



Interpersonal Neurobiology

Session Four



Autobiography in Five Short Chapters

Portia Nelson

Chapter 1

I walk down the street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I fall in.
I am lost ... I am helpless.
It isn't my fault.
It takes forever to find a way out.

Chapter 2

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I pretend I don't see it.
I fall in again.
I can't believe I am in the same place.
But it isn't my fault.
It still takes a long time to get out.

Chapter 3

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I see it is there.
I still fall in ... it's a habit.
My eyes are open.
I know where I am.
It is my fault.
I get out immediately.

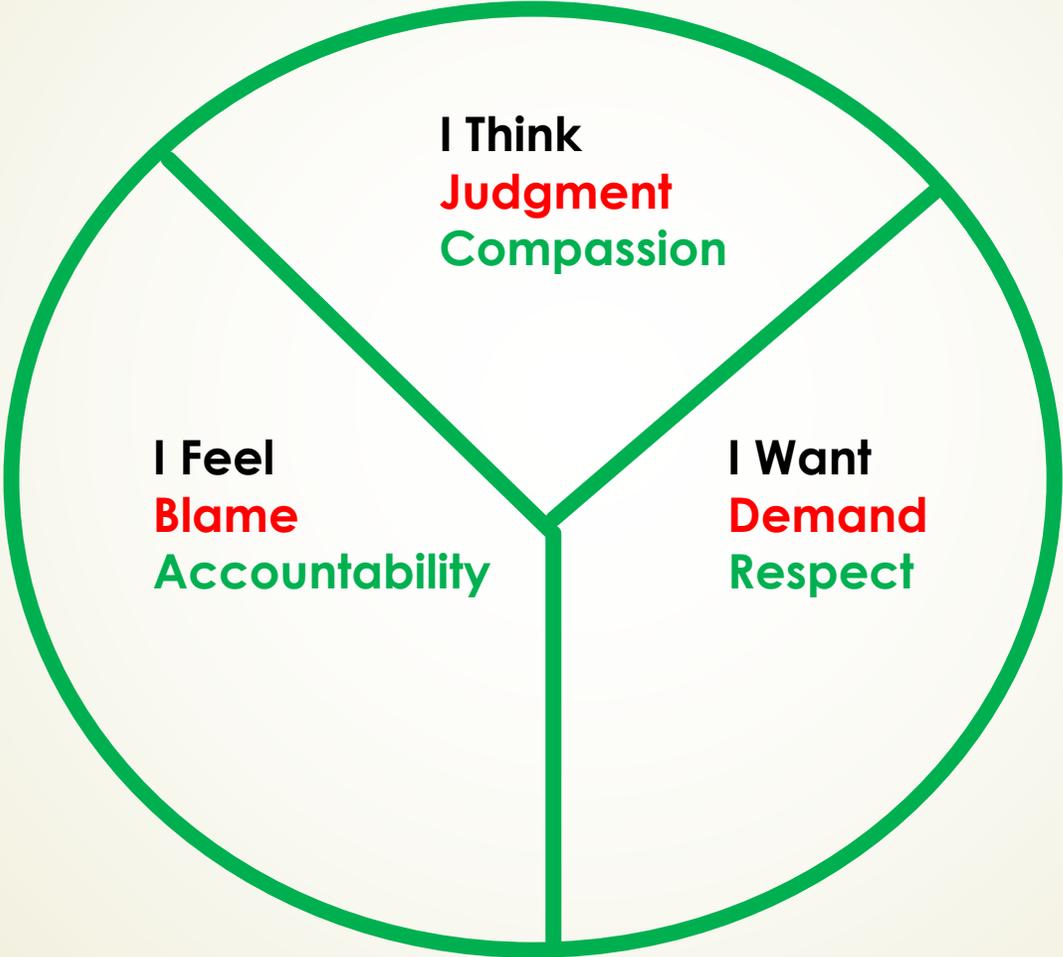
Chapter 4

I walk down the same street.
There is a deep hole in the sidewalk.
I walk around it.

Chapter 5

I walk down another street.

Awareness Wheel



Patterns of Intention

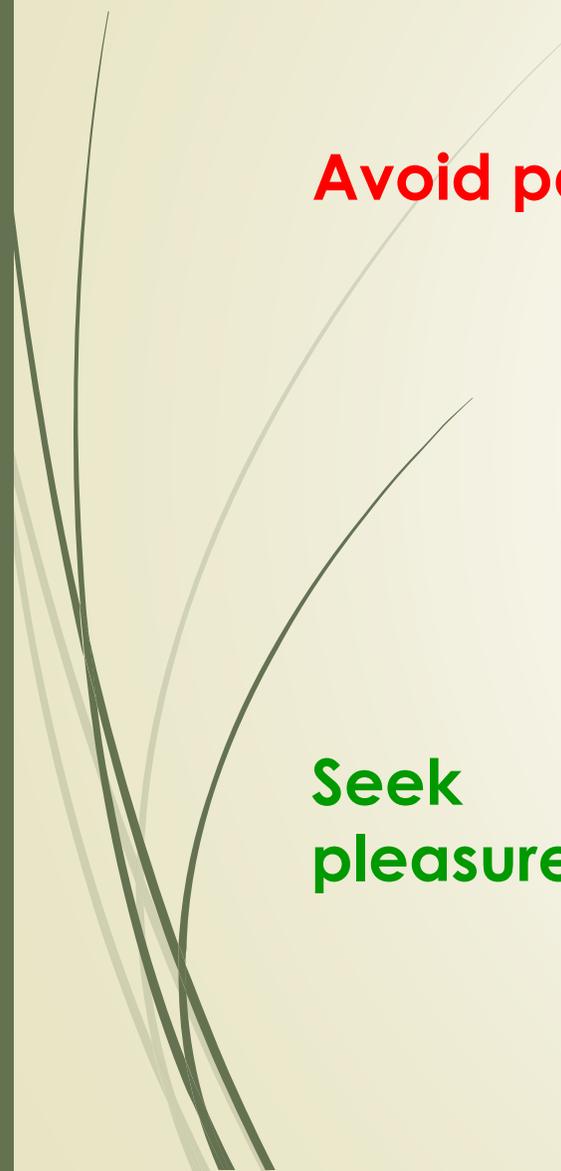
Avoid pain

Learn and Grow

X CHOICE

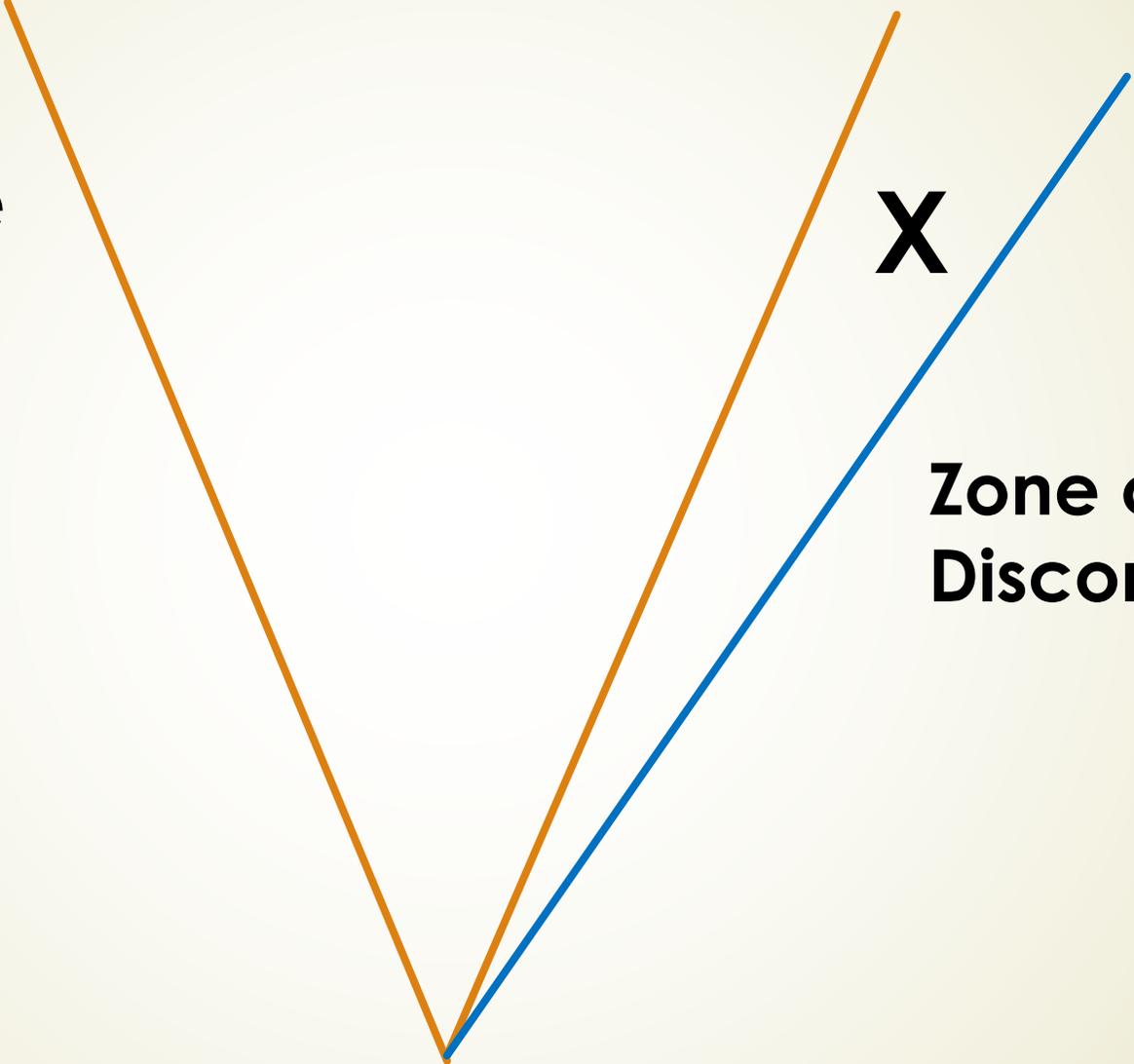
**Seek
pleasure**

**Protect and
Defend**





Comfort Zone

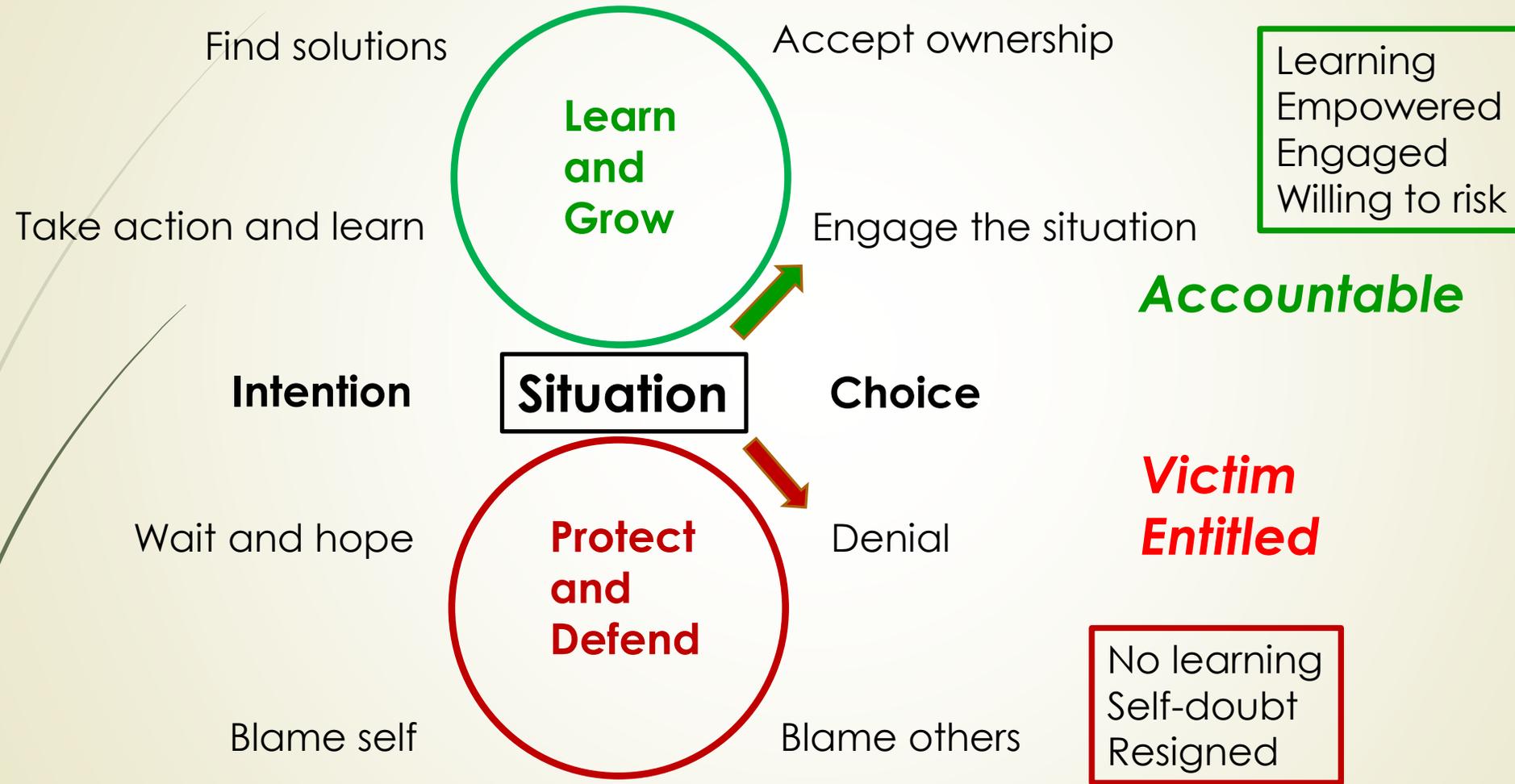


X

Learning
Growth
Safety

**Zone of Safe
Discomfort**

Victim/Accountability Wheel



Accountability/Empowerment

The ability, willingness, and courage to renew attitudes and behaviors in order to achieve desired outcomes

Knowing that I have the resilience for any situation in which I find myself



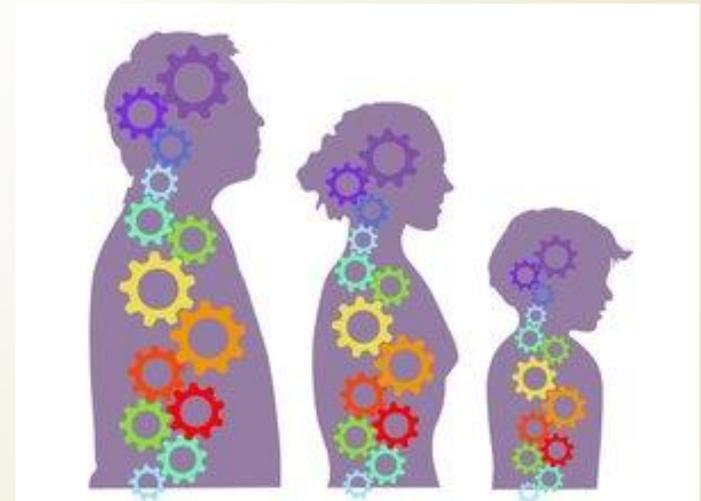
Mindfulness Practices

- ▶ Awareness Wheel
- ▶ Following the Breath
- ▶ Neff “Compassion”
- ▶ Miranda “Mountain of Presence”
- ▶ Dan Siegel “Wheel”
- ▶ Anamcara “Four Elements”
- ▶ Spiritual Inquiry
 - ▶ Question sets
 - ▶ What's here and Who's here



Definition: Mind

The mind is an embodied process that regulates the flow of energy and information within itself and between minds.



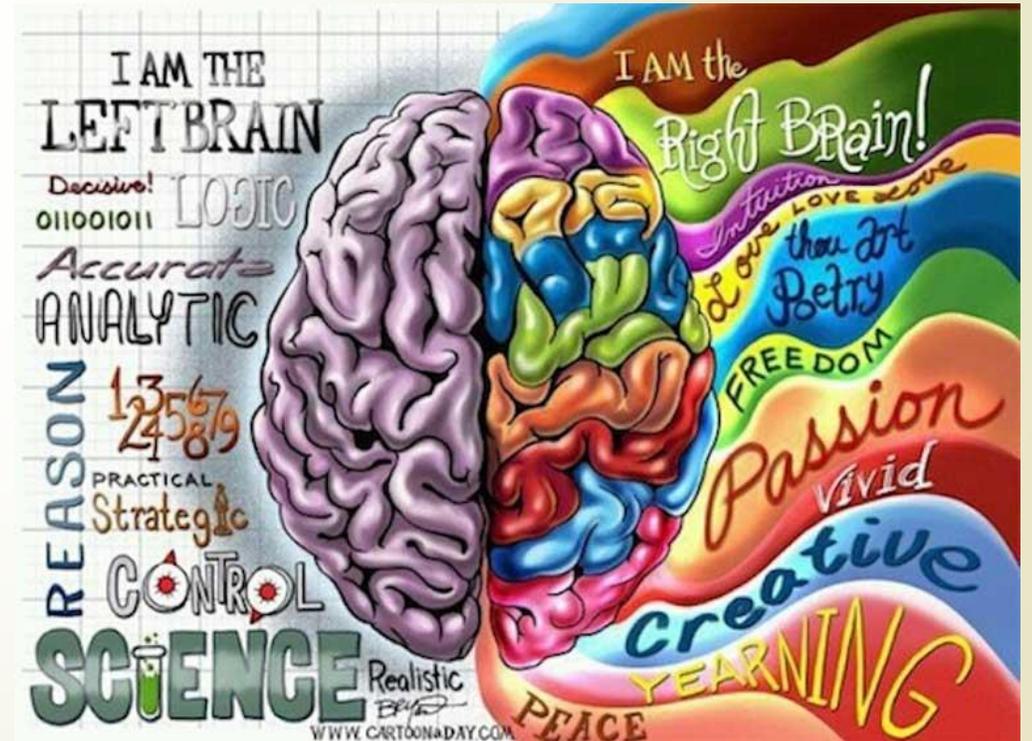
Startling Conclusion

- ▶ **We are biologically hard wired to be in relationship. Relationship is essential for survival, learning and sanity.**
- ▶ **Without relationship we lose our humanity.**
- ▶ **Because we need it so much, the loss or threatened loss of it is devastating. Being disconnected hurts.**



Anatomy

- ▶ All three evolutionary levels interconnected at pre-frontal cortex
- ▶ “Seat of the Soul”—pre-frontal cortex
- ▶ Mirror neurons, emotional attunement
- ▶ Flipping our lid
 - ▶ Amygdala hijack
- ▶ Cortical layers
 - ▶ Top down and bottom up

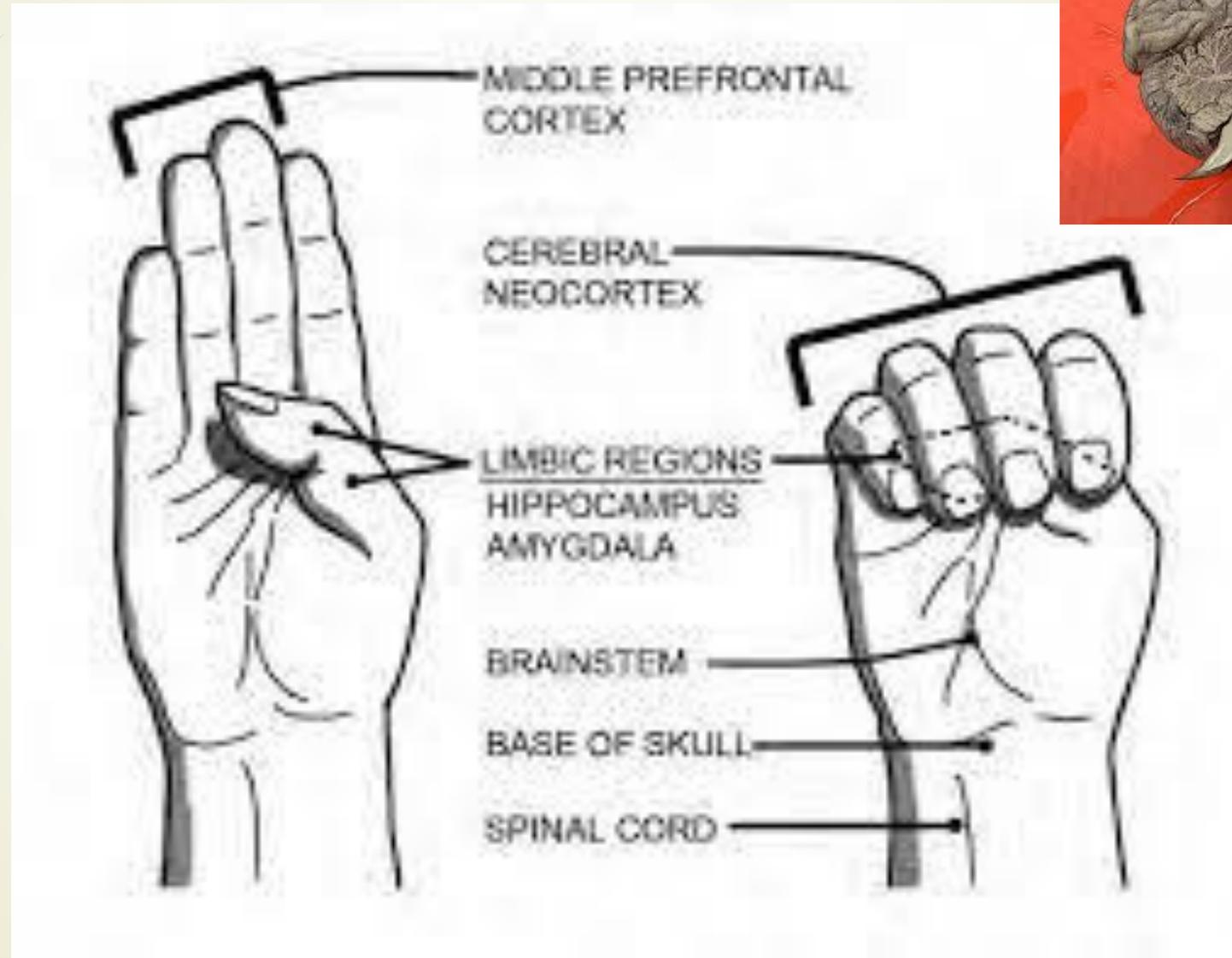


Neuroplasticity

- ▶ That which fires together wires together
- ▶ Explains cow trails, ruts, habit
- ▶ Everything is changeable

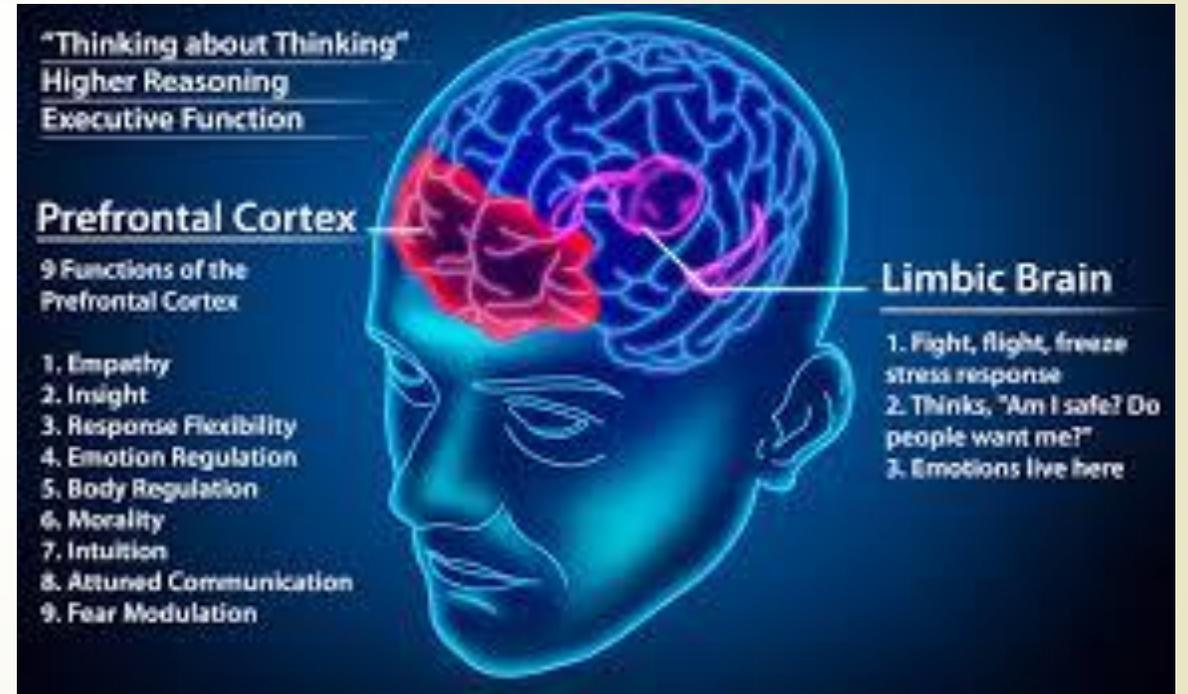


Hand Model of the Brain



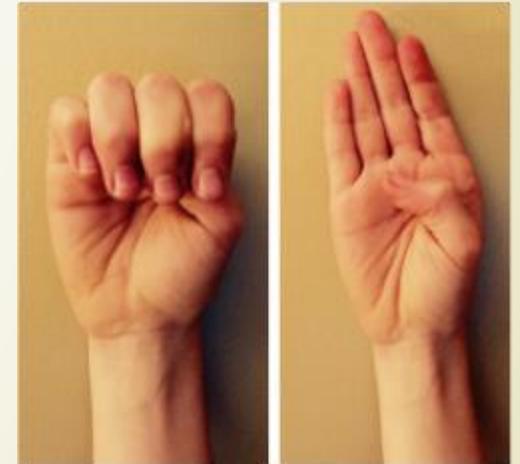
Pre Frontal Cortex—"Seat of the Soul"

- Bodily regulation
- Attuned communication
- Emotional balance
- Response flexibility
- Fear modulation
- Empathy
- Insight
- Moral awareness
- Intuition



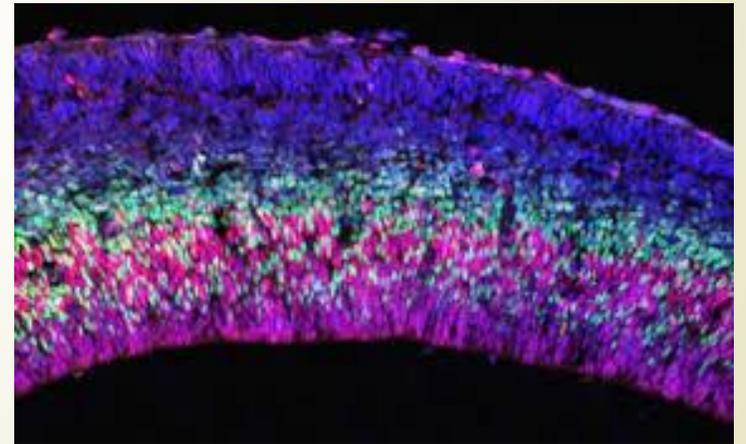
Flipping Our Lid

- **“Crepes of Wraith”**
- **Amygdala takes over—fear (often hurt, sad, anger first)**
- **Emotions, cow trail, rutted pathways**
- **Fight, flight, freeze**
- **Higher functions not engaged**



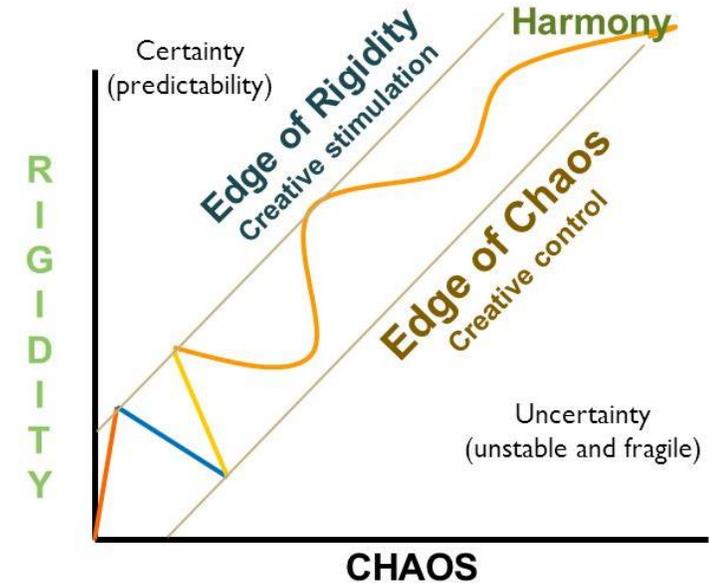
Curiosity (Beginner's mind) vs Knowing

- ▶ Anatomically--Top down vs bottom up
- ▶ Top down is based upon labels, past experience, assumption
- ▶ Bottom up based upon sensory information in the moment



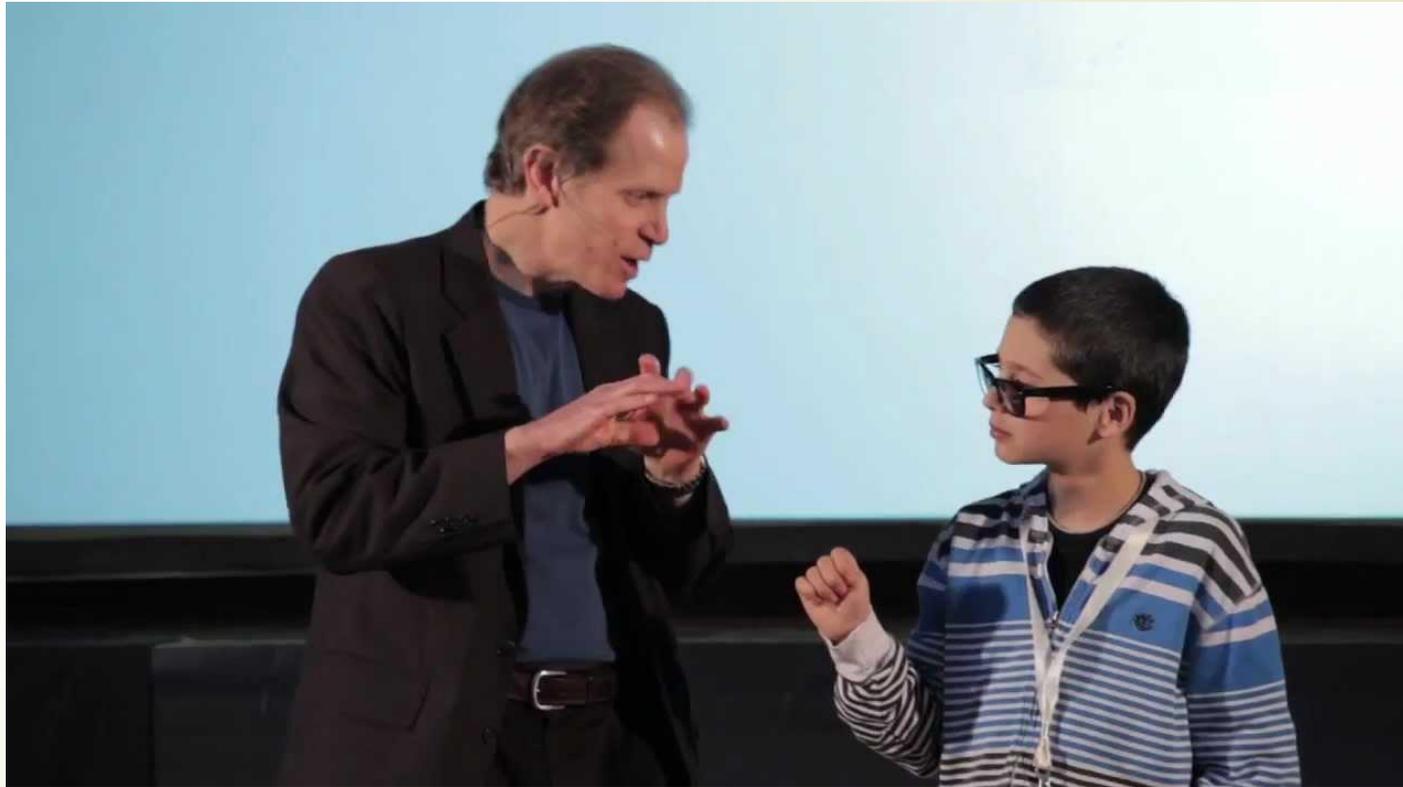
Walking the Fine Line

- ▶ Chaos and rigidity
- ▶ All of life lives on this balance point
- ▶ All human physiology
 - ▶ Cardiac function
 - ▶ Arrhythmia vs fixed rate
- ▶ Personality vs psychosis
- ▶ Top down vs bottom up
- ▶ Comfort zone vs punishment zone



Three “R’s”

- **Reflection**
- **Resilience**
- **Relationship**



Reflection

- ▶ **Mindfulness practice**
- ▶ **Awareness wheel**
- ▶ **SIFT—sensations, feeling, images, and thoughts**
- ▶ **Integration—adding together diverse differentiated parts of the system**
 - ▶ **Members of the committee**
 - ▶ **FACES—Flexible, adaptive, coherent, energized, and stable**



Relationship

- ▶ **Fundamental component of the definition of mind**
- ▶ **We are defined by our relationships**
- ▶ **We are always in relationship with other minds**
 - ▶ **To be out of relationship destroys the mind**
- ▶ **OATS system—others and the self**
 - ▶ **Primitive level means we are separate**
 - ▶ **Reality is that it simply discerns what's mine and what's others in the interdependent system**



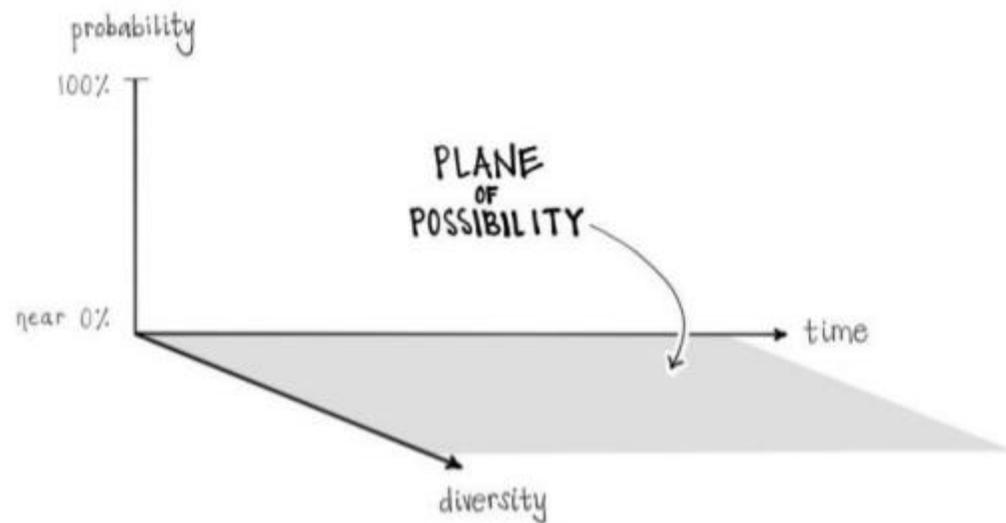
Resilience

- The ability to bounce back, face into
- Essentially a courageous question relating to hope
- At it's most basic “Can I trust stepping into the new room?”, “Can I create what I want?”
- Derives from rigidity of personality into the expanding possibility of opening



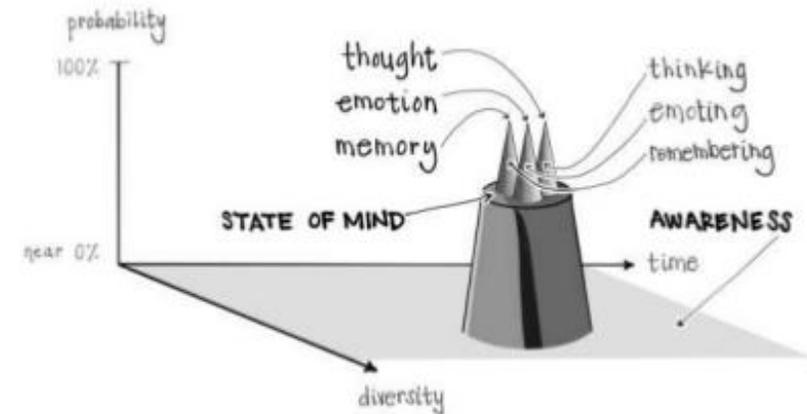
Freeing the Mind, Accessing the Plane

3P Diagram



Mental Processes from a 3P Perspective

3P Diagram with State of Mind



Inquiry

- ▶ **Total time 60 minutes**
- ▶ **Take a break—10 minutes**
- ▶ **Partner A asks all three questions, one at a time.**
- ▶ **Listen, “Thank you”, move to next question.**
- ▶ **Cycle through all three questions over and over for 15 minutes.**
- ▶ **Partner B then asks questions.**
- ▶ **Journal for 10 minutes**
- ▶ **Discuss what you noticed with your partner for 10 minutes**

Inquiry

- ▶ **Tell me a way that you get reactive.**
- ▶ **Underneath this reaction, what is difficult to accept?**
- ▶ **What happens, right now, if you let everything be exactly as it is?**



Gathering Together to Tell Our Stories

- ▶ What did you notice?
- ▶ What surprised you?
- ▶ Were you able to shift in perspective – find a bigger story?
- ▶ When you share, we each hear our own story and it's such a gift.
- ▶ Sharing takes courage, connection and willingness to be vulnerable – or whole hearted.
- ▶ Whatever you say is perfect – for you – for this moment.



“What’s the takeaway on all this?”

Post Meeting Assignment

- ▶ **Write a list of intentions for 2020 incorporating your deepest values and wants.**
- ▶ **What happens when you begin to notice that your mind (maybe how you have always identified yourself) is so interdependent and absolutely dependent on that interdependence.**
- ▶ **Write a reflection paper about what you have noticed when adding the concepts of interpersonal neurobiology to the awareness wheel, comfort zone, accountability, and power of intention. How do you think the development of an Enneatype relates to neurobiology?**
- ▶ **Have a healing holiday and a more conscious, loving, gratifying new year!**

Everything is Waiting for You

Your great mistake is to act the drama as if you were alone. As if life were a progressive and cunning crime with no witness to the tiny hidden transgressions. To feel abandoned is to deny the intimacy of your surroundings. Surely, even you, at times, have felt the grand array; the swelling presence, and the chorus, crowding out your solo voice. You must note the way the soap dish enables you, or the window latch grants you freedom.

Alertness is the hidden discipline of familiarity.

The stairs are your mentor of things to come, the doors have always been there

to frighten you and invite you, and the tiny speaker in the phone is your dream-ladder to divinity.



Put down the weight of your aloneness and ease into the conversation. The kettle is singing even as it pours you a drink, the cooking pots have left their arrogant aloofness and seen the good in you at last. All the birds and creatures of the world are unutterably themselves. Everything is waiting for you.
— David Whyte