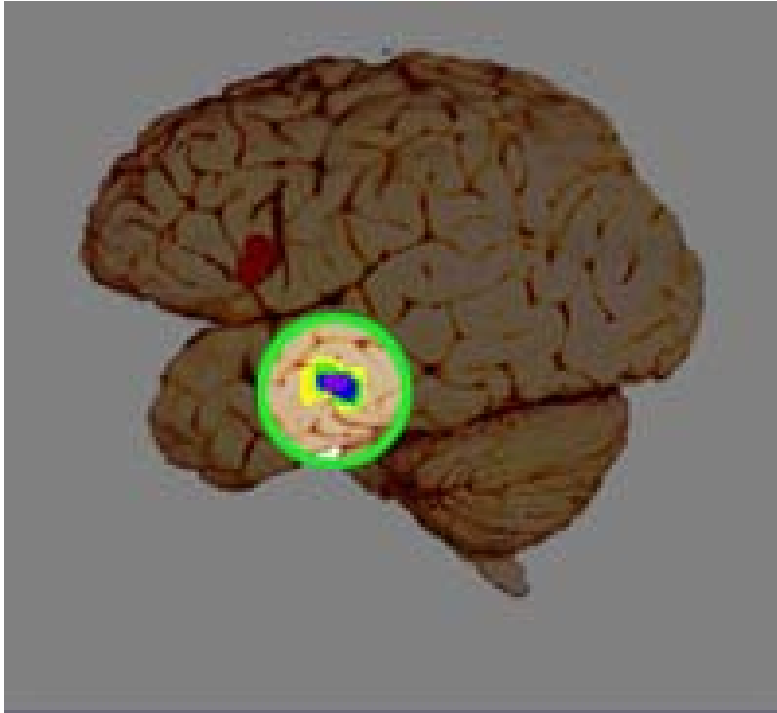


Limbic System

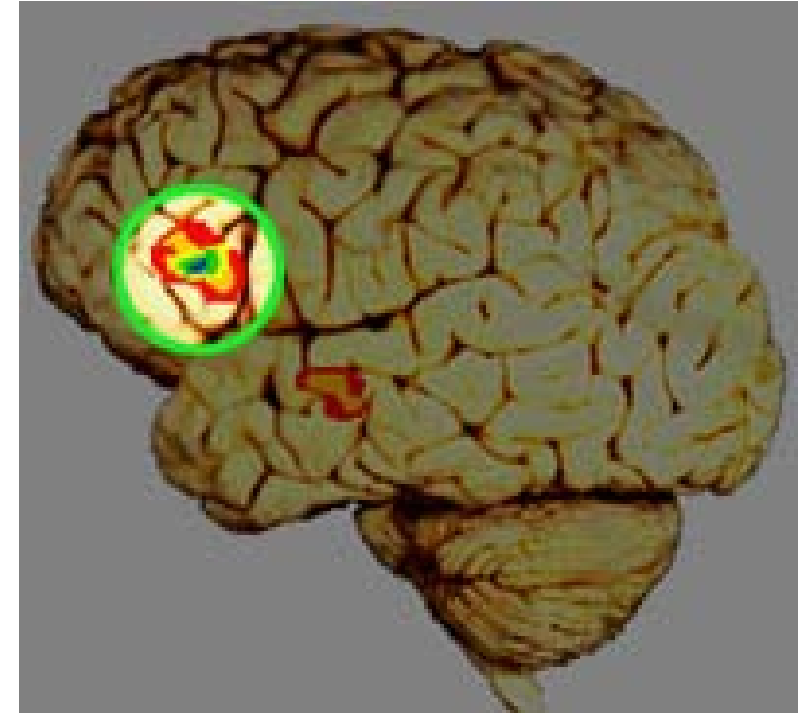
- ❖ Allows us to act before we think
- ❖ Fight/flight/freeze response
- ❖ Emotional reactions
- ❖ Bodily functions

Emotions will play a larger role than rational thought when processing information

Recognising facial expressions



❖ Adolescents use amygdala



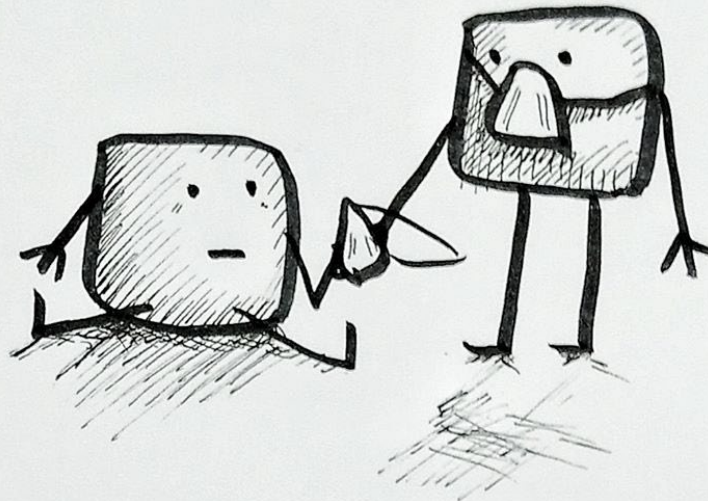
❖ Adults use prefrontal cortex



**Uniquely wired to
explore, challenge,
push boundaries
and above all
LEARN**

SUPPORTING A YOUNG PERSON

put your own
oxygen mask
on first



ANXIOUSLITTLEMONSTERS



Cheer up

Don't worry, it will be fine

Let's be positive

I'm sure it will pass

Oh that's nothing – when I.....

SUPPORTING A YOUNG PERSON

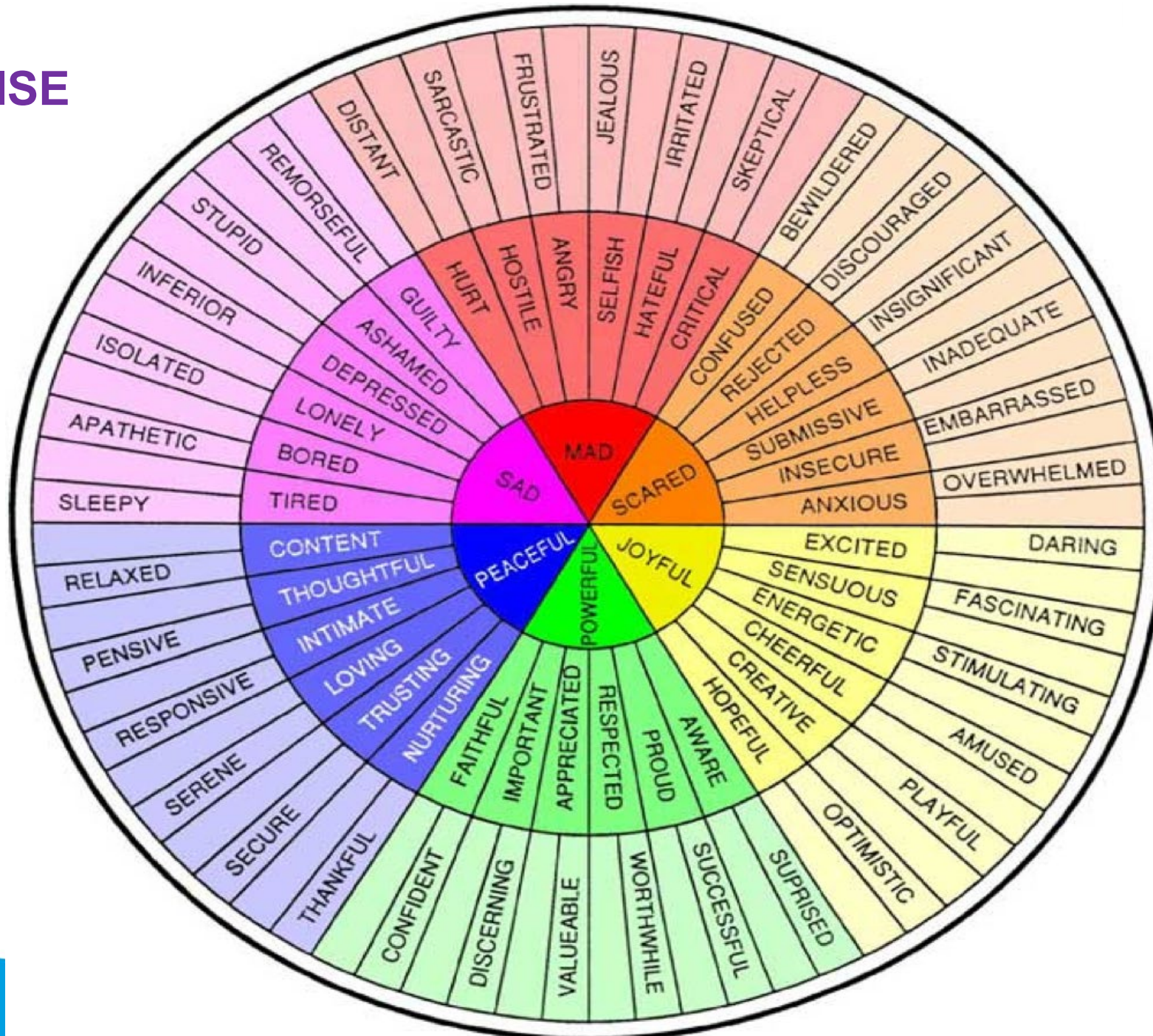
The 4 r's

- ❖ Recognise
- ❖ Respect
- ❖ Regulate
- ❖ Respond/Reason



RECOGNISE

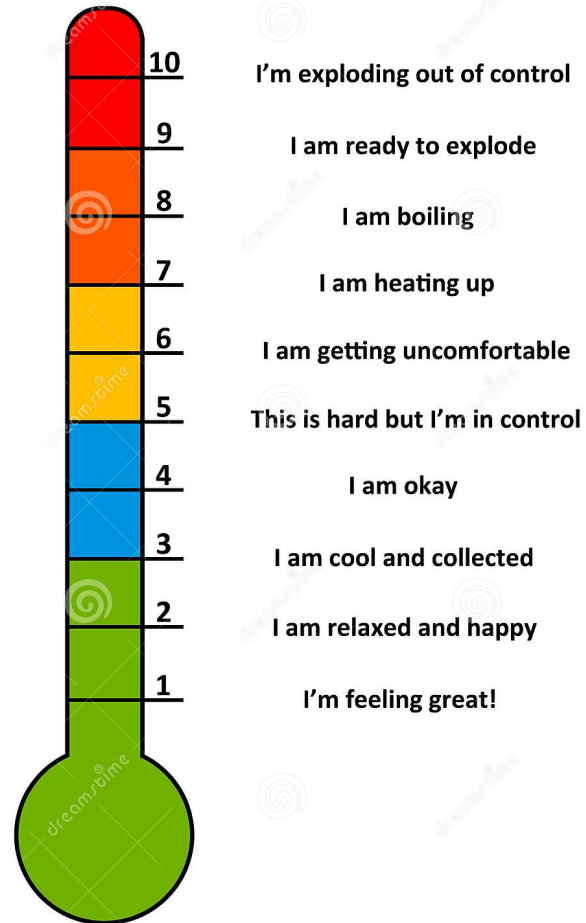
WHAT?



RECOGNISE

HOW MUCH?

Feelings thermometer







THE POWER OF LISTENING

ALL FEELINGS ARE VALID AND HAVE WORTH

RESPECT

INSTEAD OF....

TRY.....



You were doing so well, don't spoil it now

Big sighs/eye rolls

Why didn't you....?

That's what happens when....

You don't know you're born

It's just your hormones

If I'd had your chances

But you can do this so just get on with it

In my day.....

Don't worry, it will be fine...

Come on, don't cry...

You seem.....

I see

Mmmm...

Oh?

Go on....

That sounds.....

I can see this is hard for you

You wish that..... I'm hearing that.....

This has really upset you

RESPECT



BE PRESENT

Eye Contact, Body Language, No Phones, Same Level

ENCOURAGE

You seem..... I see Mmmm... Oh?
Go on....

BE CURIOUS

Open Questions: Who What Why When How

SHOW YOU'VE
HEARD

That sounds..... I'm hearing that..... So what you're saying is.....
You wish that.....

REGULATE: what might help you right now?

A drink/something to eat?

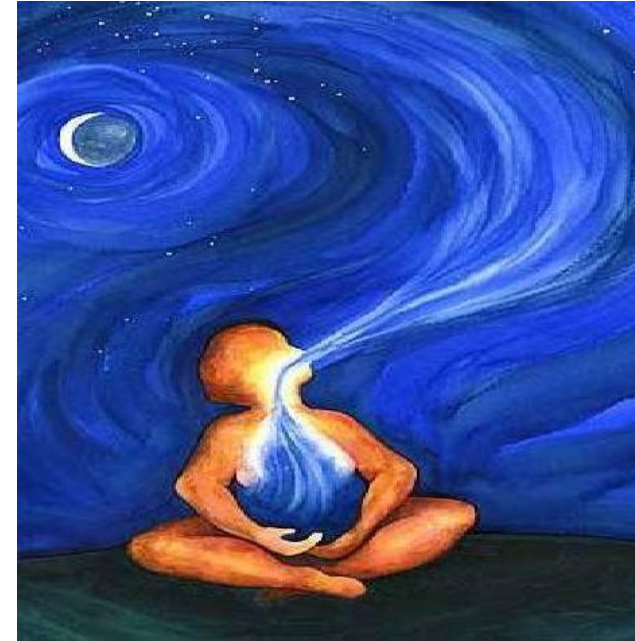
A hug?

Somewhere quiet?

A distraction?

Someone else?

What normally helps you?



AND BREATHE.....

REGULATE

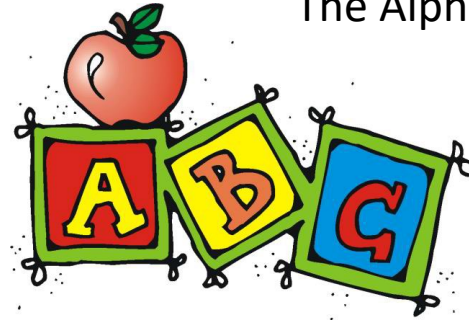
Getting Back Into The Window Of Tolerance



- ❖ 5 – things I can see
- ❖ 4 – things I can hear
- ❖ 3 – things I can feel
- ❖ 2 – things I can smell
- ❖ 1 – a thing I like to taste



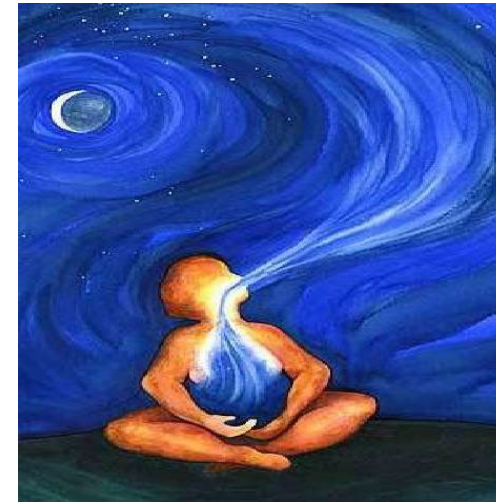
Use your senses



The Alphabet game



Visualisation



AND BREATHE.....

Reframing





- STEP AWAY
- TAKE A BREATH
- OBSERVE
- PERSPECTIVE
- PROCEED

STEP AWAY

Find a space, either physically or mentally imagine a safe space.



TAKE A BREATH

Taking just 5 deep breaths has been shown to help regulate emotions and calm the brain

OBSERVE

Take a moment to observe what is happening for you.

Where are you feeling tense, uncomfortable?

Are you tired, hungry, thirsty?

Do you need a hug, some alone time, a distraction?

PERSPECTIVE

Is this fact or opinion?

See the situation as an outside observer.

Is there another way of looking at it?

What would someone else see and make of it?

What advice would I give to someone else?

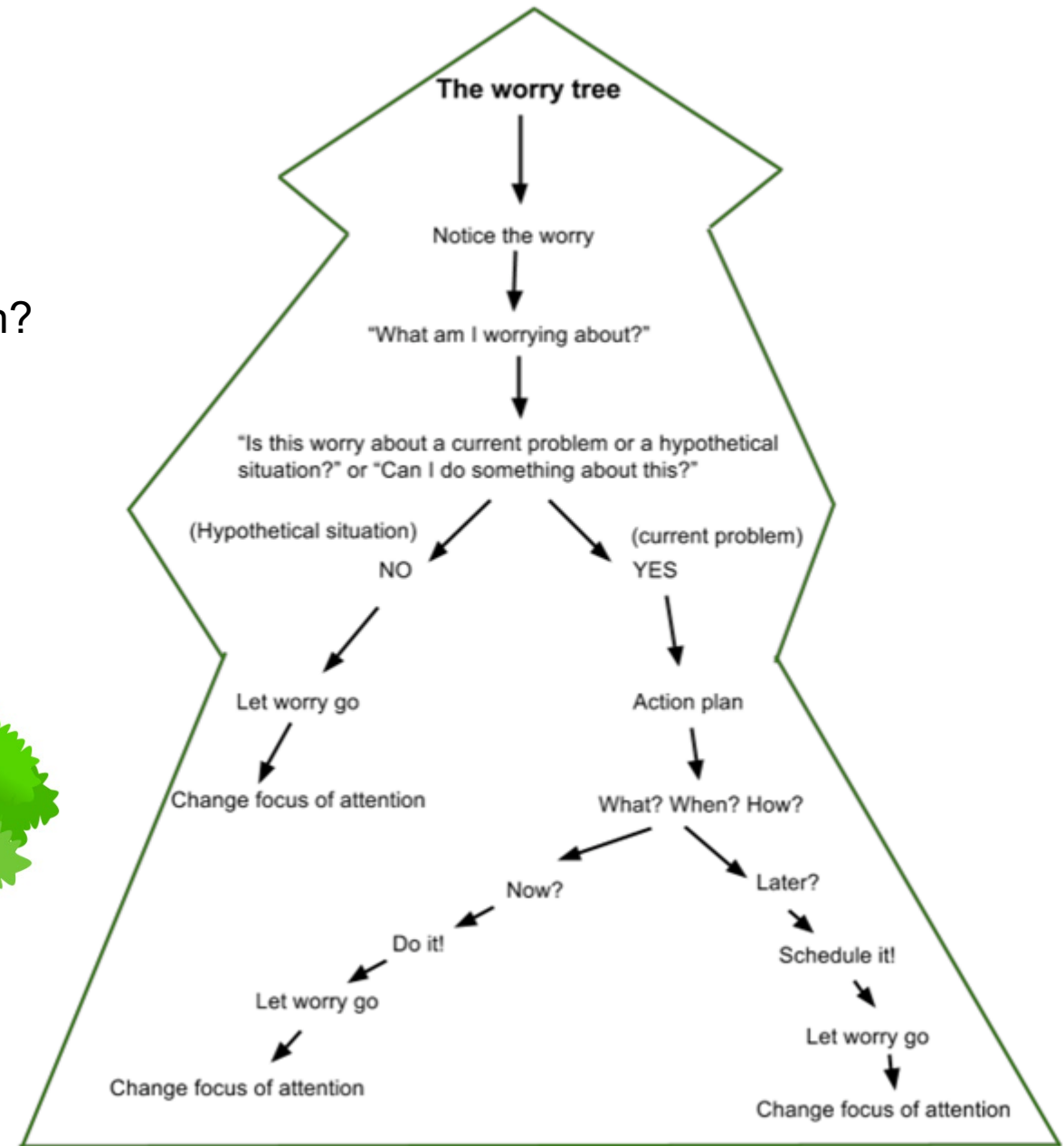


Proceed (with caution)

You might want to react right away but do you really need to? Take some time to think through your options – use the worry tree if useful

THE WORRY TREE

- ❖ What is the worry/anxiety/fear?
- ❖ Is it a current problem or a hypothetical situation?
- ❖ Where is the evidence?
- ❖ What else might happen?
- ❖ What could you do?
- ❖ What has worked before?
- ❖ When could we do it?



Widening the Window of Tolerance



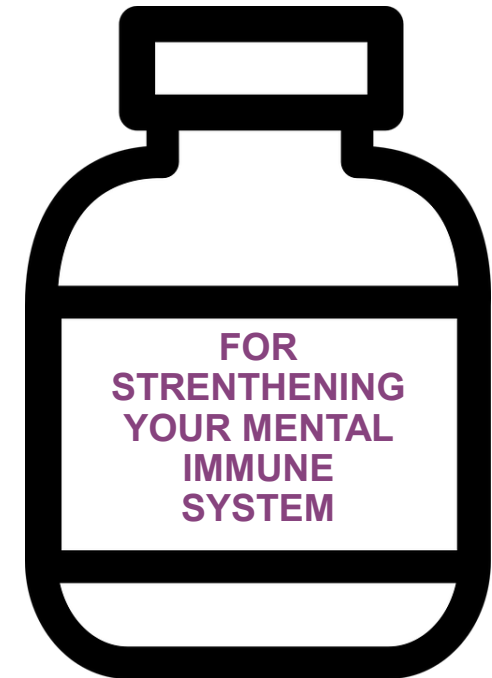
A = Active **B**=Being **C**=Connecting **D**=Developing **E**=Expressing

RESPOND/ REASON:

❖ Collaborative problem solving

❖ Practise when regulated

❖ Choose your battles



Sometimes we need someone to simply be there...Not to fix anything or do anything in particular, but just to let us feel we are supported and cared about.



Facebook.com/SparksofHope.org



Your relationship

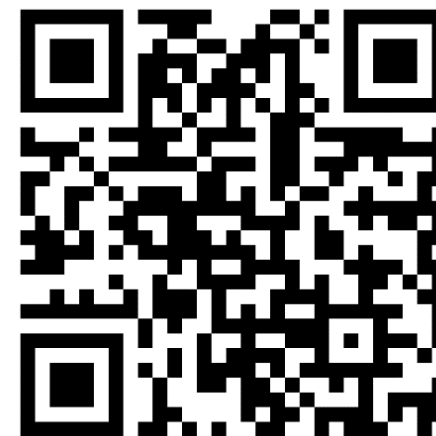
SUPPORT FOR PARENTS

- ❖ ONE TO ONE COUNSELLING

- ❖ ONLINE SUPPORTED MODULES

- ❖ Supporting an Anxious Child (5-11 years)
- ❖ Supporting an Anxious Teen (12-18 years)





THANK YOU

Any questions?





Remember to take
care of yourself.
You can't pour from
an empty cup.

COUNSELLING

- ❖ Integrative Counselling, person-centred, TA, Psychodynamic, CBT, EFT
- ❖ Face to Face, Phone, Video
- ❖ Child focused



PROCESS

- ❖ Complete referral form on website
- ❖ Phone call/email to arrange assessment
- ❖ Phone assessment within 2 weeks
- ❖ Counselling sessions within 8-10 weeks
- ❖ 6-12 sessions – 50mins same place & time each week
- ❖ Can come back as many times as wanted/needed



SUPPORTED ONLINE PROGRAMME

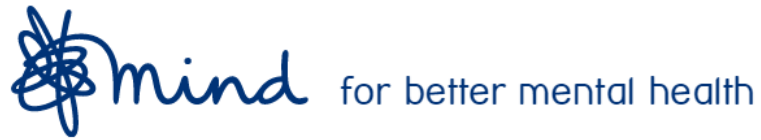
- ❖ A package of digital mental health and wellbeing programs, mostly based on CBT and positive psychology
- ❖ Access via our website
- ❖ Personalised to individual needs
- ❖ Allocated to an individual Time To Talk supporter who checks in once a week



SUPPORTED ONLINE PROGRAMME

- ❖ Modules available for CYP (16+)
 - ❖ Space for Resilience
 - ❖ Space for Anxiety
 - ❖ Space from Stress
 - ❖ Space from Low Mood
 - ❖ Space from Low Mood and Anxiety
 - ❖ Space for Positive Body Image





SIGNPOST

