

Our Leadership Responsibilities: How to be an Exceptional Advisor for Families Undergoing a Divorce

2017 IDFA Conference: Canadian Series—Keynote

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Learning objectives

1. Understand the power of those who can control their emotions
2. Learn how our brain works, why we get triggered, and why being triggered puts us at a disadvantage
3. Develop the lifestyle habits of real leaders who remain in control

LEADERSHIP

“... clients in continuing conflict have the ability to hijack even the best intentions of the professionals through positional thinking, advocacy, alignment, transference, counter-transference and other invisible pulls towards long-standing habits of adversarial work.”

Van Buren, Berger, Fauss

Peace in Place Project: Building Healing Spaces
The Collaborative Review, Winter 2014

“... None of us is spared the reality of emotions.
They can ruin any possibility of a wise agreement.”

Fisher and Shapiro

Beyond Reason: Using Emotions as You Negotiate

Brain science to understand

- Why we get emotional, take it personally
- What happens in our body when we get emotional
- How to prepare to be at our best

Brain patterns

All of our experiences
since childhood
are stored in our brain

You are walking down the street and notice someone running toward you. The person, upon reaching you, hits you on the head and steals your wallet or purse.

The next time someone is running toward you, chances are a set of standard fear responses will be set into play. You will probably freeze and prepare to defend yourself.

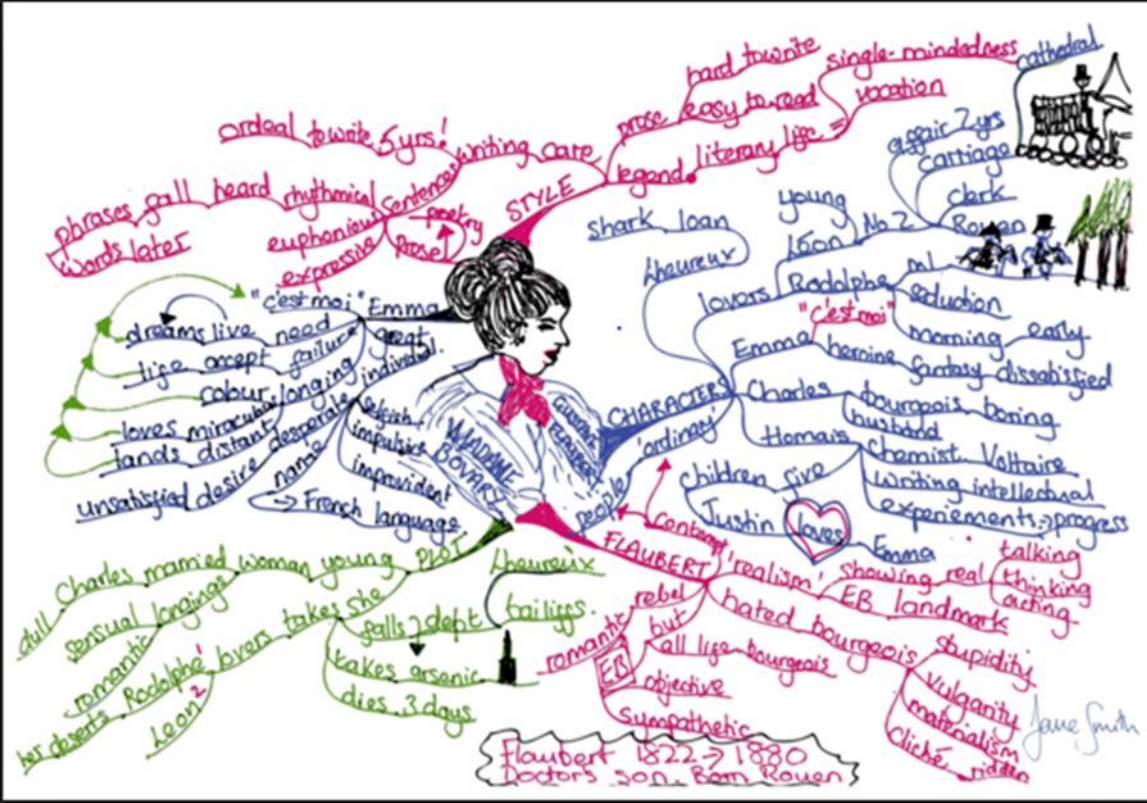
The sight of someone running towards you has become a conditioned fear stimulus.

But suppose you later find yourself on the street where you were mugged. Although there is no one running toward you, your body may still be going through its defense motions.

The reason for this is that not only did you get conditioned to the immediate stimulus directly associated with the trauma (the sight of the mugger running toward you), but also to the other stimuli that just happen to have been there.

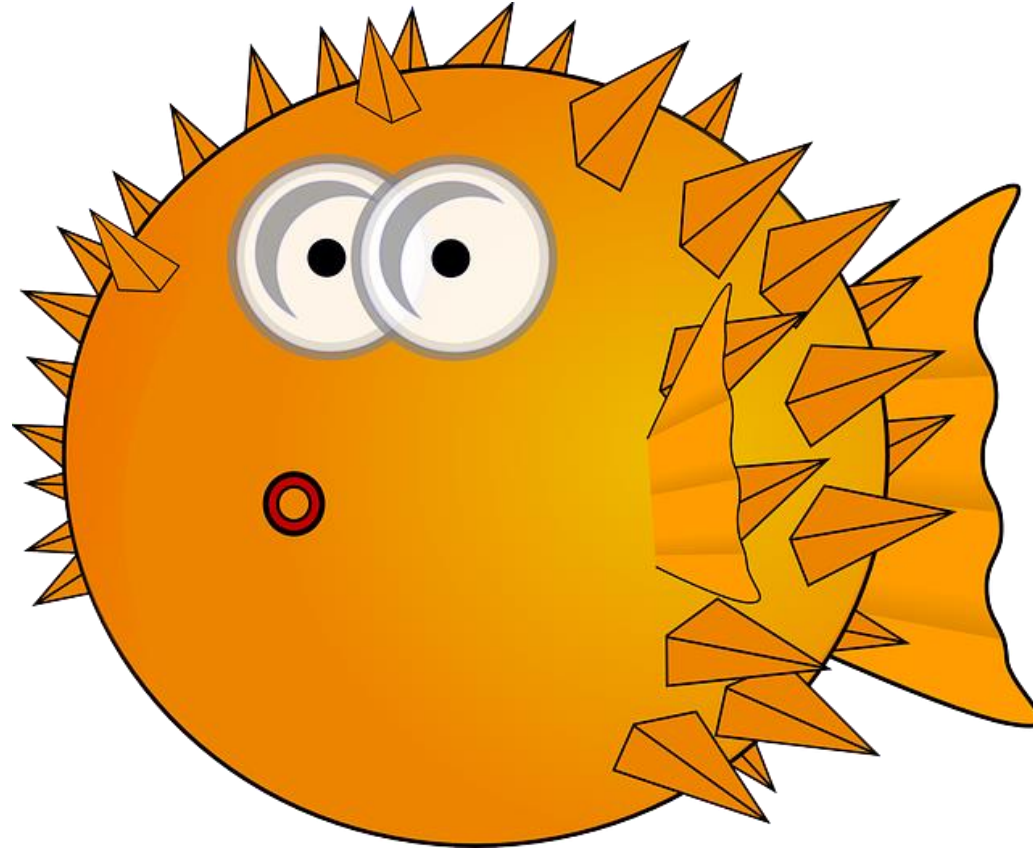
These made up the occasion or the context in which the mugging took place, and like the sight of the mugger, they too, were conditioned by the traumatic experience.

Brain patterns



What is an emotional trigger?

What is an emotional trigger?



We have the same triggers in relation to:

physical threats



Illustration Source:
innerblindness.org

and

emotional threats



Limbic system

We react impulsively.

It's our brain protecting us from danger.

Fight-or-flight response

- Hormones are released including **adrenaline** and **cortisol**

Fight-or-flight response

- Hormones are released including **adrenaline** and **cortisol**
- Changes in the body
 - heart rate and blood pressure increase
 - veins constrict to send more blood to major muscle groups
 - muscles tense up, energized by adrenaline and glucose
 - pupils dilate to take in as much light as possible
 - send more oxygen into the lungs

Stress interferes with memory.

Limbic activation impacts short-term memory.

Pre-frontal cortex

- Planning complex cognitive behaviours



Pre-frontal cortex

- Planning complex cognitive behaviours
- Decision making
-

Pre-frontal cortex

- Planning complex cognitive behaviours
- Decision making
- Evaluate good and bad, better and best, same and different

In fight or flight mode,



Image Source: lifehacker.com

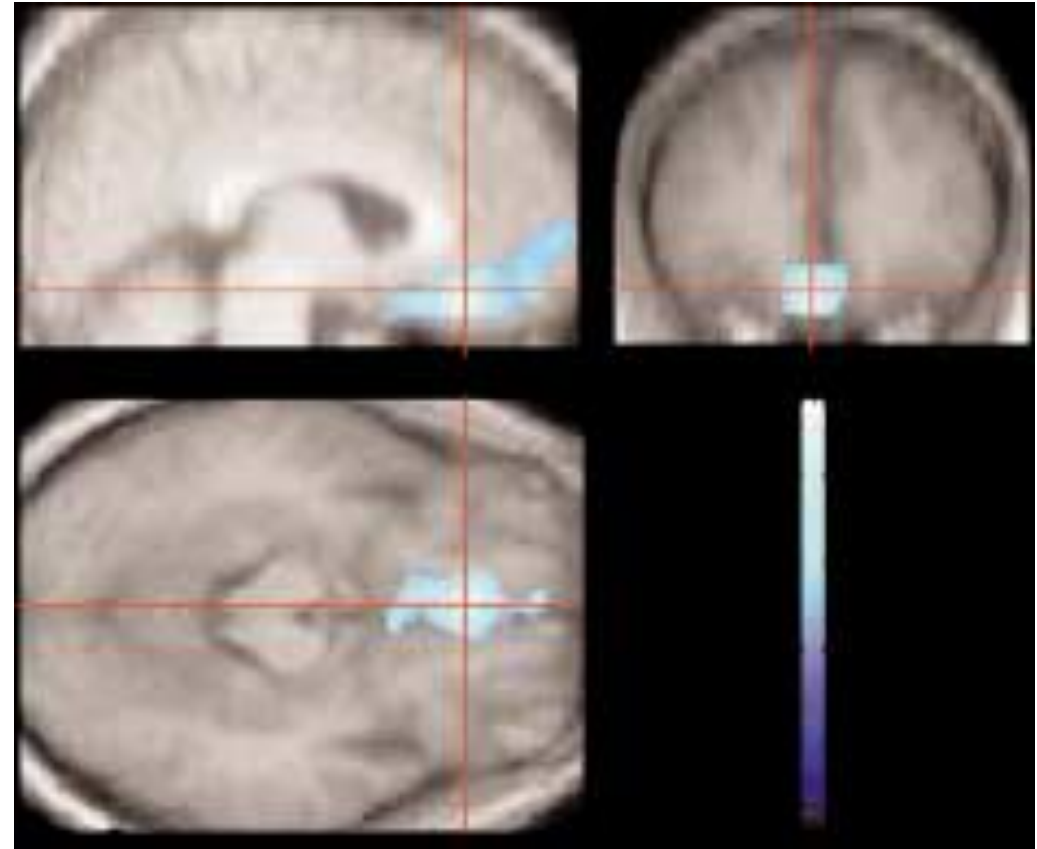
our ability to **THINK** and to **REASON** diminishes.

Pre-frontal cortex

Figure 1.

Decreases in Regional Cerebral Blood Flow in Response to an Imagined Scenario Involving Unrestrained Aggression.

Pietrini, Guazzelli, Basso, Jaffe, Grafman



What makes it worse?

Judgement.

Intolerance.

Mirror neurons



Take care of yourself

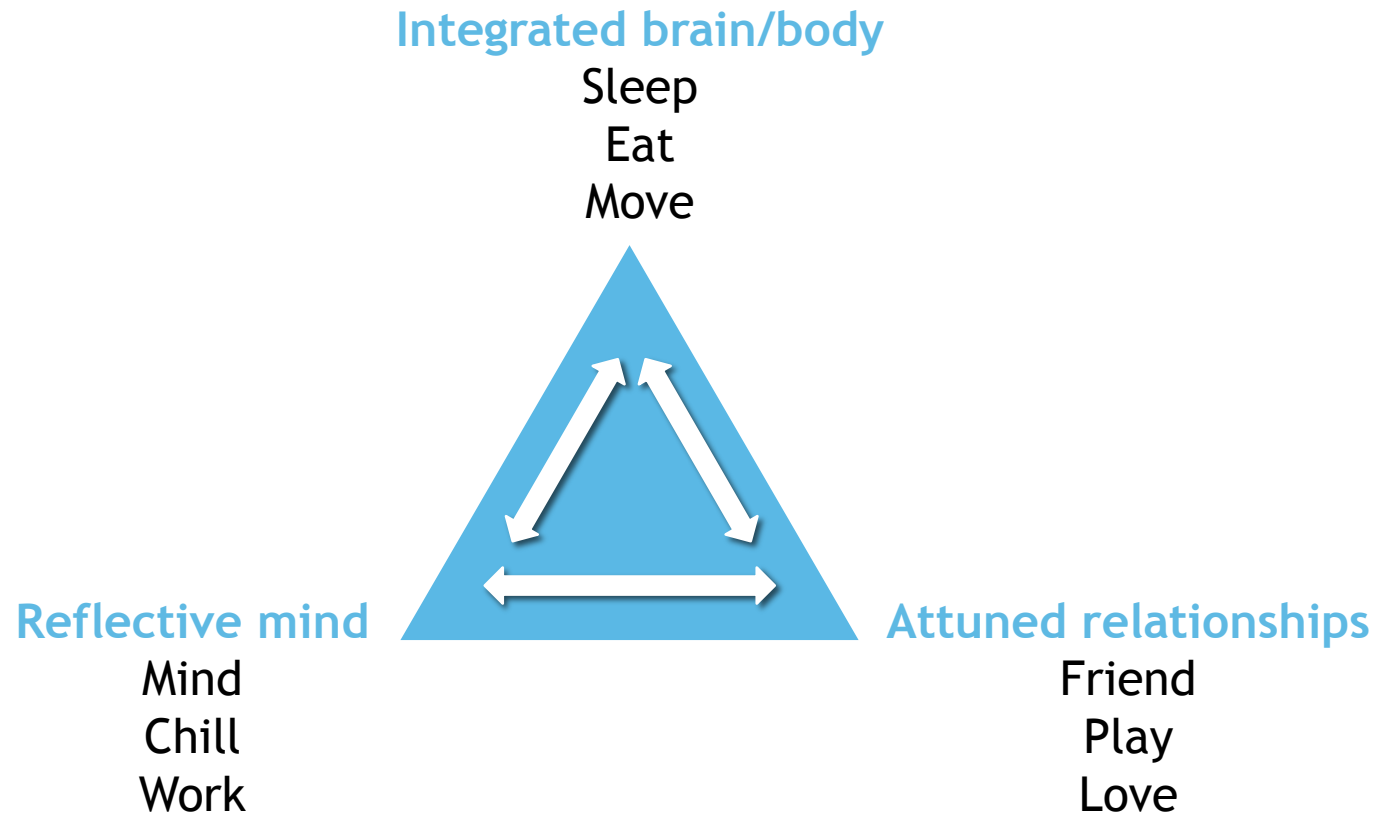
to minimize your susceptibility

Healthy Mind Platter

Rock, Siegel, Poelmans, Payne

“The Healthy Mind Platter offers a theoretical model to study and optimize the mental well-being, brain health, creativity and performance of leaders.”

Whole health pyramid



Credit: Alan Rock, Dr. Linda Page

Whole health pyramid

The brain is 2% of our body weight yet uses 20% of our energy.

Whole health pyramid

Brain energy shortage

triggers defense systems

interferes with pre-frontal cortex functions

(planning, rational decision making, empathy, emotional regulation, ethical sensibility, moral judgment, etc.)

Expectation

A strong belief that something will happen or be the case in the future.

A belief that someone will or should achieve something.

Expectation: The **Pygmalion effect**

If we expect someone to succeed, unknowingly we provide

- Better climate

-

-

-

Expectation: The **Pygmalion effect**

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Expectation: The **Pygmalion effect**

If we expect someone to succeed, unknowingly we provide

- Better climate
- Provide more input
- Better response opportunity
- More positive feedback



Image Source: buzzle.com

Rules for expectation

1. Recognize your negative expectations
2. Believe in a positive expectation and write it down
 - Even if you don't intellectually understand how your expectation will be fulfilled

Intention

: a determination to act in a certain way

: what one intends to do or bring about

Merriam-Webster

Intention



- Intentions shape our behaviour because we move toward what we expect

- We “get” more of what we pay attention to

“You are a master when you’ve conditioned yourself with chosen thoughts and feelings, you’ve memorized desired emotional ... states, and nothing in your external life deters you from your aims.

No person, no thing, and no experience at any time or place should disrupt [*your objectives*]”.

brackets added

Dr. Joe Dispenza;
Breaking the Habit of Being Yourself

Rules for intention

1. Commit your intention to writing

2. Define

- Who I will be
- What I want to accomplish

Harness the power of your brain

Anchor Card

You are the **LEADER**.
Take it seriously.

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