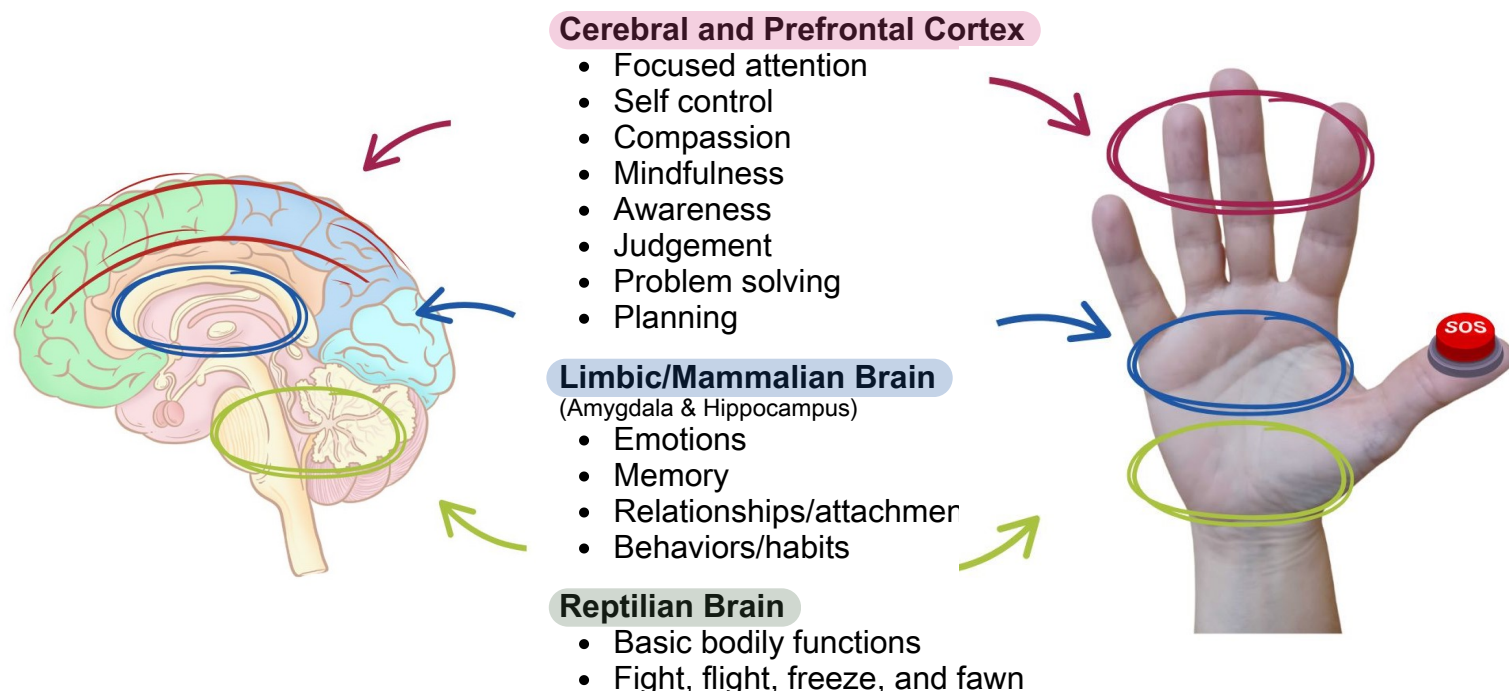


The Hand Model of the Brain

By Dr. Dan Siegel



Emotionally Regulated

An emotionally regulated brain looks like a closed fist. The brainstem, amygdala, and prefrontal cortex (thinking brain) are all connected and working together.



Disconnected = Dysregulated

When your fingers are raised, the prefrontal cortex (thinking brain) becomes disconnected and difficult to access. The emotional brain becomes activated and can lead to impulsivity or poor decision making.



The Hand Model of the Brain

What is the hand model of the brain?

The hand model of the brain helps us understand how individuals who are typically focused, thoughtful, and capable of making sound decisions (regulated) may, at times, display extreme changes in behavior, become withdrawn, act impulsively, or exhibit dysregulated behavior.

Numerous factors can result in a person becoming "activated," leading to a state of dysregulation. What factors come to mind when considering your program participants?

The brain reacts to perceived threats in various ways: Fight, Flight, Freeze, and Fawn. What are ways these responses might show up in your program participants?



Youth workers play a crucial role in assisting individuals in maintaining regulation and guiding them back to stability when they are dysregulated. How are you currently supporting young people in your program to achieve this?

**Looking for more ideas? Check out some of the other quick guide videos on self-awareness and regulation.*

How does this information influence your approach to behavior management within your program?

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AKA....

There are a variety of ways people describe this concept. The "watch dog/wise owl" brain and "upstairs/downstairs" brain are examples you may hear.

