

Here there and
everywhere –
understanding
embodiment

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Today's Journey

Roots of Trauma

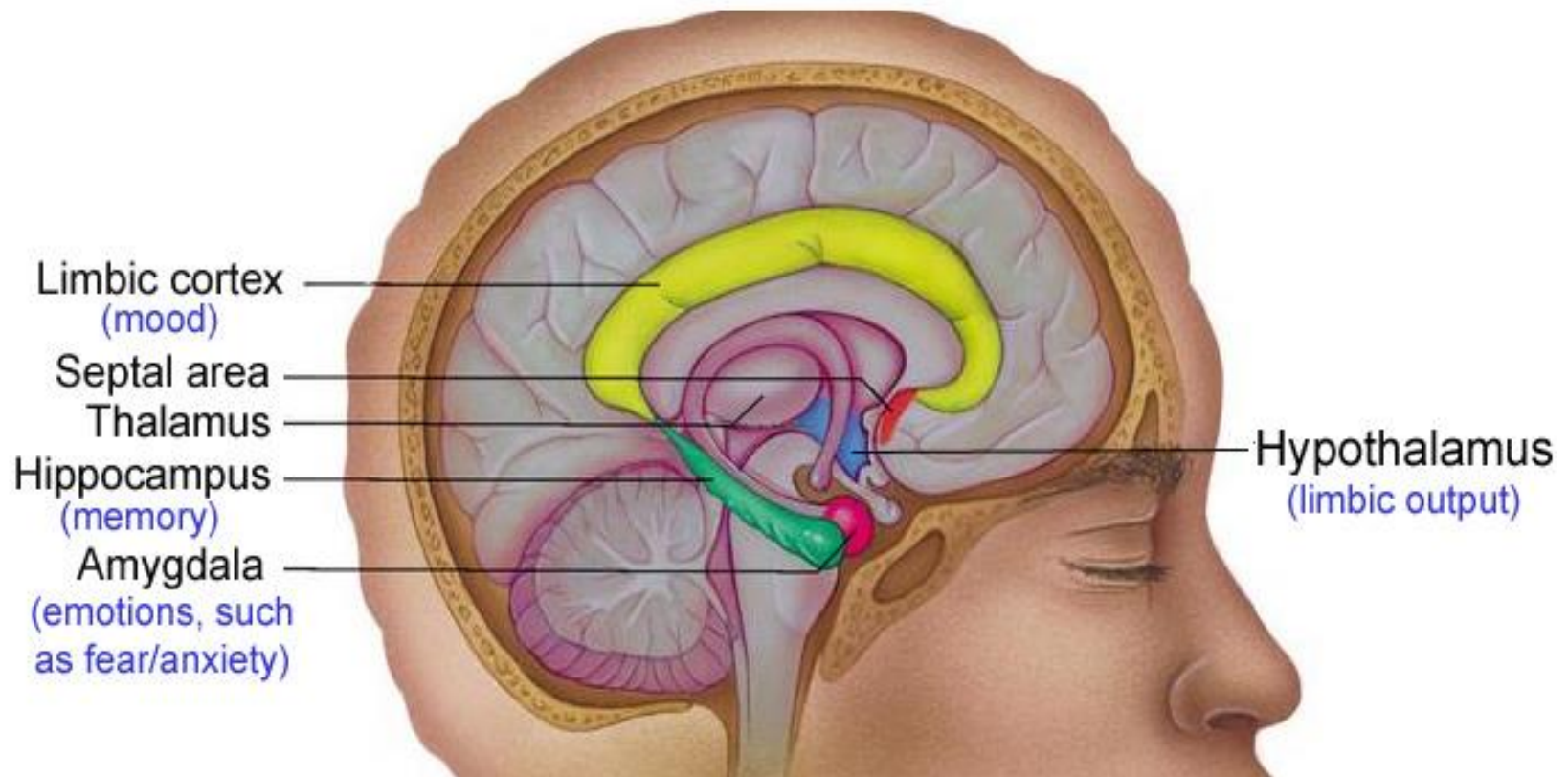
Trauma and relationship

Embodied approach and relationship

Understanding movement patterns and an embodied approach in relation

Human Beings and Trauma

Limbic System



Limbic System AKA Emotional Brain
also - paleomammalian cortex

Developed in the first
mammals

Records good and bad
experiences

Responsible for emotions

Big influence on behaviour

Neocortex AKA Logical Brain

Development of language

Abstract thought

Imagination

Development of cultures

Flexibility

Learning ability

Relationality drives us all

Homo sapiens emerged on the Savannah Plain some 200,000 years ago, yet according to evolutionary psychology, people today still retain those traits that made survival possible then: an instinct to fight furiously when threatened, for instance, and a drive to trade information and share secrets. Human beings are, in other words, hardwired. You can take the person out of the Stone Age, but you can't take the Stone Age out of the person.

Research report from Neuroscience 2019

People worked in pairs. One received an unpleasant sensation. The other held their hand and offered empathy and support.

When the pair were strangers – no effect.

When the pair were known to be partners – similar pattern of brain wave activity associated with empathy. The higher the score the less pain was reported.

Suggested that the touch from someone we know and trust creates a synchrony which can be very helpful and healing.

Explains why we go to someone we know and trust when something bad happens.

If a therapist is relational there is greater
likelihood of developing a synchrony
bond

Every interaction is a negotiation

Here and now presence

Description without interpretation or explanation

Genuine curiosity

Meaning is found in the between

Awareness leads to insight and change

Context of the situation

Relationality is.....

The idea that you can help someone not by doing something FOR them but by doing something WITH Them.

There is something happening all the time when you are with someone and it has meaning for each of you.

If you can stay in the position of not knowing, you allow the other to take support.

Mechanism of trauma

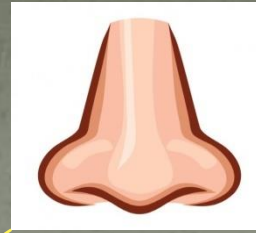
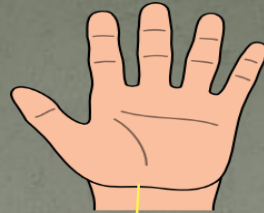
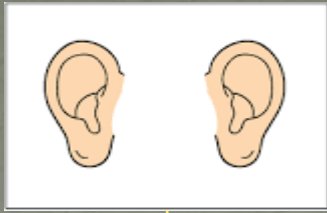
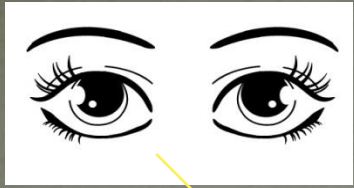
Amygdala (Safety) – hippocampus (memory)

Amygdala (survival is all that matters)

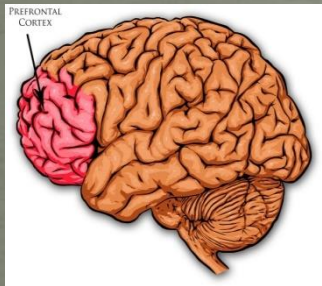
Hippocampus – store of emotional trauma experiences

Amygdala is a primitive mechanism but if it didn't help it wouldn't be in the population. Even so it makes life awkward in the modern world.

The amygdala can be seen as a safety officer who has complete power over the system's reactions.

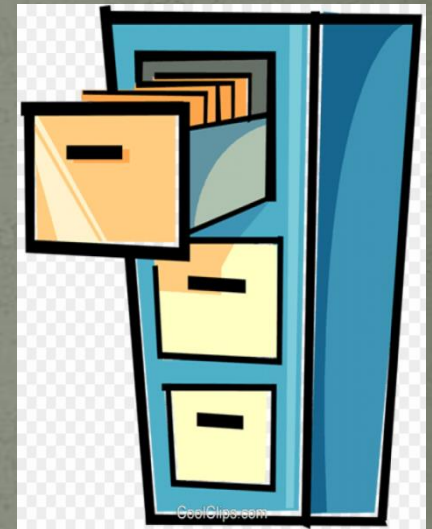


Incoming signals



Neocortex

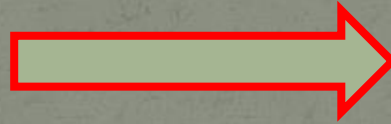
Amygdala
(safety Officer)



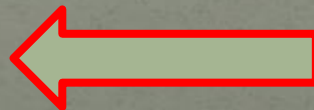
Hippocampus
Trauma Files

Trauma response system (The Five F's)

The making of a traumatic memory



Physiological responses
(The Five F's)



Survival responses to trauma

FRIEND - first defensive strategy

Fight - the second defensive response

Flight - third defensive response

Freeze - Fourth option

Flop - Last chance - Total submission

Simplified

Safety officer (Amygdala) pushes button for every trauma and also every time an impulse closely matches original trauma (cross matches with Hippocampus)

Traumatic memory file is not easy to destroy but..... it can be rewritten or jumbled up

EMDR and Hypnotherapy (Rewind technique) are examples of this

Trauma and relationship with a client.

Challenges of embodiment and trauma

Defences are operating.

Reactions can be at a primitive level

Language may be unhelpful (trauma operating at the primitive level – neocortex unhelpful)

No common ground necessarily

Connection is not easy

The usual challenges – culture, education, philosophy

Common ground is two bodies who have an embodied relational field

So what is embodiment?

Embodiment isn't about sitting in the head and paying attention to the part of you we call the body—it's about fully inhabiting the intelligence of the body and attuning to the world through it.

All our primitive development sits alongside all of our newer developments such as the neocortex.

In simplistic terms, to be embodied means to live through our sense door. It means to engage oneself in the world through the experiences we feel in our body, through our body, and perceived through our body.

Emotions are driven by our thoughts but sensations are a present moment experience.

When I am in the NOW, I am without thought, simply experiencing my senses: feeling, touching, seeing, hearing, smelling, tasting, awareness of my breath, noticing everything through my sensory systems without holding on to or even labelling any sensation.

Embodiment in relation

Information from the body is one of the first primary sources of information that something is not well and that something needs to change.

Energy levels can fluctuate

Energies merge and modify the whole field

Synchronous – Asynchronous

Support the Differentiation – I'm happy that you're telling me your truth. Your behaviour supports who you are in this moment – how is my behaviour impacting on this relational moment.

Quick Experiential

Feeling is the quality of your movement.

How does your subjective experience change when you see movement change.

What do you notice?

We are constantly giving to and receiving from the other

It starts with you but it's not about
you

Self-awareness is the ability to focus on yourself and how your actions, thoughts, or emotions do or don't align with your internal standards. If you're highly **self-aware**, you can objectively evaluate yourself, manage your emotions, align your behaviour with your values, and understand correctly how others perceive you.

At the coal face



- You don't need to know the story.
- The relationship you develop will have elements of both of you.
- Look for the meaning and not the answer.

Me and You and what's in between

My journey to self knowledge began when I came out of the womb.

I am programmed for relationship so I reached out to others in the environment in order to work out where I fitted.

My primary caregiver had a massive influence on me. I used bodily movements to orient myself and discover things about the world.

I learned to Yield, Push, Reach, Grasp on to, pull towards and eventually let go.

I developed a repertoire of psychological functioning through movement patterns



I'm ready for another exercise

Imagine yourself as younger, whatever age that works out at. Check out the sensations you are receiving in your body. Pay attention to stomach, shoulders and jaw.

Imagine standing outside an unfamiliar run down house with the door open.

Walk in the house and make your way through the rooms.

In the next room you turn the corner and there is your mother standing there smiling at you. She takes you by the hand and walks you to the garden where the sun is shining.

Check out the sensations you feel now. Pay attention to your stomach shoulders and jaw.

What's going on?

Re-evoking early
developmental movement
patterns

Re-evoking the relational field

The information is valuable
whether it be a positive or
otherwise experience.

Practitioners of embodied approaches can help individuals both become more aware of bodily sensations and learn to use therapeutic techniques to release any tension the body is holding. Techniques often used in therapy include breathing exercise and sensation awareness, physical exercise such as dance or other movement, voice work, massage, and grounding exercises.

Thank you, and remember.....



You can't change the past but you have
the power to shape the future

