

TMFRS

LET'S MAKE SENSE OF YER STUPID FUCKING BRAIN

Working WITH Trauma Brain Pt II

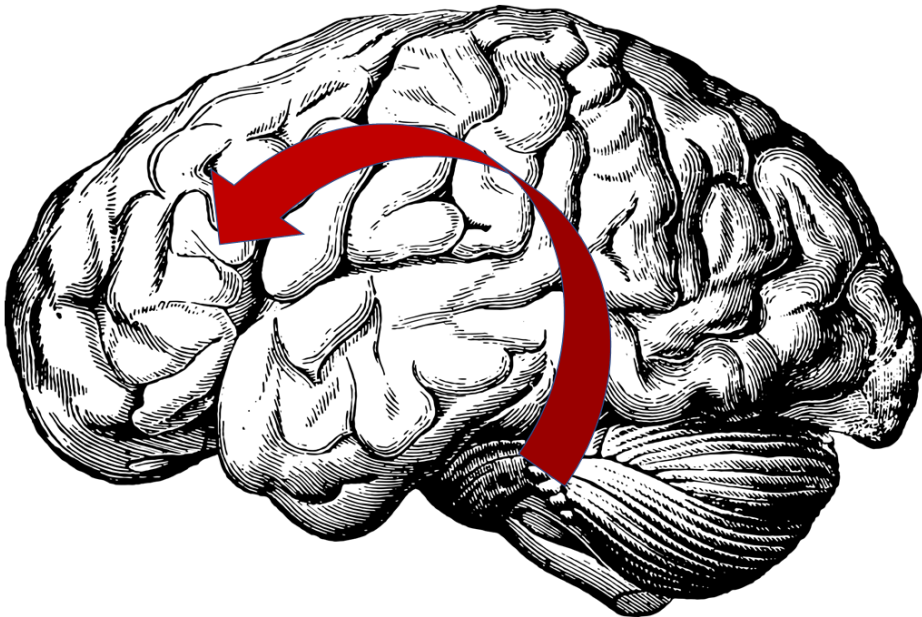
And no longer fighting a neuro-battle you'll always lose

Fall 2021

Deepening Neuro-Processing Details

So, let's give more detail to what's really going on up top each day, especially as related to the process of PTSD processing and management.

I see the trauma-recovering brain processes organization running like this. Again, first starting from the bottom-level, most critical actions that your head is going to put at the top of the list to keep livin' - and moving upwards, towards the more high-falutin functions that we *ideally* can gain access to, but often have to shove to the back of the drawer when unnatural, socially-pressured human life is a'callin.



In general, order of operations starts at the lower-thinking bottom-brain and moves upwards/outwards to the analysis, regulation and integration center - the PFC.

When we're talking about brain functions and how they present in your life on a prioritized scale, we have:

Automatic survival and fear responses (such as getting nervous system-deregulated or engaging your fight or flight cascade)

Emotions (as in, having feelings that act as a conduit between your brain, body, and the world to tell you how to act. Also, this is the level of creating and retrieving emotional memories, which we continually talk about being a different category of memories from word recollections, because they are completely different priorities.)

Experiential memories (as in, tying together multiple senses to create a movie-version of events playing in your skull. Also, accessing your early implicit memories, which are generally behavioral programs you learned so young and/or persistently in life that you can't remember when you ever first encountered the information. Plus, this is where past recollections of visual, auditory, olfactory, sensory experiences will pop up.)

Word representations of emotions and experiences (Meaning, your translation of physical emotional and experiential events into thought-based, abstract, human language. Also known as, creating disjointed tidbits of declarative memories from what you felt and saw. Having partial narratives of events and feelings, sometimes interspersed with the words you've collected from others making appearances.)

Acknowledgement of outside facts (This is your higher level integrative process of finally enlisting your working memory. Taking information from your life and adding in new, more objective data from external sources. Holding them together in one place to collect context. This would be the maintenance and initial integration portion of your working memory.)

Realizing more realistic limitations of existing in time-space (Let's call this long term memory retrieval processes, in which you remember your inherent fallibility and ignorance as a living organism. Realizing what you *knew* at that time... is different than what you *know* now, removed from the event... and trying to mesh those two perspectives. I think we can consider this stage to also be functions of your working memory - specifically informational *manipulation*, which is a different process in a different part of your head. It means you can HOLD data from different perspectives... but also have the power to shape the information. As in, you can change the meaning of the short-term memory you're holding onto, not just cling to those first data points.)

Internally and externally congruent, logical and reasonable narratives creation (We can correlate this with increasingly high levels of memory integration and reconsolidation, in which

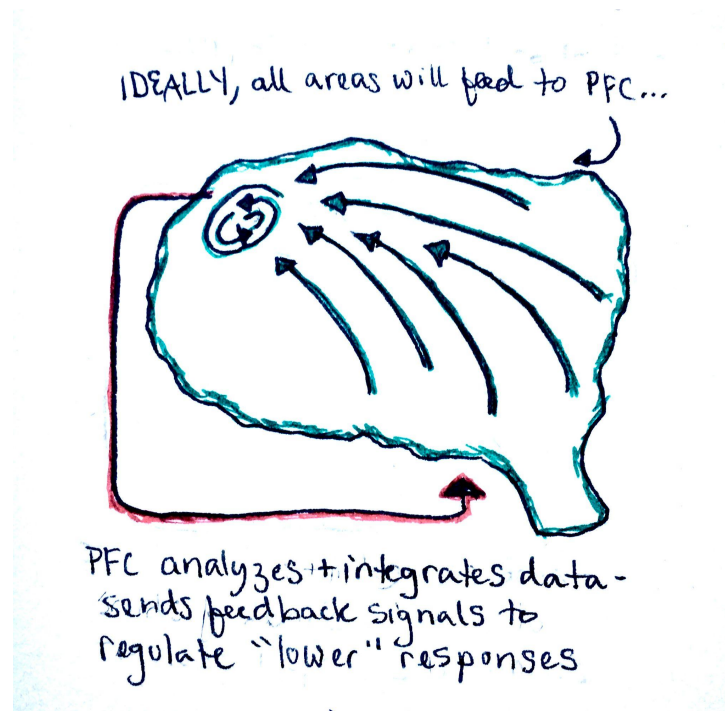
you reassess old information with a new narrative based on more recent information, thus changing the coding of the memory in your brain synapses. And we can also connect this to the process of decision making. Deciding HOW you feel about events, WHAT really happened, and how you react to the memory in the current day, with all information in tow.)

And, then, *finally*,

You gain access to your full timeline of historically derived information, and have the power to take broad views that include personal identity integration

(This would be your long term potentiation of neural networks, or, the “sealing-in” of information into a historical learned filing cabinet. Moving data from short term to long term memory. It’s also the process of creating autobiographical stories. Also, where we get a “sense of self,” or “lifelong identity,” or “cohesive personal story,” as we keep talking about.)

God bless that Prefrontal Cortex, but... seriously, we just had to journey ass-first through the entire brain to get to this lofty point.



Remember this graphic from last time? Still the simplest way to understand your brain functions.

So, one more time, seems like that hierarchy of shit your brain needs to do is:

- 1 Automatic survival and fear responses
- 2 Emotional responses and emotional memory creation
- 3 Experiential memories retrieval and creation
- 4 Developing word representations of everything so far
- 5 Acknowledgement of outside, more objective facts
- 6 Realizing your realistic limitations of existing as an animal in a single time-space
- 7 Creating internally and externally congruent, logical and reasonable narratives from everything so far

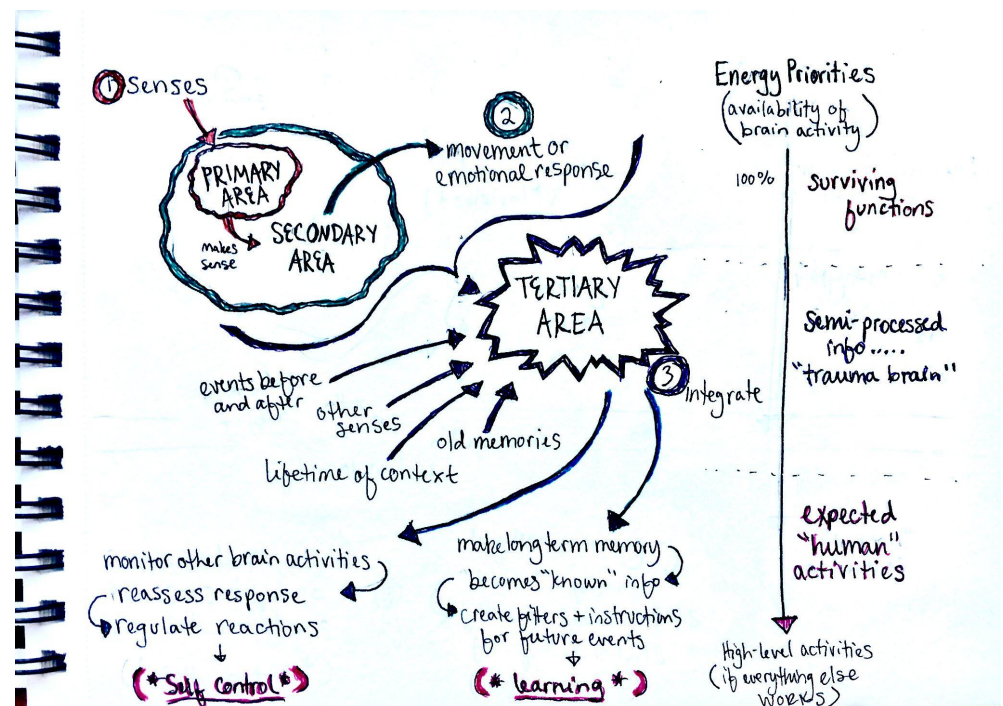
And finally,

- 8 Developing a full life timeline, with historically derived information, and identity integration of new information with old tales about who you are. Then putting that novel safely on a bookshelf where you can always access it as “learned, known, resolved, and cultivated,” knowledge.

Throughout, we’ve moved from lower-brain, primary area, sensory recognition. To secondary area, immediate reaction processes. All the way to the information-managing, tertiary area king, the Prefrontal Cortex with all its integration and human supervision processes.

And hopefully, this chat has started to make some sense of the ways your more “basic” functions can completely override your intentions to engage the higher and fancier brain activities. Which should already be pretty relieving, considering how much we hate ourselves for ever not meeting humanly demands.

But that’s just the beginning, Fuckers.



Let’s keep talking about ALL the ways we can use this concept. Next time.

How do you feel about this shorter episode format and accompanying text/graphics? Hoping it helps with incremental, immersive, reflective learning. Share your thoughts anytime @ traumatizedmotherfxckers@gmail.com