

YOUR BRAIN ON TRAUMA:

- Suspicious & untrusting
- Negative & pessimistic
- Addictive
- Self sabotaging
- Scattered & distracted
- Demotivated & drained of energy
- Self critical
- Judgmental of yourself & others
- Emotionally cut off

Trauma Signs and Symptoms

- Anxiety, fear, and worry about safety of self and others
- Worry about recurrence or consequences of violence
- Changes in behavior:
 - Withdrawal from others or activities
 - Irritability with friends, teachers, events
 - Angry outbursts and/or aggression
 - Change in academic performance
 - Decreased attention and/or concentration
 - Increase in activity level
 - Absenteeism
 - Increase in impulsivity, risk-taking behavior
 - Discomfort with feelings (such as troubling thoughts of revenge)
 - Increased risk for substance abuse
 - Discussion of events and reviewing of details
 - Negative impact on issues of trust and perceptions of others
 - Over- or under-reacting to bells, physical contact, doors slamming, sirens, lighting, sudden movements
 - Repetitive thoughts and comments about death or dying (including suicidal thoughts, writing, art, or notebook covers about violent or morbid topics, internet searches)
 - Heightened difficulty with authority, redirection, or criticism
 - Re-experiencing the trauma (e.g., nightmares or disturbing memories during the day)
 - Hyperarousal (e.g., sleep disturbance, tendency to be easily startled)
 - Avoidance behaviors (e.g., resisting going to places that remind them of the event)
 - Emotional numbing (e.g., seeming to have no feeling about the event)

*Adapted From: TSA for Schools

OVERVIEW OF DISGUISES OF RAGE by Ruth King, author of "Healing Rage: Making Inner Peace Possible"

EXPRESSION	DOMINANCE	DEFIANCE	DISTRACTION	DEVOTION	DEPENDENCE	DEPRESSION
Core characteristics	Controlling Critical Judgmental Detached Independent Seeks power and status. Intolerant of imperfection.	Angry Blaming Hostile Defensive Cynical Seeks justice and reparations. Intolerant of rules and prohibitions.	Urgent Persistent Compulsive Consumptive Envious Seeks immediate pleasure by overindulging. Intolerant of stillness.	Accommodates Avoids Over-functions Guilt-Ridden Resentful Seeks significance by pleasing. Intolerant of separation.	Sweet Childlike Gullible Seductive Cautious Manipulates to be rescued. Intolerant of adult responsibility.	Bitter Disheartened Indifferent Avoids Withdrawn Manipulates to be seen. Intolerant of adult expectations.
When I am triggered, I act	Rejected / Judgmental Superior / Controlling Unforgiving Ruthless Cruel Needs to be righteous	Demanding / Belligerent Entitled Confrontational Vindictive /Hateful Revengeful Needs to be right	Pretender Denies problems Self-Indulgent Performs Jealous Needs to be seen	Martyr Guilt inducing Self-sacrificing Pleases Hurt Needs to be wanted	Fearful Confuses Mute / Helpless Insecure / Inhibited Impressionable Needs to be helped	Inaccessible Hopeless Reserved Withholding Unnoticeable Needs to be alone
Fears	Insignificance	Defeat	Inadequacy	Unworthiness	Abandonment	Engagement
Ashamed of	Needing tenderness	Needing validation	Needing nourishment	Needing admiration	Needing to be cherished	Needing to be seen
Defense postures	Distance from others. Becomes critical to avoid intimacy.	Blames others Becomes belligerent to avoid intimacy.	Over indulges Self-sabotages to avoid intimacy.	Clings to relationships by accommodating others. Self-sacrificing to avoid intimacy.	Hopes to be rescued. Becomes helpless to avoid shame.	Hopes to be discovered. Becomes hopeless to avoid engaging.
As a child, you...	Felt overcontrolled or ignored. Had to learn things the hard way. You were on your own. Were expected to behave as an adult.	Felt overcontrolled or under indulged. Were given too much freedom or not enough. Were expected to do as you were told – or else.	Frightened and anxious. Felt trapped and confused. Performed for praise Were expected to be better than others.	Were doubtful, voiceless, felt guilty. Felt unworthy of love. Pleased for praise. Were expected to put others first.	Felt deprived and abandoned. Were unable to do things on your own. Were seen but not heard. Had to stay childlike to guarantee love.	Felt deprived and deserted. Were unable to openly grief losses. Were unseen and unheard. Had to stay invisible to guarantee safety.
Emotional challenges	Trust Significance	Trust Respect	Intimacy Stillness	Self-respect Separation	Independence Separation	Existence Intimacy
I have the potential to perpetuate these Rage Legacies	War, greed, oppression, indifference, political corruption	Violence, hatred, abuse, disrespect	Gluttony, waste, indifference, class oppression	Denial, martyrdom	Fear, helplessness, self-loathing	Dispiritedness, despair, Self-abusing, hopelessness, futility

Self-Care Assessment Worksheet

This assessment tool provides an overview of effective strategies to maintain self-care. After completing the full assessment, choose one item from each area that you will actively work to improve.

Using the scale below, rate the following areas in terms of frequency:

- 5 = Frequently
- 4 = Occasionally
- 3 = Rarely
- 2 = Never
- 1 = It never occurred to me

Physical Self-Care

- Eat regularly (e.g. breakfast, lunch and dinner)
- Eat healthy
- Exercise
- Get regular medical care for prevention
- Get medical care when needed
- Take time off when needed
- Get massages
- Dance, swim, walk, run, play sports, sing, or do some other physical activity that is fun
- Take time to be sexual—with yourself, with a partner
- Get enough sleep
- Wear clothes you like
- Take vacations
- Take day trips or mini-vacations
- Make time away from telephones
- Other:

Psychological Self-Care

- Make time for self-reflection
- Have your own personal psychotherapy
- Write in a journal
- Read literature that is unrelated to work
- Do something at which you are not expert or in charge
- Decrease stress in your life
- Let others know different aspects of you
- Notice your inner experience—listen to your thoughts, judgments, beliefs, attitudes, and feelings
- Engage your intelligence in a new area, e.g. go to an art museum, history exhibit, sports event, auction, theater performance
- Practice receiving from others
- Be curious
- Say “no” to extra responsibilities sometimes
- Other:

Emotional Self-Care

- Spend time with others whose company you enjoy
- Stay in contact with important people in your life
- Give yourself affirmations, praise yourself
- Love yourself
- Re-read favorite books, re-view favorite movies
- Identify comforting activities, objects, people, relationships, places and seek them out
- Allow yourself to cry
- Find things that make you laugh
- Express your outrage in social action, letters and donations, marches, protests
- Play with children
- Other:

Spiritual Self-Care

- Make time for reflection
- Spend time with nature
- Find a spiritual connection or community
- Be open to inspiration
- Cherish your optimism and hope
- Be aware of nonmaterial aspects of life
- Try at times not to be in charge or the expert
- Be open to not knowing
- Identify what is meaningful to you and notice its place in your life
- Meditate
- Pray
- Sing
- Spend time with children
- Have experiences of awe
- Contribute to causes in which you believe
- Read inspirational literature (talks, music, etc.)
- Other:

Workplace or Professional Self-Care

- Take a break during the workday (e.g. lunch)
- Take time to chat with co-workers
- Make quiet time to complete tasks
- Identify projects or tasks that are exciting and rewarding
- Set limits with your clients and colleagues
- Balance your caseload so that no one day or part of a day is “too much”
- Arrange your work space so it is comfortable and comforting
- Get regular supervision or consultation
- Negotiate for your needs (benefits, pay raise)
- Have a peer support group
- Develop a non-trauma area of professional interest
- Other:

Balance

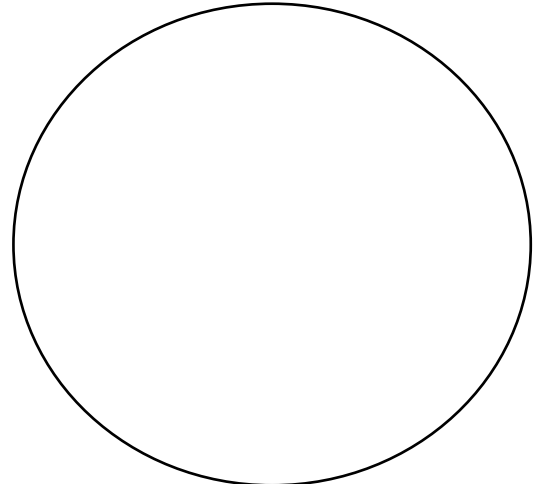
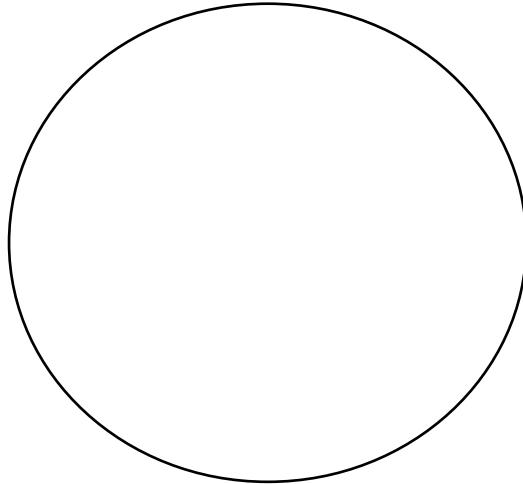
- Strive for balance within your work-life and workday
- Strive for balance among work, family, relationships, play and rest

Self-Awareness Hot Button Activity

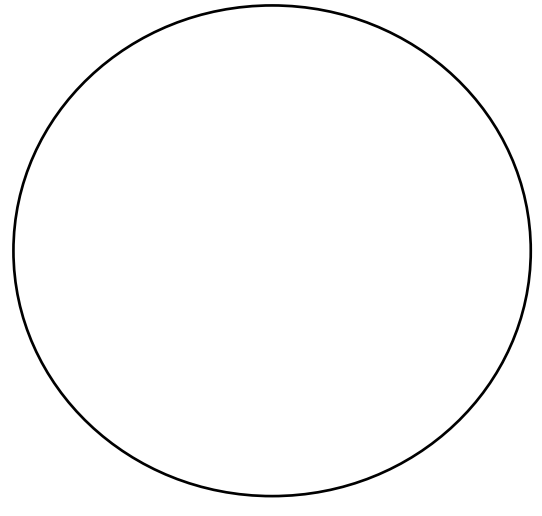
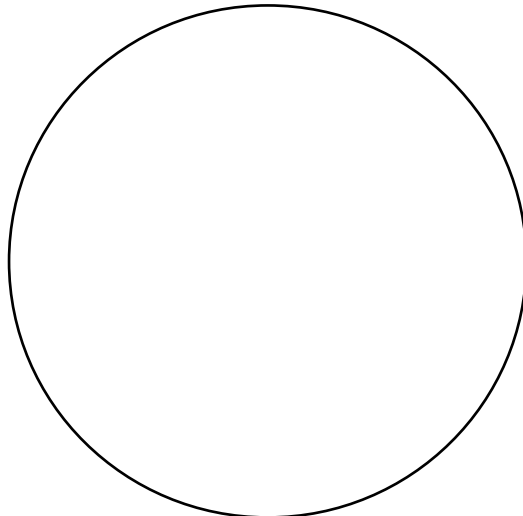
Your family members

Your friends

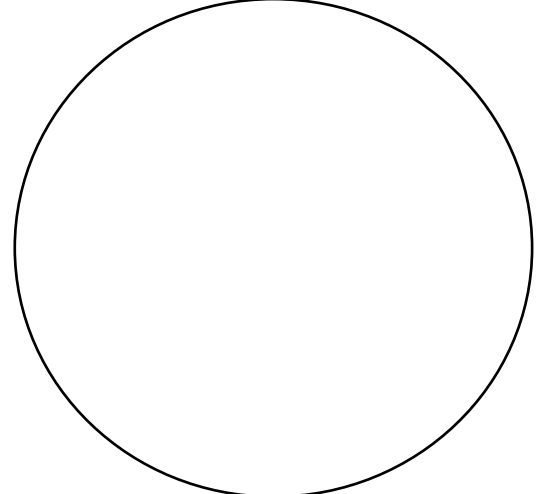
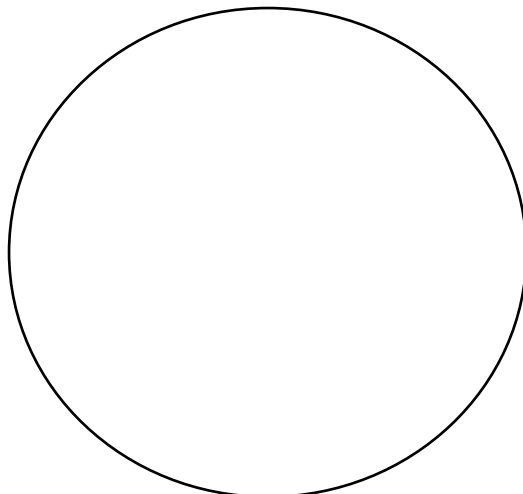
On each circle going across, write down behaviors that push your buttons.



On each circle going across, write down your feelings when faced with these challenging behaviors.



On each circle going across, write down the impact your feelings have/had on your relationship with your relatives or your friends who exhibited these behaviors.





PARENTING WITH A STRESSED-OUT BRAIN

Adults “under too much stress feel like they are fighting for survival, and sadly, they experience children as the threat to their well-being.”

~ brain researchers Daniel Hughes and Jonathan Baylin

Adults’ brains work the same way a child’s brain works. When an adult was ignored, abused or violent as a child, and faced defensive postures, annoyed voices, judgmental eyes or closed faces, they don’t tend to move past an automatic survival, self-defense mode, which results in:

- ❑ A narrow hyper-focus on the child’s immediate behavior, especially the most negative aspects of the child’s behavior. The smallest signs of anger can trigger the amygdala, which activates the brain’s natural threat-detection system.
- ❑ A tendency to overreact to a child’s nonverbal communication, such as facial expressions, tone of voice, gestures, thereby typically focusing on their negative interpretation, which results in mutual defensiveness.
- ❑ A strong tendency to be judgmental of the child and toward oneself, to make rapid assessments in black and white, or all-or-nothing terms.
- ❑ Taking things personally because the limbic system in the brain is activated, so that we experience events as happening **TO** us or being **ABOUT** us (triggering social rejection), especially something so potentially emotionally charged as teaching or parenting.

Hughes and Baylin describe four kinds of blocked care that result from unmanageable stress.

Chronic Blocked Care

Specific triggers lead to overwhelmed emotional reactions. Because of the adults’ early experience of toxic stress (e.g. being ignored, abused), the areas that control nurturing systems in the brain are underdeveloped. So when stress occurs, the poorly developed areas are not fully activated and, instead, threat reactivity occurs, making it almost impossible for the adult, in that moment, to nurture the child.

Acute Blocked Care

Sometimes, an adult may experience an emotional blow (e.g. divorce or a parent dies), and go into shock. This, again, makes it almost impossible for the adult, in that moment, to fully nurture a child.

Child Specific Blocked Care

Sometimes, a child’s mannerisms or appearance may be a reminder of something from the past that triggers an adult’s defensive systems.

Stage Specific Blocked Care

Parents may have particular expectations that a child might not meet. The adult’s feelings of their own parental rejection may then push them to punish the child instead of providing developmentally appropriate discipline (*which is not punishment but growth oriented*).

NOTE: Understanding the neurobiological causes of blocked care can help explain why you react the way you do to a child’s behavior.

Tapping Quick Reference Guide

Tapping, which is using your fingertips to firmly but gently tap on certain points on your body, is a easy-to-learn technique that can help calm you down, restore your energy and reduce problems, such as:

- Sadness
- Stress
- Anxiety
- Financial problems
- Emotional disorders
- Fears/Trauma
- Distressing Thoughts
- Disturbing Memories
- Pain
- Weight issues
- Phobias
- Procrastination

This process is a combination of ancient Egyptian practices of 3,500 years ago, traditional Chinese medicine that dates to 1700 BC, which uses needles to stimulate “acupoints” and modern innovations that recognize that when we hold emotion in our body, it leads to dis-ease. Tapping can help release a fear, a worry, a bad memory or anything else that’s bothering you. The technique is *simple* and you can use it whenever or wherever you are. Tapping is also highly effective in group settings.

1. **Choose your Most Pressing Issue (MPI)** *You can’t clean a dirty house without first seeing the dirt, right? Tapping has the same intention. You first have to acknowledge what’s bothering you in order to clear it.*
2. **Rate you MPI on its intensity level from 0-10.** *This is how you can track whether the process is working.*
3. **Craft a setup statement,** using your **Most Pressing Issue** to fill in the blank
4. **Notice what comes up when you tap.** *It’s likely your intuition talking, pay attention to it.*
5. **Take three deep breaths before you begin.** *Get grounded and in touch with your body.*
6. **With each statement, tap 5-7 times** as you go through the sequence on spots on your body.
7. **As the intensity goes down, change your statements** from negative to positive , e.g.:

*NEGATIVE: Even though I feel this anxiety, I completely accept myself and honor how I’m feeling,
POSITIVE: I am enjoying the calm and peacefulness I am feeling as I give voice to what bothers me.*

Here is an example of one round of the process. You can repeat, stop or move on to a different MPI.

Karate chop: Even though, I feel **overwhelmed and stressed**, I deeply accept myself and I honor how I’m feeling.

Eyebrows: Just thinking about my day makes me stressed

Side of Eye: I have so much to do.

Under the Eye: I have so much to worry about

Under Nose: I have a lot of responsibilities

Chin: I am carrying tension in my body.

Collarbone: It doesn’t feel safe to relax when there is so much I need to worry about.

Crown of Head: I have way too many demands on my time

Eyebrows: This struggle to feel centered is real

Side of Eye: It's hard to feel calm when there is so much is on my plate

Under the Eye: I can't feel calm until everything goes my way

Under Nose: If I don't worry, it means that I don't care

Chin: If I don't feel some panic then it won't get done.

Collarbone: If I 'm not stressed, it means I'm not working hard enough

Crown of Head: Are these beliefs really true?

Eyebrows: Maybe I should realize my negative self-talk

Side of Eye: Maybe I should acknowledge my beliefs that no longer work for me

Under the Eye: I choose to give them a voice and let them go

Under Nose: All these beliefs that cause me to hold onto stress

Chin: All these beliefs that don't do me any good

Collarbone: All these beliefs that keep me stuck

Crown of Head: I acknowledge them now

Eyebrows: I give them a voice to all of these worries about the day

Side of Eye: I am willing to acknowledge what is really bothering me

Under the Eye: It's safe for me to give it a voice

Under Nose: I give it a voice and I let it go

Chin: Awareness brings about change

Collarbone: My stress levels are already changing for the better

Crown of Head: Today I am willing to let go of my stress

5. Take a deep breath and out.
6. Re-rate the intensity of your **Most Pressing Issue** using the 0-to-10 scale.
7. Repeat, stop or move on to a different MPI.

This information was adapted from: www.thetappingsolution.com



7 tips for managing anxiety and stress during the pandemic

As the situation around the coronavirus continues to evolve, we're living life differently and learning as we go. Stress levels were high before the COVID-19 pandemic, but now they've skyrocketed. We all need support. Now is a time to be kind to each other — and to ourselves. Practicing self-care is more important than ever — and so is focusing on things you can control while letting go of things you can't. Here are some simple things you can do to take good care of yourself right now.

Eat as healthy as you can

Eating a variety of healthy foods is always important, but it's easy to fall back on less healthy options when you're feeling anxious. You don't need to stress out about exactly what to eat — just think about simple ways to eat as healthy as you can. Try to include a fruit or vegetable in every meal. Drink plenty of water. Snack mindfully by portioning out individual servings. It's not about perfection, it's about doing what you can to nourish your body the right way. Also don't forget to support your immune system by taking daily vitamins, i.e. elderberry, echinacea, zinc, and Vitamin C & D.

Get creative with exercise

When you're worried, get out of your head and into your body. Virtually any form of physical activity can act as a stress reliever, so have fun changing up your routine. Find a new yoga or cardio video online that you can try at home. Get a massage or a pedicure. Love your body. Also get outside in the fresh air! The sun naturally feeds our body Vitamin D.

Stay socially connected

Talk to other people about how you feel — from a safe distance, of course. This can help everyone feel more connected and less alone. Ups and downs are inevitable, so check in with loved ones often. Every opportunity to reach out is an opportunity to help lift someone up — including yourself.

Practice kindness

Simple gestures mean a lot. Check in with your neighbors to make sure they have what they need and to let them know you care. Small acts of kindness add up, and the benefits go both ways. Research shows there is a proven link between kindness and feelings of happiness — helping others just feels good.



Rest and relax

If you're having trouble sleeping, you aren't alone — up to 1 in 3 Americans have difficulty falling and staying asleep. So, when your energy is low, take breaks throughout the day. If you have trouble sleeping, make sure you have a quiet, relaxing bedtime routine — and stick to a consistent schedule. Kaiser offers [digital tools](#) that can help improve the quality and quantity of your sleep.

Make time for mindfulness

Ease anxiety about what the future holds by intentionally focusing on the present moment. That's exactly what mindfulness is. Try this simple exercise next time you feel stressed or anxious:

- Get comfortable. Relax your jaw and drop your shoulders.
- Breathe deeply and count your breaths. Inhale to 3 counts, exhale to 4, repeat.
- When your mind wanders, bring your focus back to your breathing.

Get things done

Explore a new hobby you've been meaning to try, or tackle a project you never seem to have time for. Maybe you want to try drawing, painting, or journaling — or finally organizing all your family photos in a scrapbook. Accomplishing simple tasks like cleaning out drawers and closets can be rewarding, while moving your attention away from anxious thoughts.

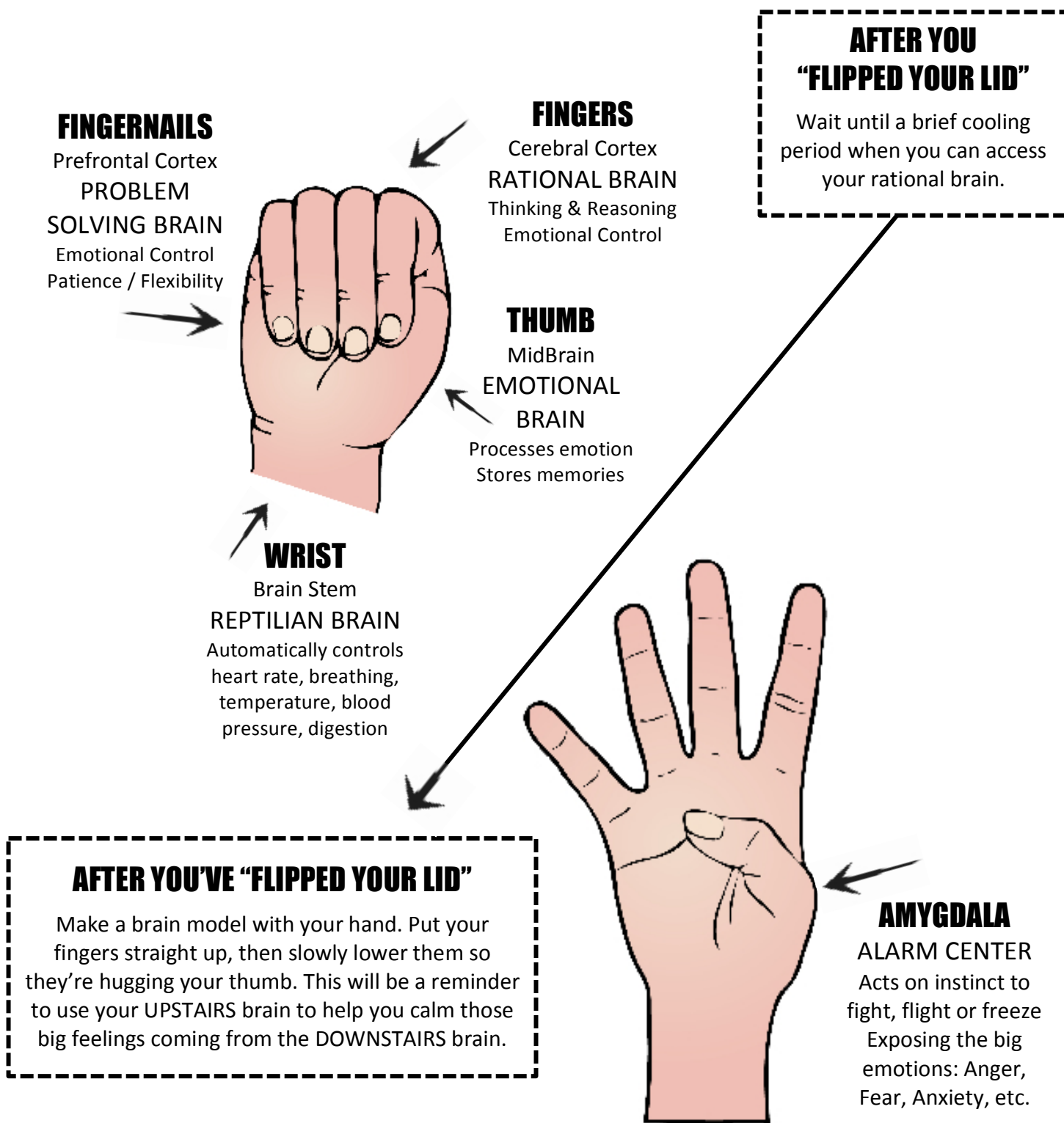
Take breaks from the news

Of course it's important to stay up to date. But it can also be overwhelming and make stress and anxiety worse. Designate time to unplug — especially before you go to sleep. And be sure to choose news from trusted sources, like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the World Health Organization. There's a lot of misinformation going around, and it can be tough to separate the myths from the facts. Also take a break sometimes from social media!!

When times are uncertain, it's never a comfortable feeling. Stress, fear, and anxiety are normal. Making time to practice self-care can help you find some relief. If you need additional support for mental health and emotional wellness, we have [resources](#) that can help — including personalized programs, [digital tools](#), and more.

*L Rowland et. al., "A Range of Kindness Activities Boost Happiness," *The Journal of Social Psychology*, May 15, 2018.

“FLIPPING ONE’S LID”



CREDIT to Dan Siegel creator of the metaphor and expression “Flipped Lid.”

Forced In The Silence to Listen

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when this threat of harm has passed
whether through death disease
or determined intention
my goal is to be different
more purposeful
more aware

today
I am allowing seemingly immaterial moments
to become a mirror
& eusocial insects
to serve as sages

who would have guessed
the clamorous buzzing of bees
which once stirred fear
frustration
fury even
could teach life lessons
about whom I decide to allow into my life
whom to let go of
& who to just let be

more & more
I am asking myself
what can those
who are annoying
disrespectful
callous
& unkind

teach me
about the peculiarities within myself

inform me
of the ways I need to
adjust fine tune
& confess the names
of people I should forgive

with this forced silence
prompted by an invisible enemy
I am learning
with open heart
to turn inward
to discover wisdom
love
healing
& to graciously
let go of the habit
to go outside of myself
for self-soothing

in each moment
I can allow myself
to get caught up
in the insistence
irritation & distraction
of someone else's way of being

- or -

I can unattach to an outcome
decide not to uncomfortably shift
deliberately swat

or demand they be different

I am becoming better at recognizing
that heated words
are emotional billboards
hiding in plain sight
displaying a longing to be seen
heard to feel safe
& anger absence annoyance
is sometimes / most times
ALL times
just an expression of distress
tightly wrapping itself
around the weight of anxiety
or the horror of relentless ruminations

your buzzing about
is rarely ever about me

& not even a worldwide crisis
will prompt some folks
to show affection beyond
their capacity to love themselves
folks can't give you something
they don't possess
or graciously receive something
they don't believe they deserve

so I am listening better now
yesterday I could easily
have found blame
and assigned it a home

but today I chose to choose differently
I decide to see purpose
in our crossed paths
a deeper reason
for our relationship

like most humans bees cooperate
in the caring for one another
each bee's existence leverages
an intentional interconnectedness
an individual contribution
toward the collective good

as they collect nectar to make honey
their rapid wing-beats stir vibrations
that agitate a plant's pollen
which fertilizes the next visited flower

eventually
bees return to the hive
carrying reserves to feed the larvae
& even though most die before
the fruit of their labor is realized
reciprocity is mutual survival

so consider, if you will

the next time you are confronted
with an irritating animation of energy
you have a choice, you know

each encounter with another
is an opportunity for an unfolding
of a new truth
an invitation to re-see reality

& pose a self-reflective question
which can shape one's becoming:

am I hearing
or am I listening?



"Peculiar Griots"

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broken bones are peculiar griots
the morals of their stories
are sharp edged lessons
clues to internal journeys
that can no longer be ignored

is it my ability
to walk from here to there
the only ingredient
which decrees me as strong
is worthiness deserved

by how quickly or efficiently
one moves to the next act of doing

how many vials of lipstick
fancy dresses or flashy cars
can fully mask the declarations
of unworthiness I internally profess
heard by even the tiniest of my cells

this lifetime of fervent whispers
that reveal
conditionality and regret
poor mes
and damn them

there is ancient scripture to discover
when one is forced to reconcile
morals of the personal stories
we tell ourselves about ourselves

if we simply rephrase the questions
we might start to recognize
pain as an opportunity for insight

instead of
why did this happen to me?
perhaps inquire
what can this experience
tragedy / inconvenience / loss
deeply teach me



about myself
which festering internal wound
is surfacing through my silence
ready for reckoning
what aching heartbreak needs to be
brought into the healing light of day

if I could take time
to validate my own worthiness
notice when I say one thing
& do another
break promises
deflect my unprocessed pain
upon another

with damaged limbs
there is no running away
no hiding from the truth
I am afraid to face

when forcibly displaced bones force stillness
it can serve as an opportunity
for healing of body, mind & soul
it is a precious gift to shift mental wandering
from whom will love this scarred vessel now
to how can I now love myself more

how oddly similar then
is the message of this pandemic
revealing a broken world
grappling with unprocessed pain
centuries of careless picking
at scabbed over lacerations
that we have refused
to face - accept - heal from

racism oppression hatred poverty
these have always been America's broken bones
erupting jagged edges
that make us bleed

isn't it time we acknowledged
that it is unconditional love
yes only love
that will tend to and finally heal
our woundedness

Art Saved My Life poem



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