



Deep Release Online
Professional Training for Counsellors



Releasing Blocked Emotions



Session 1

What are emotions and how do they get blocked?



What are Emotions?



Joy



Anxiety

What are emotions?

Emotions are psychological states comprised of thoughts, feelings, physiological changes, expressive behaviors, and inclinations to act.

familymeans.org

Emotions are mental states brought on by neurophysiological changes, variously associated with thoughts, feelings, behavioural responses, and a degree of pleasure or displeasure.

There is currently no scientific consensus on a definition.

Wikipedia

Embarrassment



Fear



Disgust



Sadness



Ennui

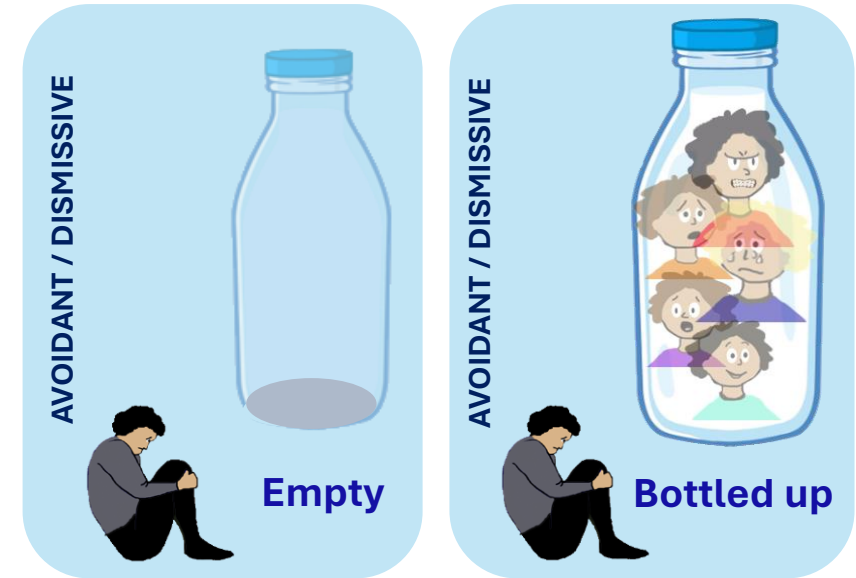


Anger

HOW / WHY DO EMOTIONS GET BLOCKED?

1. Developmental Deficit

- Our core emotional needs were ignored or dismissed
- We learnt to put a lid on our feelings, building defensive walls to protect ourselves and keep pain out
- *Avoidant Attachment? (by 1 year old...)*

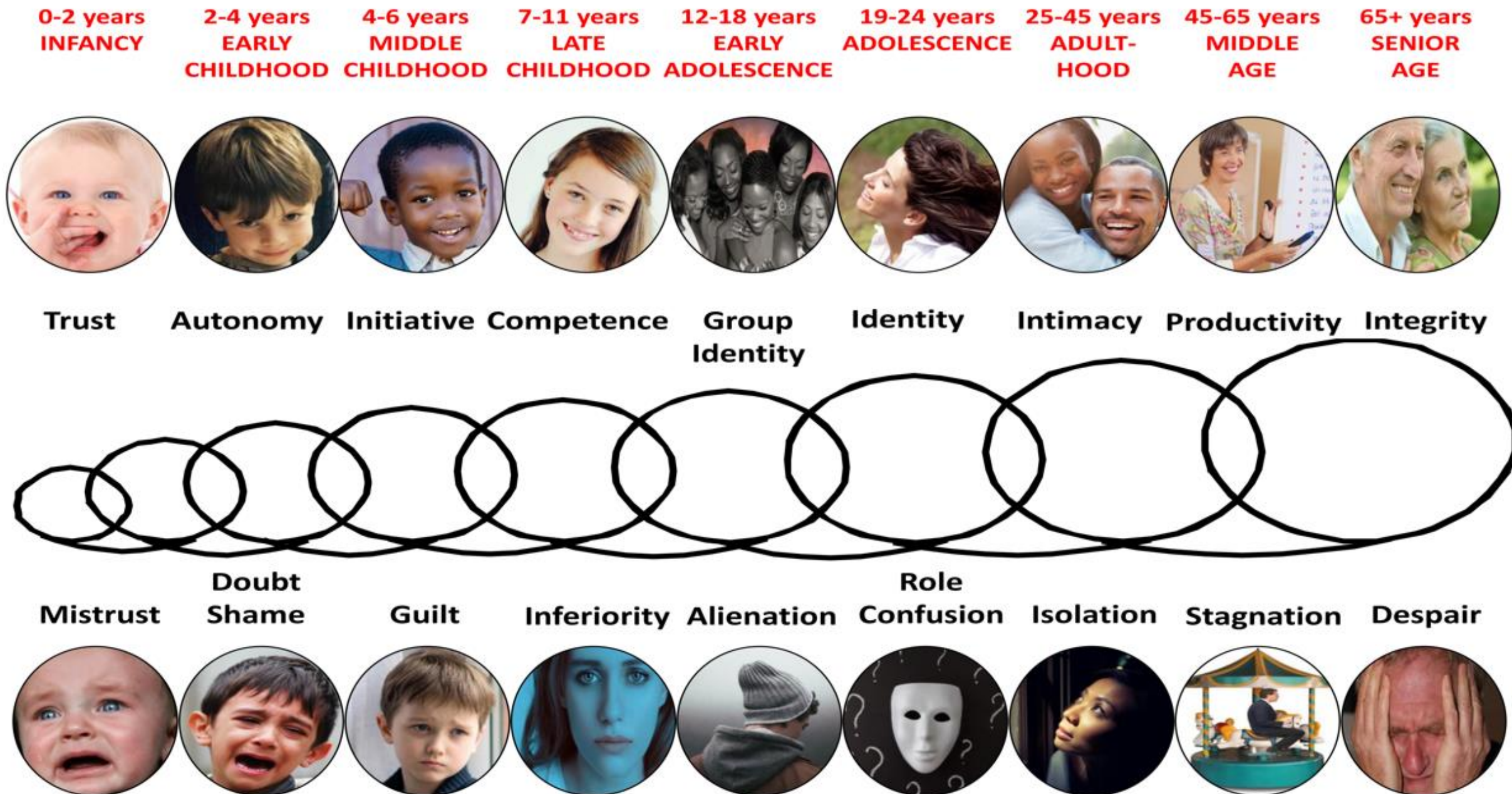


2. Trauma

- We were abused, punished or mocked for expressing distress or anger
- Freeze response
- Dissociative parts holding different emotions (at different ages)



Erikson's Life Stages



HOW / WHY DO EMOTIONS GET BLOCKED?

3. Alexithymia

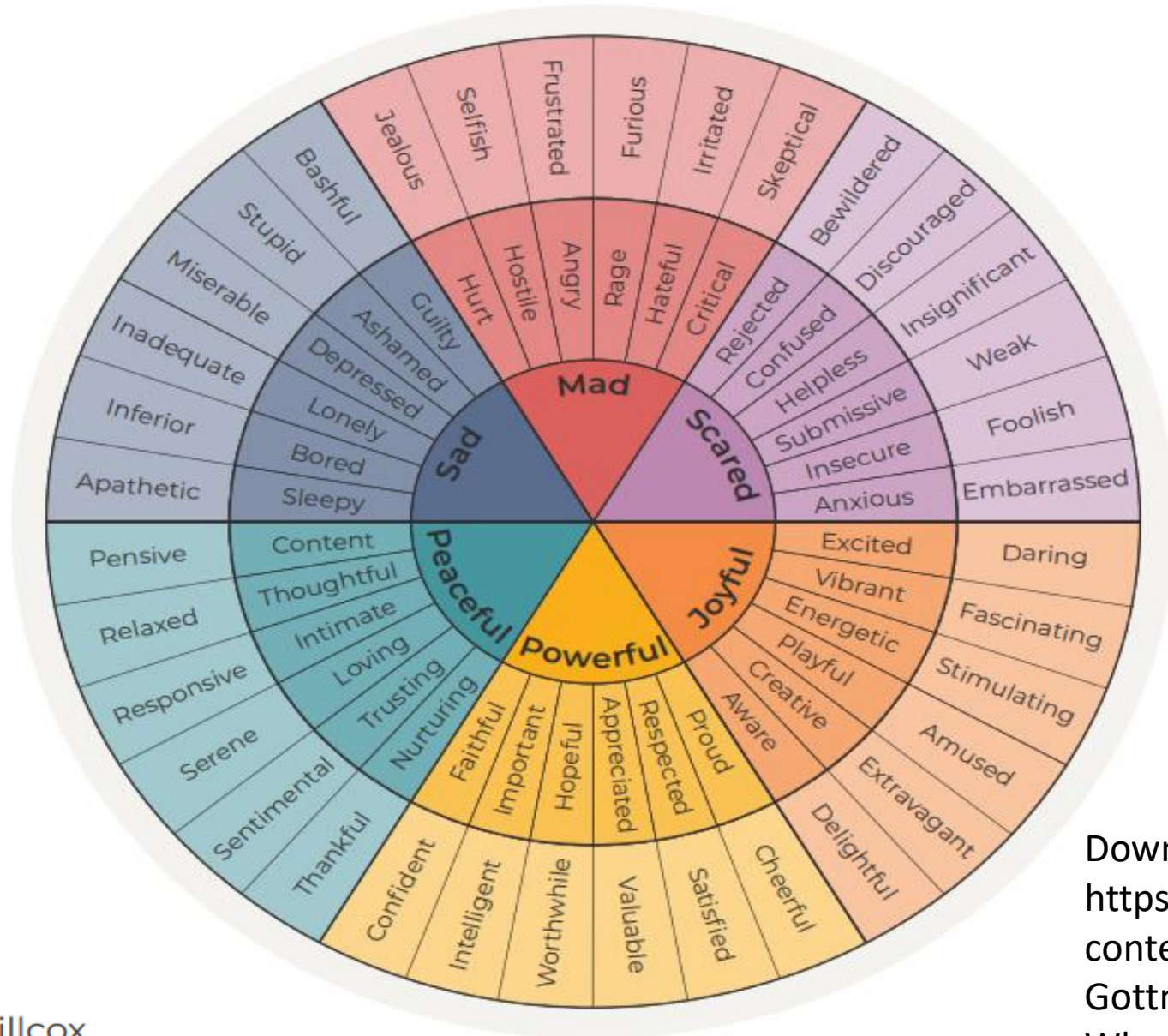
- We don't have words for what we are feeling – we genuinely don't know how to describe it
- *What are you feeling? ... I don't know.*
- 10% of the general population; 50% of people on the Autism Spectrum

4. Autism Spectrum

- Full range of human emotions, but can be hard to identify, process and articulate them
- *"Some of us never get to the point where we can look inward and explain outward..."*
- Care about others but not sure how to respond



The Feeling Wheel



Download at:
https://cdn.gottman.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/The-Gottman-Institute_The-Feeling-Wheel_v2.pdf

The Gottman Institute

Developed by Dr. Gloria Willcox

THE HARD FEELINGS WHEEL



hardfeelingscards.co.uk

THE HARD FEELINGS WHEEL



hardfeelingscards.co.uk

What Triggered Me

1. I felt excluded.
2. I felt powerless.
3. I felt unheard.
4. I felt scolded.
5. I felt judged.
6. I felt blamed.
7. I felt disrespected.
8. I felt lack of affection.
9. I felt I couldn't speak up.
10. I felt lonely.
11. I felt ignored.
12. I felt I couldn't be honest.
13. I felt like the bad guy.
14. I felt forgotten.
15. I felt unsafe.
16. I felt unloved.
17. I felt it was unfair.
18. I felt frustrated.
19. I felt disconnected.
20. I felt trapped.
21. I felt lack of passion.
22. I felt uncared for.
23. I felt manipulated.
24. I felt controlled.


Buddy Group Check-in

Say hello to your Buddies for the day and check out any boundary or other issues.

Share your thoughts and feelings about the training so far.

10 minutes





Session 2

A bit of Neuroscience

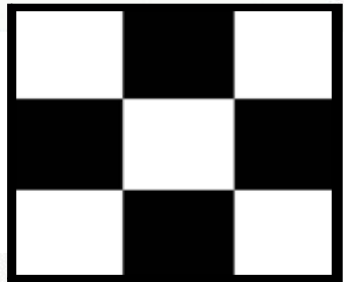
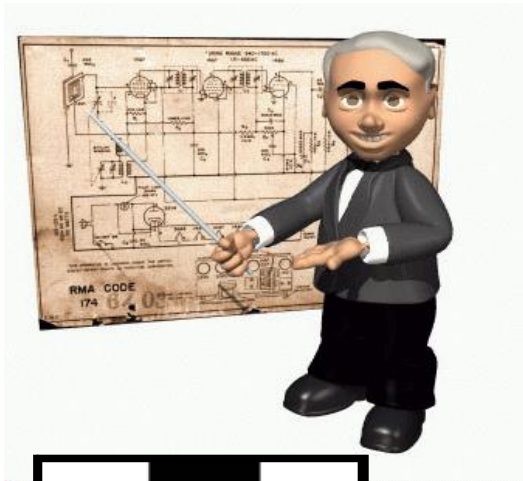
with Dr Chris



THE TWO SIDES OF THE BRAIN



LEFT AND RIGHT BRAIN



> “No!”

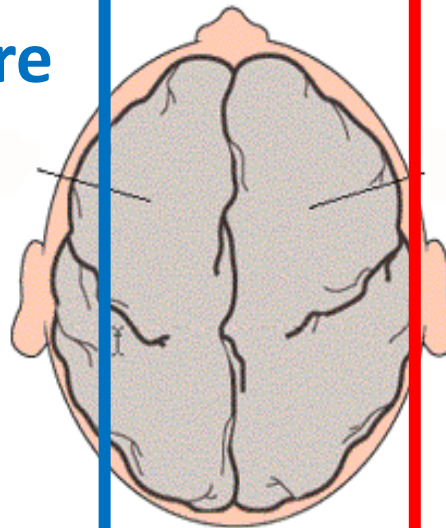
The Left Hemisphere

LOGICAL

LEGAL

LINEAR

LINGUISTIC



The Right Hemisphere

RELATIONAL

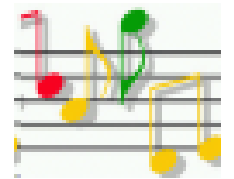
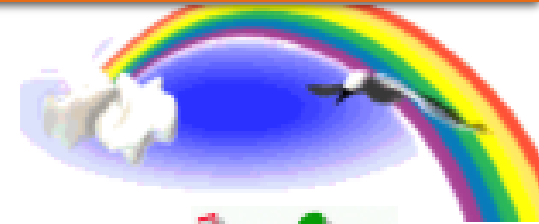
ARTISTIC

RELEASING

RESPONSIVE

REACH FOR THE STARS

RISK-TAKING



< “Why Not?”

THE TOP-DOWN BRAIN

Cortex

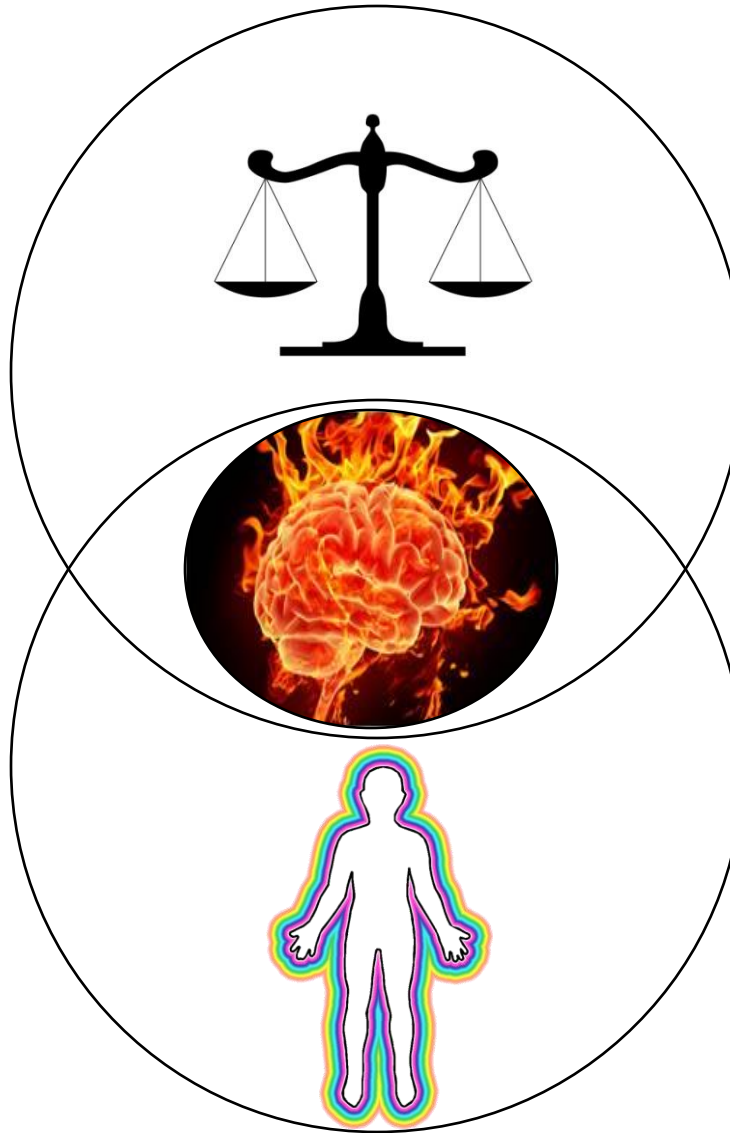
Thinking

Limbic System
"in between"

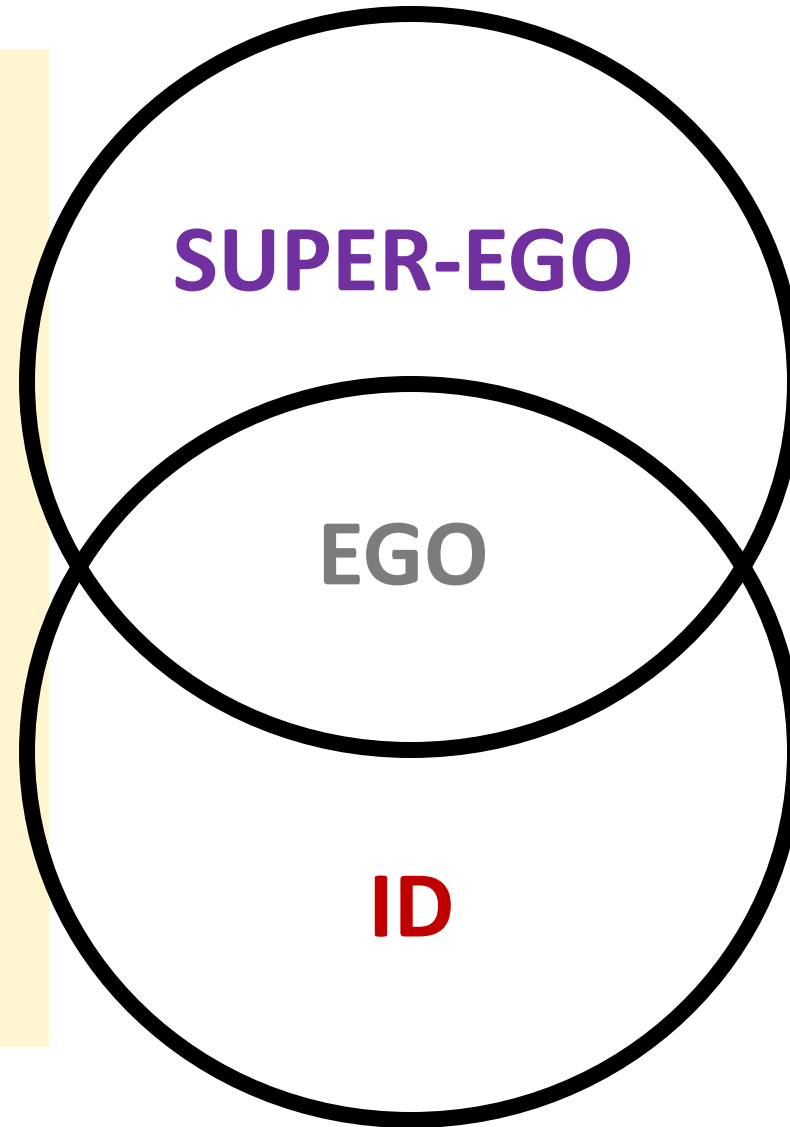
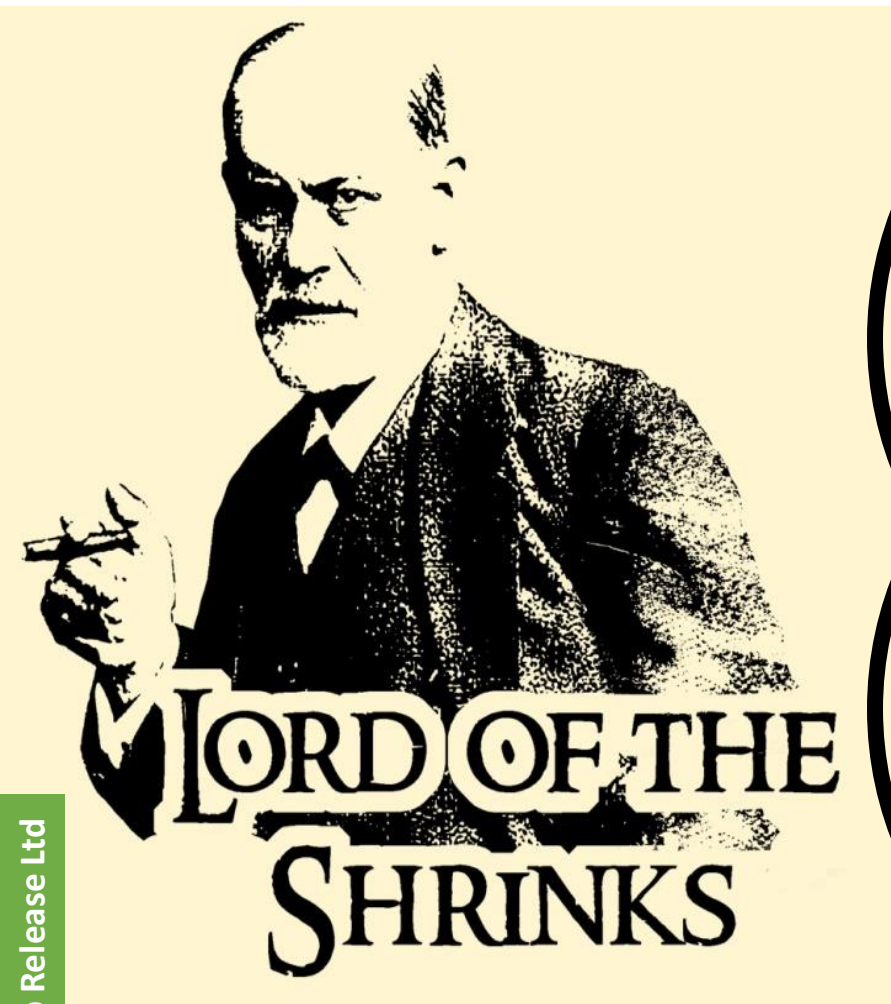
Feeling

Hindbrain

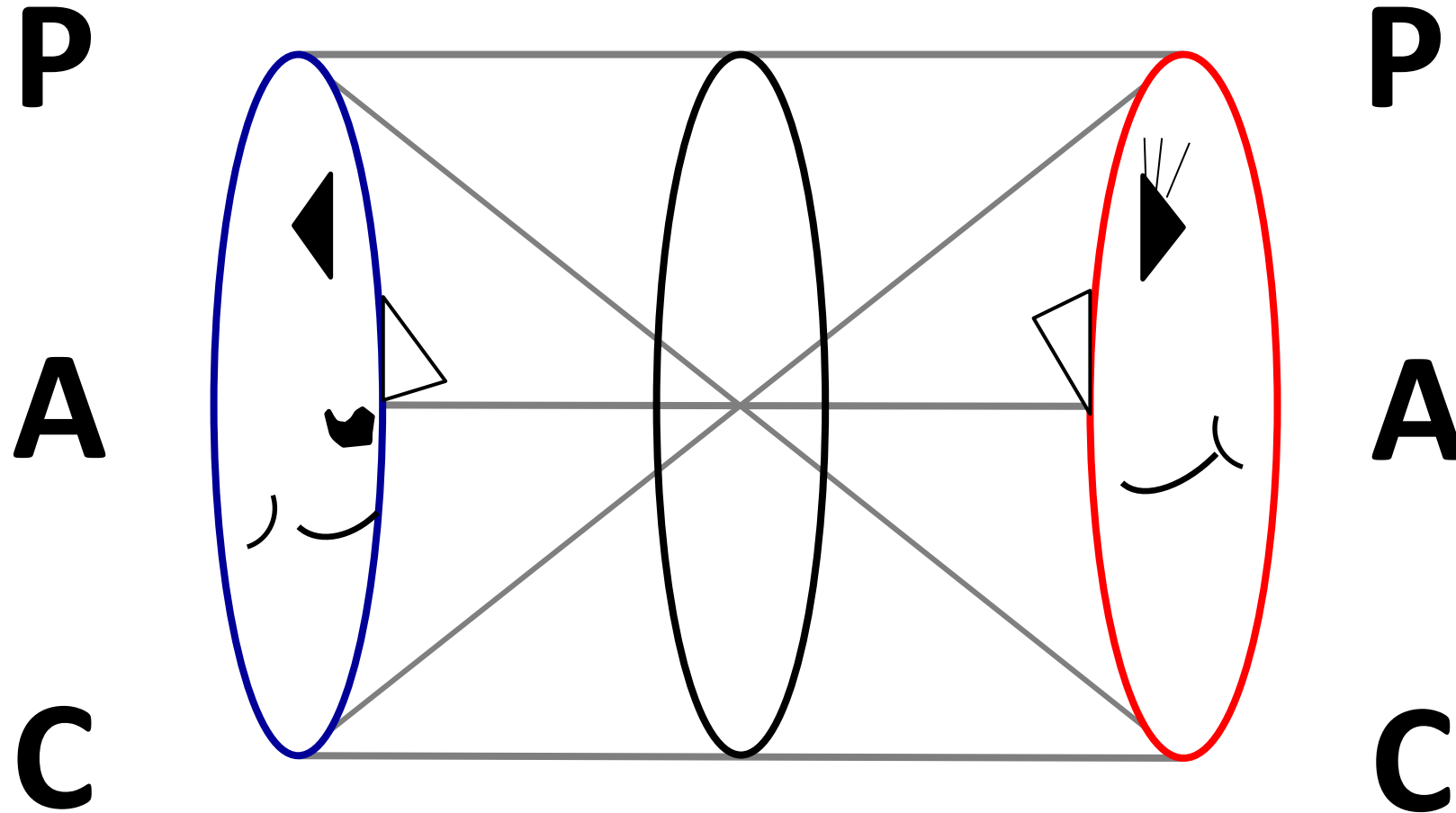
Being/Doing



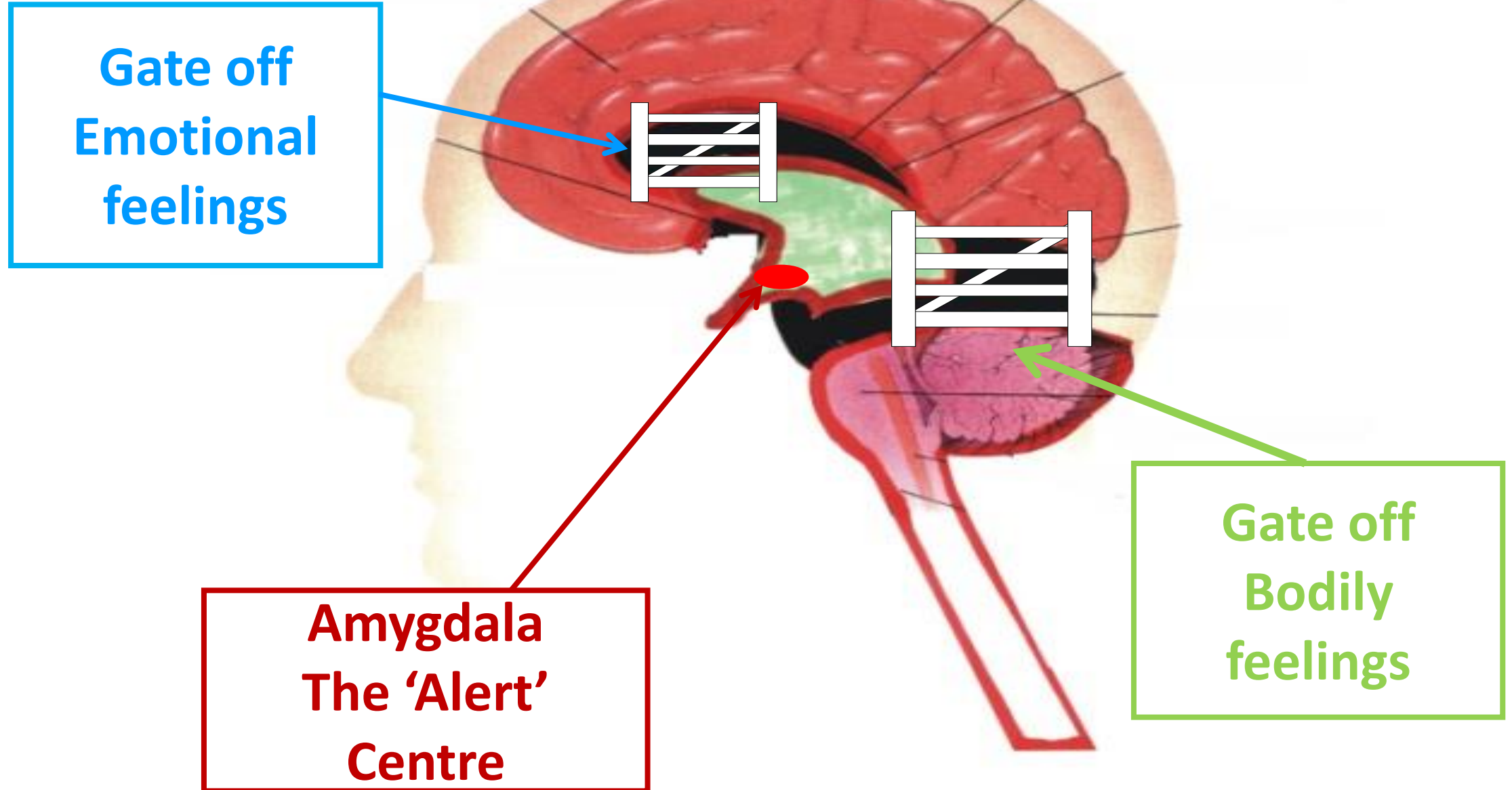
FREUD'S THEORIES



SIMULTANEOUS 2-WAY COMMUNICATION



THE SPLIT BRAIN

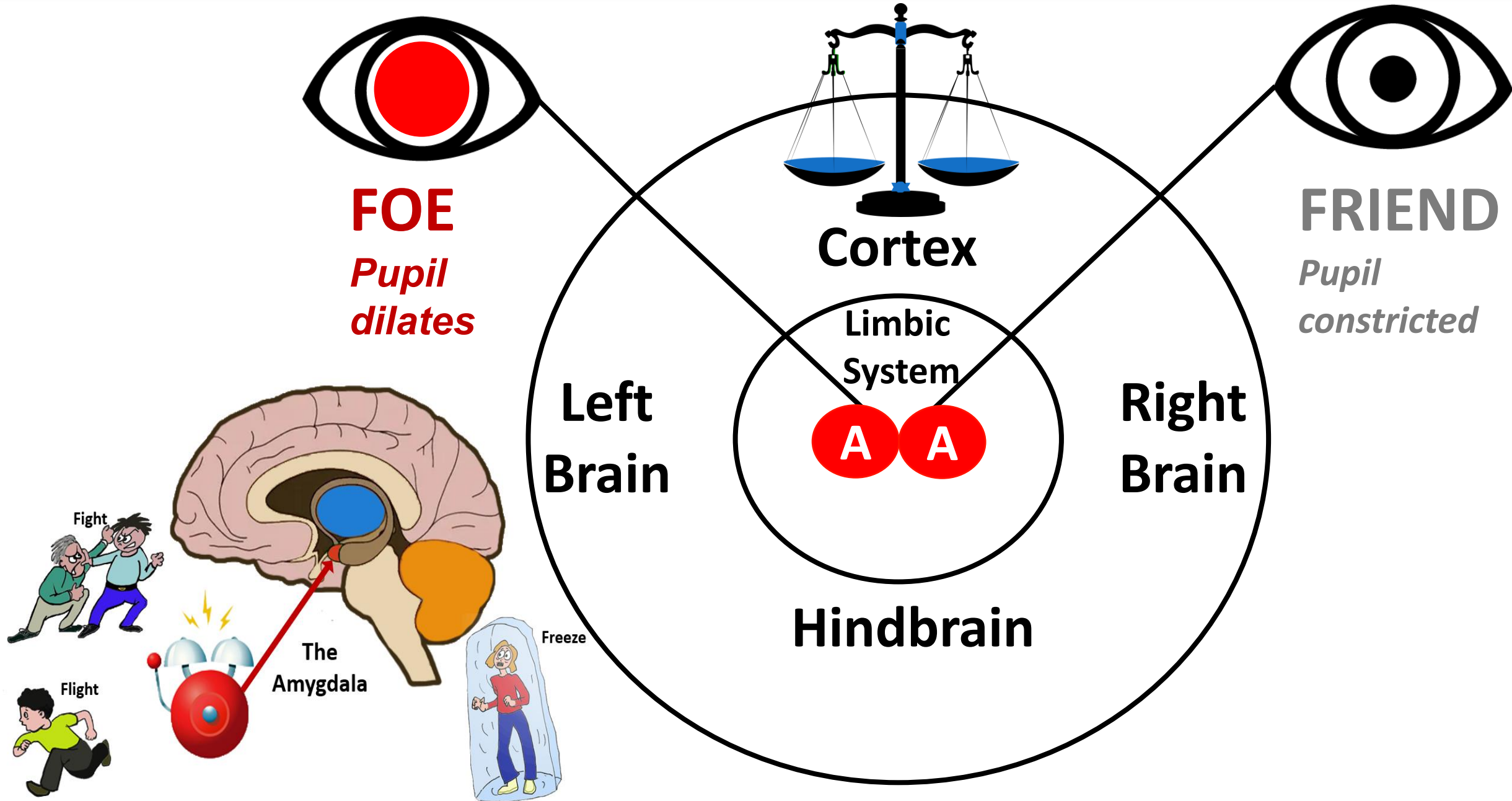






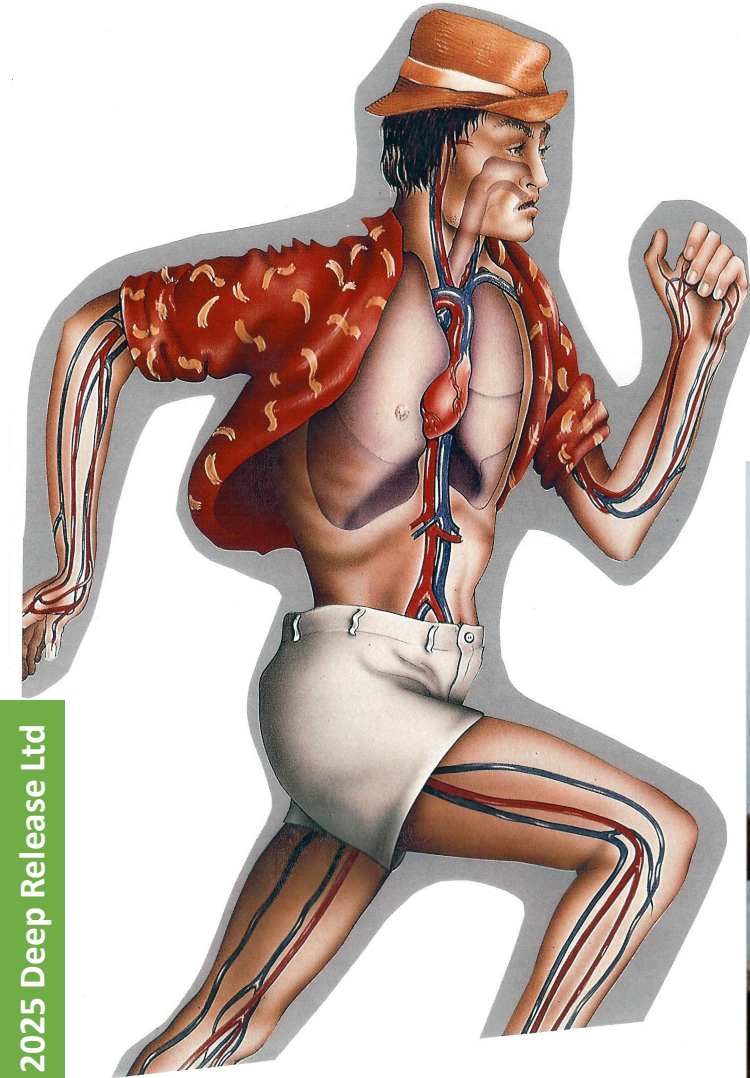
Feather-horned Beetle

FRIEND OR FOE?



THE AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

SYMPATHETIC SYSTEM – FLIGHT/FIGHT/FREEZE



PARASYMPATHETIC SYSTEM – CHILL



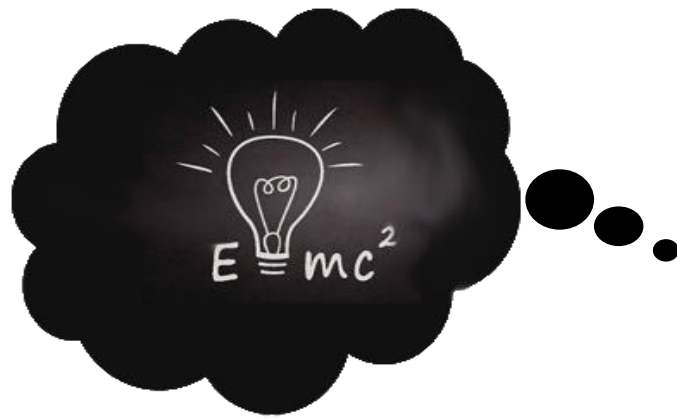
EMOTIONAL (AFFECT) REACTIONS

Looking at the way I feel

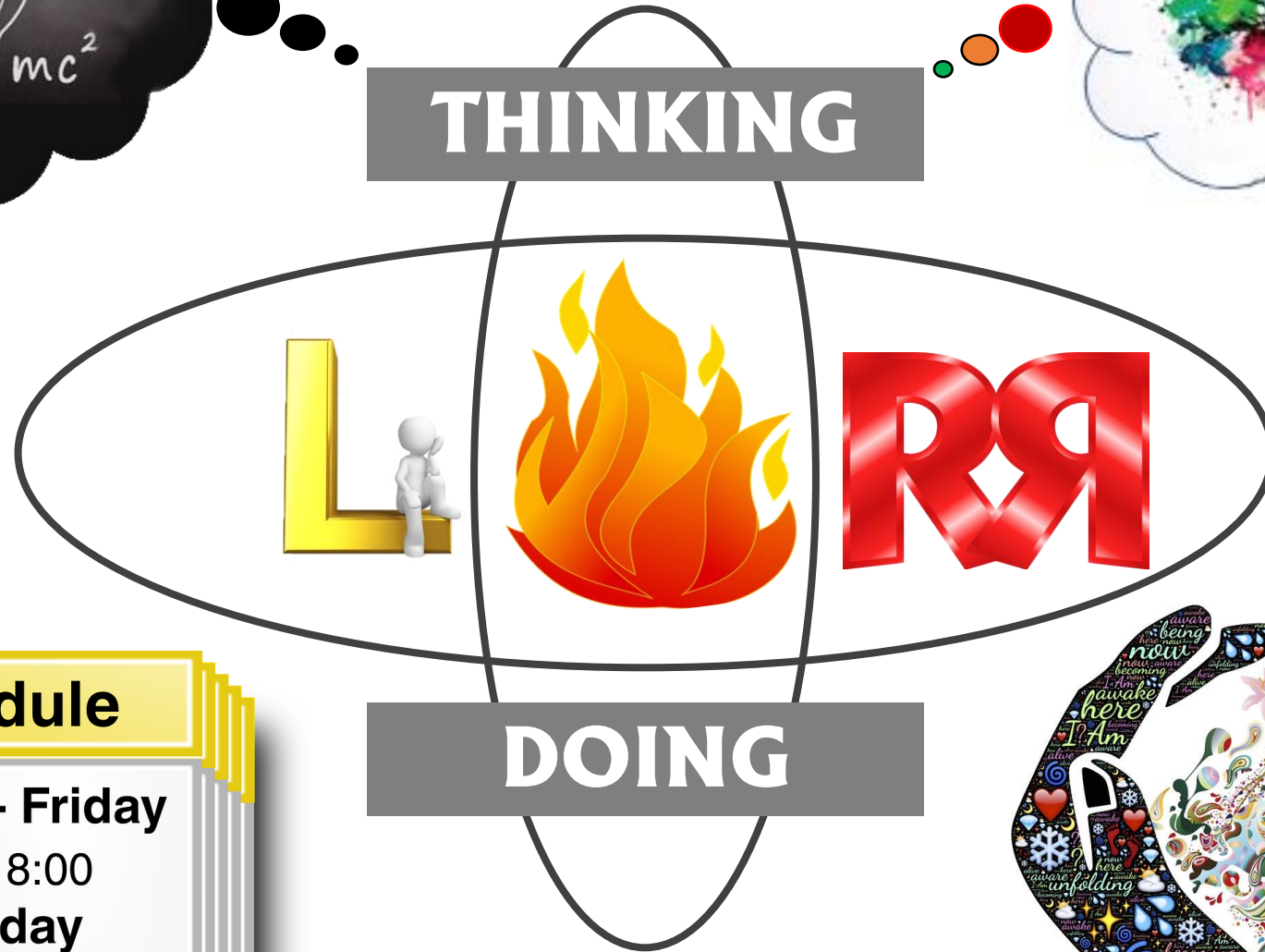




AMYGDALA



THINKING



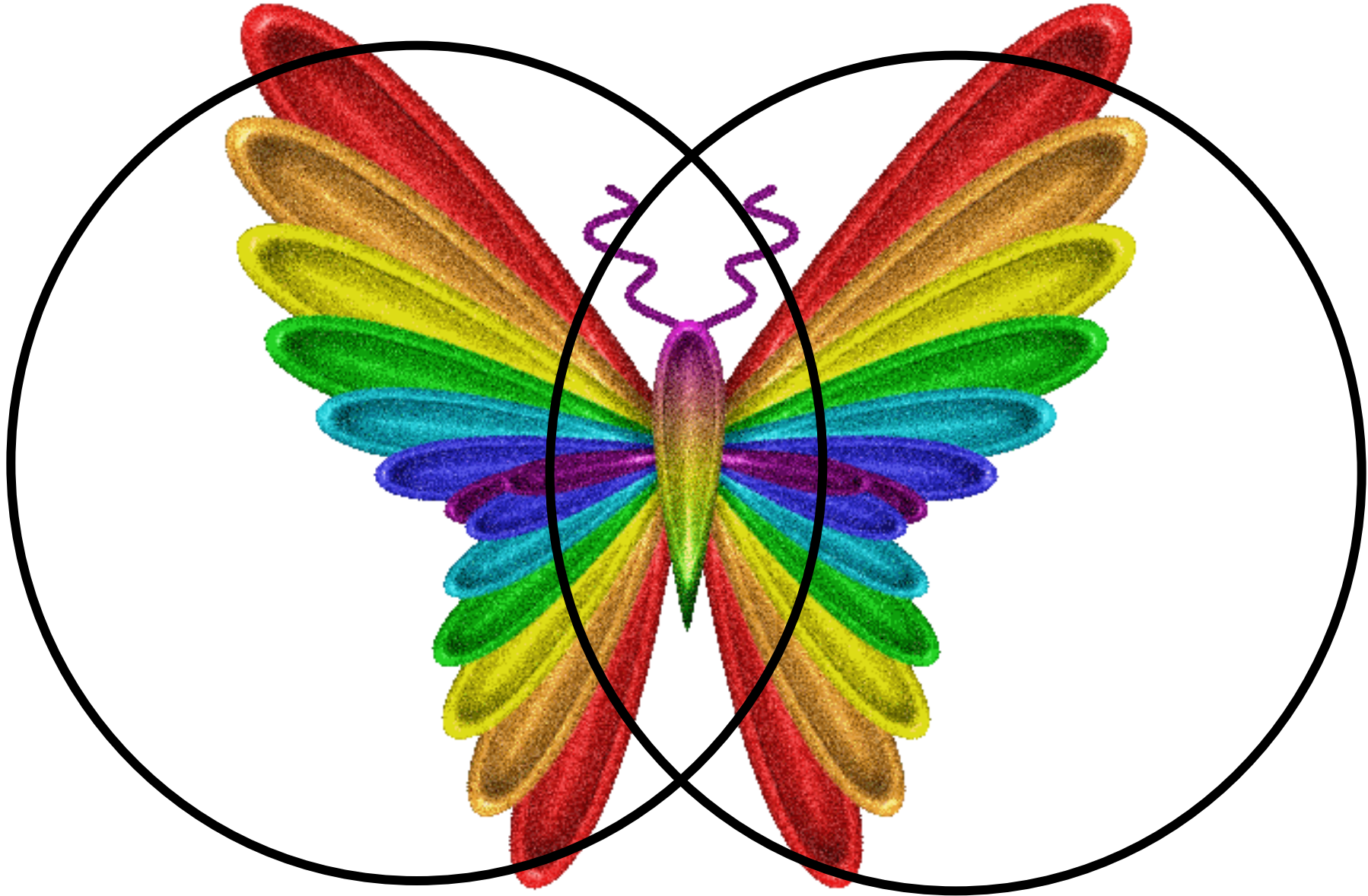
Schedule

Monday - Friday
8:30 - 18:00

Saturday
8:30 - 13:30



BALANCE



Share in Buddy Groups

1. Do you experience the fight-flight-freeze response? In what kind of situation?
2. How do you get back into balance?
3. What do you find hardest when working with people who struggle to 'feel'?

15 minutes



Take a break! 5 minutes



5:00



Session 3

Defences and Layers





**Accessible memories and
associated feelings**



**Suppressed memories
and associated feelings**

A large, irregular rock formation sits on a sandy seabed. The rock is heavily encrusted with green and brown algae or coral. The water is a clear, deep blue, and the seabed is composed of fine sand and small pebbles. The lighting is soft, coming from above, creating gentle shadows on the rock's surface.

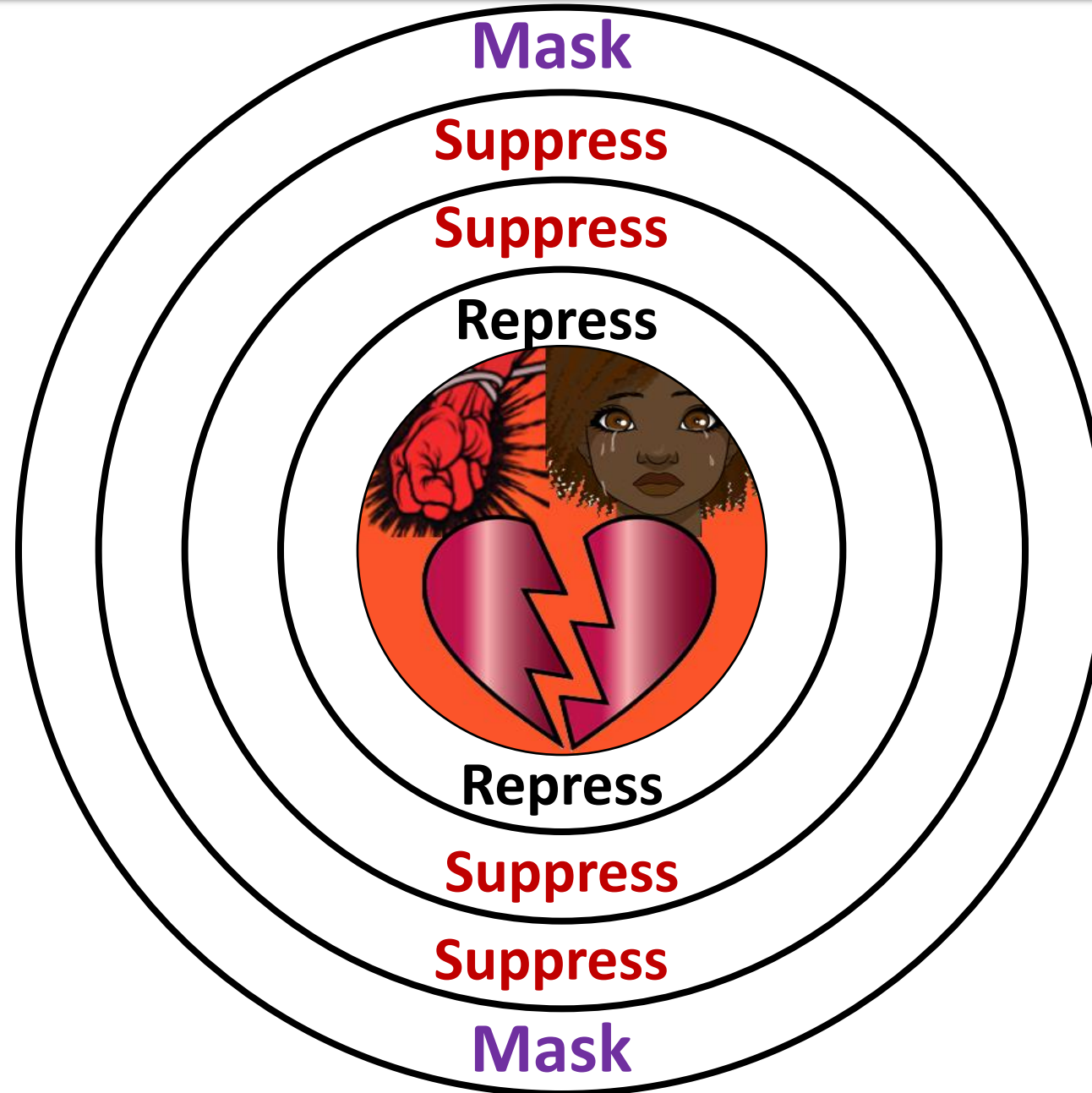
**Repressed memories
and associated feelings**







LAYERS OF DEFENCES



BEHIND THE MASK...



DOWN THROUGH THE LAYERS



The Box



She found a box and put inside the feelings that she sought to hide
The memories of loss and pain, the overwhelming sense of shame
The times she failed or fallen short, forgetting lessons she'd been taught
The people who had walked away, despite her begging them to stay

Why dwell on failure or on grief? Forget, move on, get some relief
Stop going on about the past, just start again, find peace at last
She felt her anger rise within – no point!
She grabbed it quickly, shoved it in
Her eyes were blinking back the tears – they went in too, with all her fears

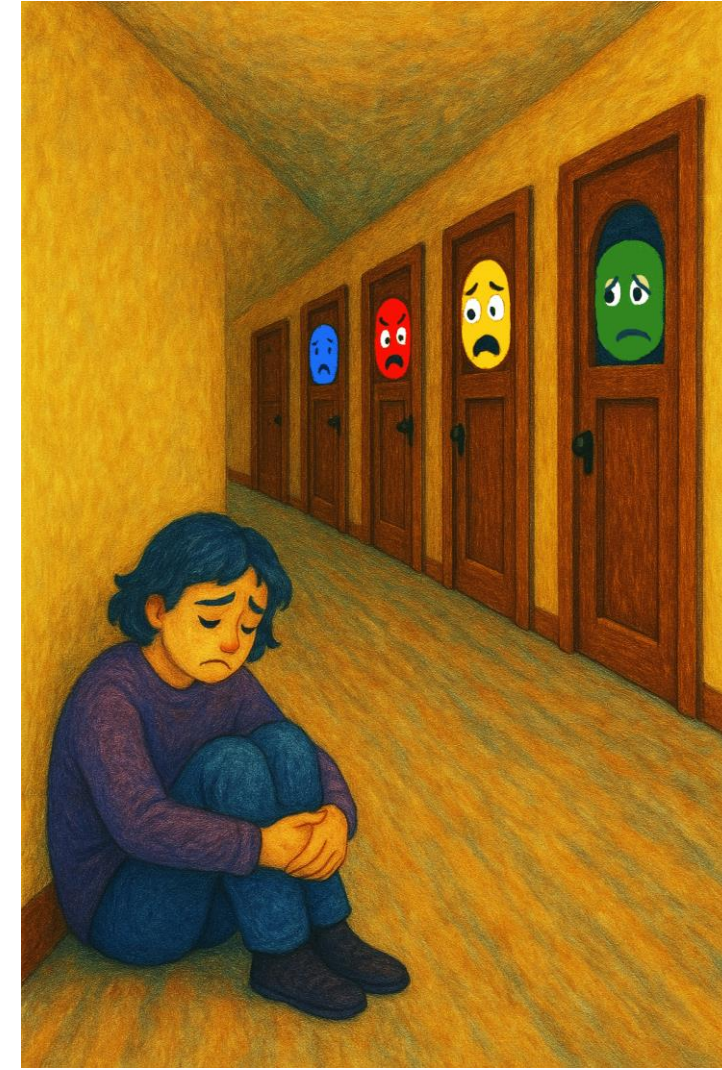
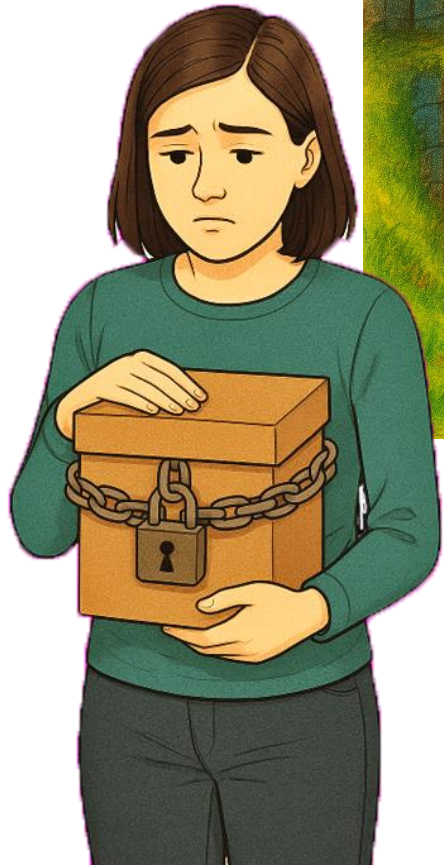
And that felt good, it felt so real, there would be no more pain to feel
No angry feelings, no despair, no shouting that life wasn't fair
She'd reinvent herself and see how strong and stable she would be
She pulled the lid down on her box, she rammed it shut and closed the locks

The world seemed strangely different now... she needed to move on – but how?
She felt no sense of exaltation, there'd been no awesome revelation
No wave of joy, no inner peace, in fact – just nothing. No release.

Just hollowness
no pain to face
but silence
and an empty space



METAPHORS FOR BLOCKED EMOTIONS



METAPHORS FOR BLOCKED EMOTIONS



Take a Moment



Share in Buddy Groups

Share your responses to the teaching. Do you relate to locking your feelings away?

How did you respond to the metaphors?

15 minutes




Take a break! 10 minutes



10:00



Questions Comments Discussion

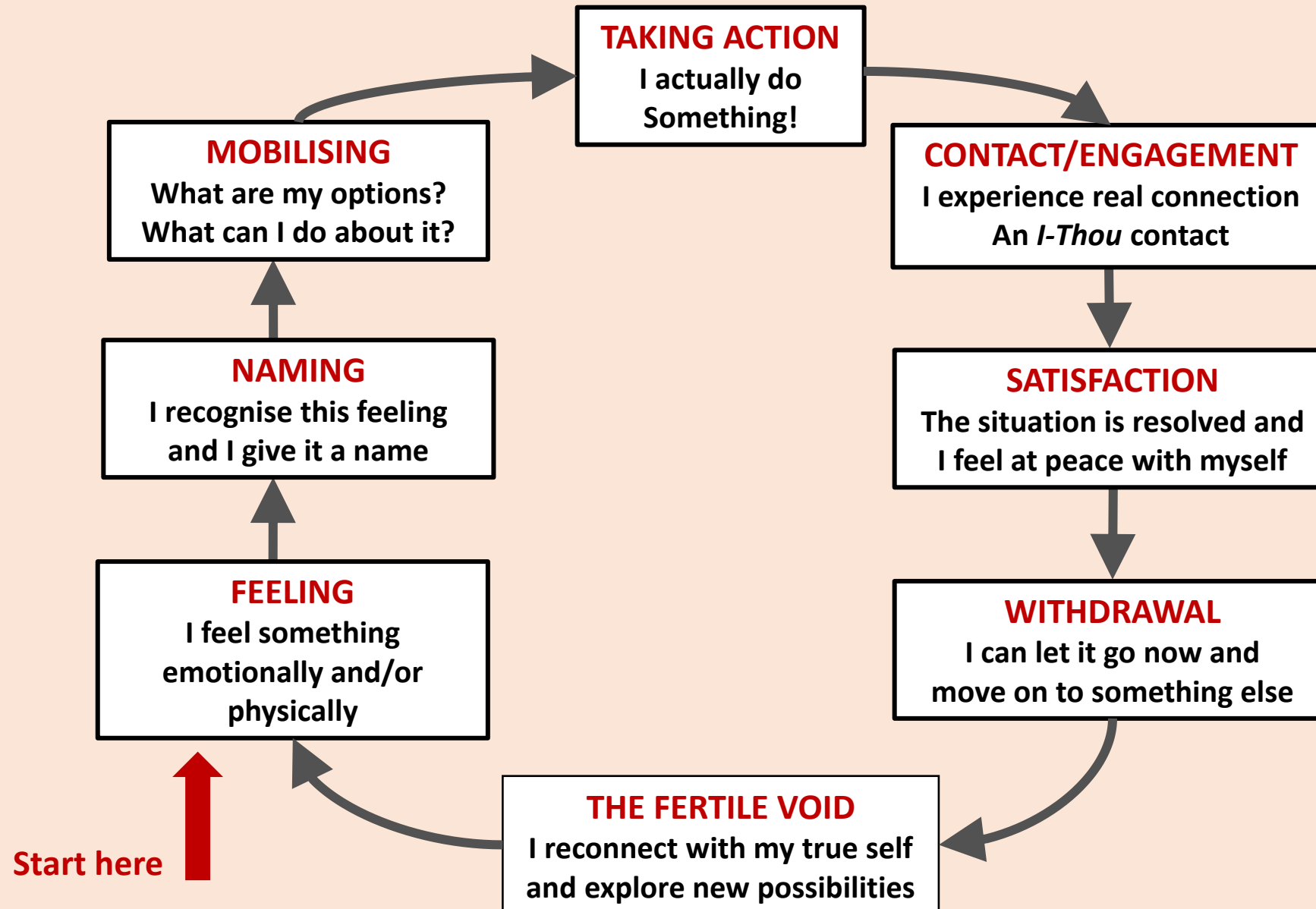


Session 4

The Gestalt Cycle of Awareness



THE GESTALT CYCLE OF AWARENESS



THE GESTALT CYCLE OF AWARENESS

Agitated, anxious person
mobilises excess energy but
can't take action

MOBILISING

What are my options?
What can I do about it?

BLOCK

NAMING

I recognise this feeling
and I give it a name

BLOCK

FEELING

I feel something
emotionally and/or
physically

Start here

TAKING ACTION

I actually do
Something!

BLOCK

CONTACT/ENGAGEMENT

I experience real connection
An *I-Thou* contact

BLOCK

SATISFACTION

The situation is resolved and
I feel at peace with myself

BLOCK

WITHDRAWAL

I can let it go now and
move on to something else

BLOCK

THE FERTILE VOID

I reconnect with my true self
and explore new possibilities

A person who goes from
relationship to relationship
without engaging fully

The workaholic who
never feels satisfied and
keeps starting a new
project

A person who needs to
be in control, cannot
let go of role/
relationship... cannot
surrender to the
unknown

Person with disordered
eating calls emotional
pain "hunger"


Trauma survivor
cut off from body
feelings
(Desensitisation)



Katy's Cycle of Experience Part 1



Katy's Cycle of Experience Part 2



Session 4

Working with the Body



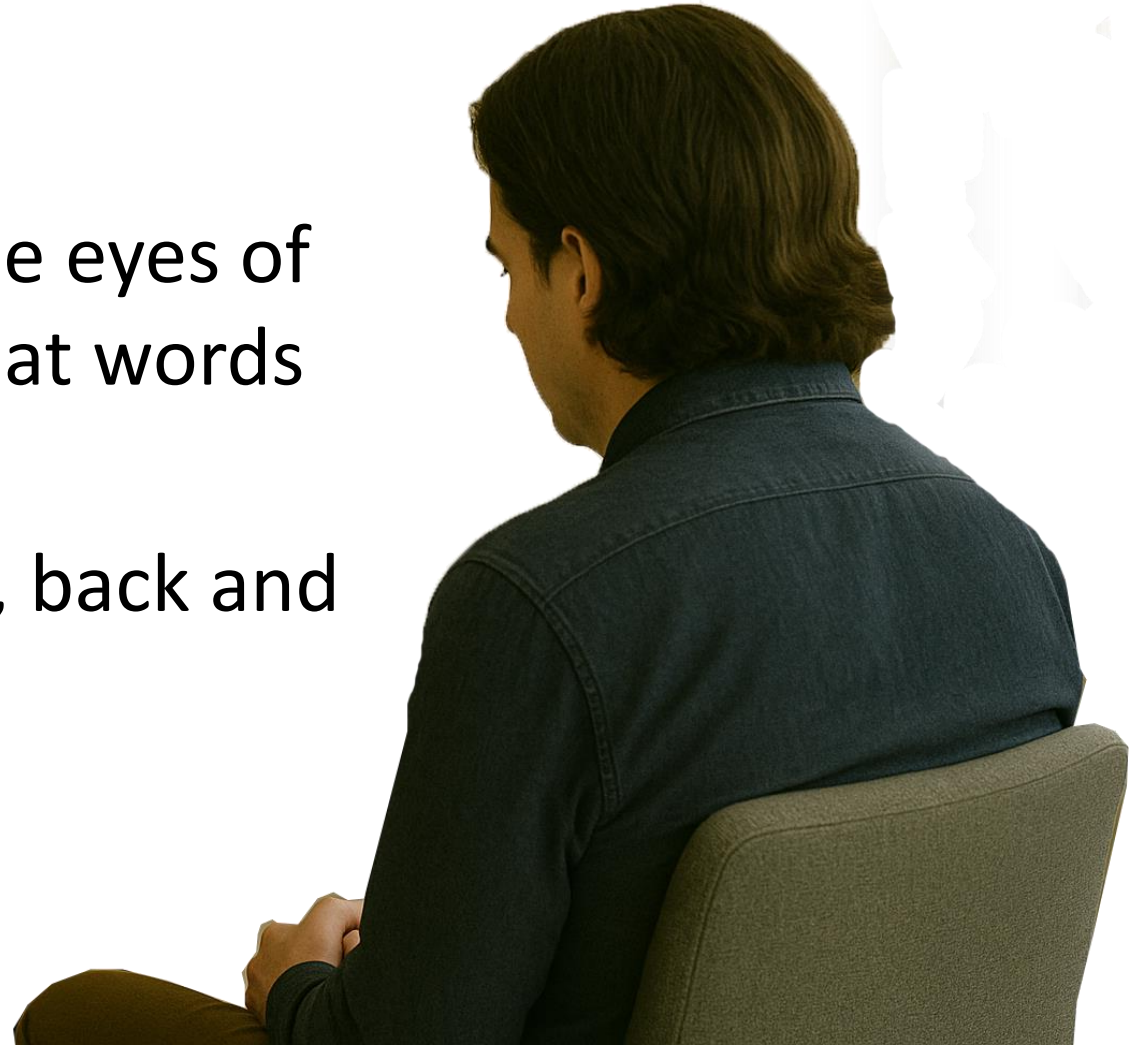
GESTALT CHAIR WORK



- Invite the client to imagine the person they have an issue with sitting in the empty chair
- This is the client's opportunity to unload their feelings, speaking directly to the person in the chair
- Encourage them to be as honest as possible, not censoring their thoughts or words

GESTALT CHAIR WORK

- When they take a break, invite the client to sit in the other person's chair
- Can they look back at themselves through the eyes of the other person? What words come to mind?
- Continue the dialogue, back and forth



WORKING WITH THE BODY



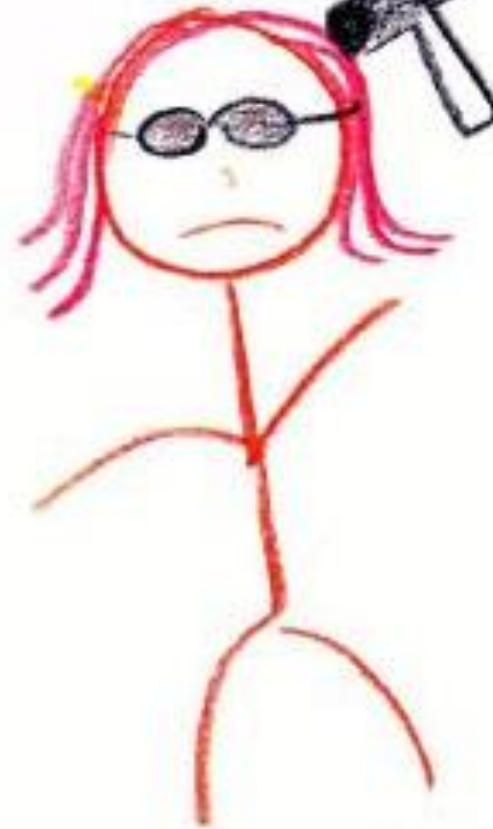
FIND THE VOICE OF YOUR BODY



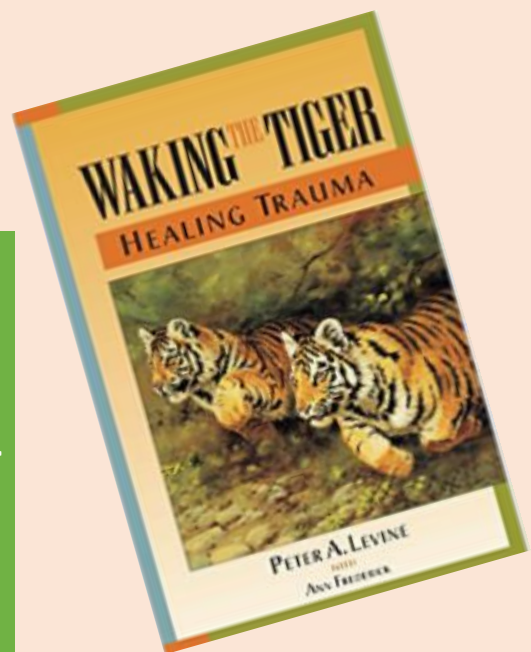
***It hurts to move
but I've got to
keep going***



***This is too
much!***




***You need
some sense
knocking
into you!***



<https://youtu.be/z41x1BaXMdE>





Session 6

Working with Sound





INTERVIEW WITH MASHA



SUMMARY OF IDEAS FOR WORKING WITH CLIENTS

- Use feelings tools (feelings wheels)
- Use the Inside Out characters
- Invite clients to draw their anger
- Use the metaphors
- Use the Roles Played in Anger Cards
- Use the Understanding Attachment Cards
- Use the Gestalt Cycle of Experience to see where the blocks occur
- Invite them to explore what happens to their body when they think about engaging with feelings
- Invite the client to express themselves more forcibly (drums?)
- Use Gestalt 2-chair work to speak directly to the person in the situation

Share in Buddy Groups

**Lots to discuss together
– share your reactions
to the different ways of
working!**

15 minutes





Questions Comments Discussion

Share in Buddy Groups

Say goodbye

Exchange details if you wish

5 minutes



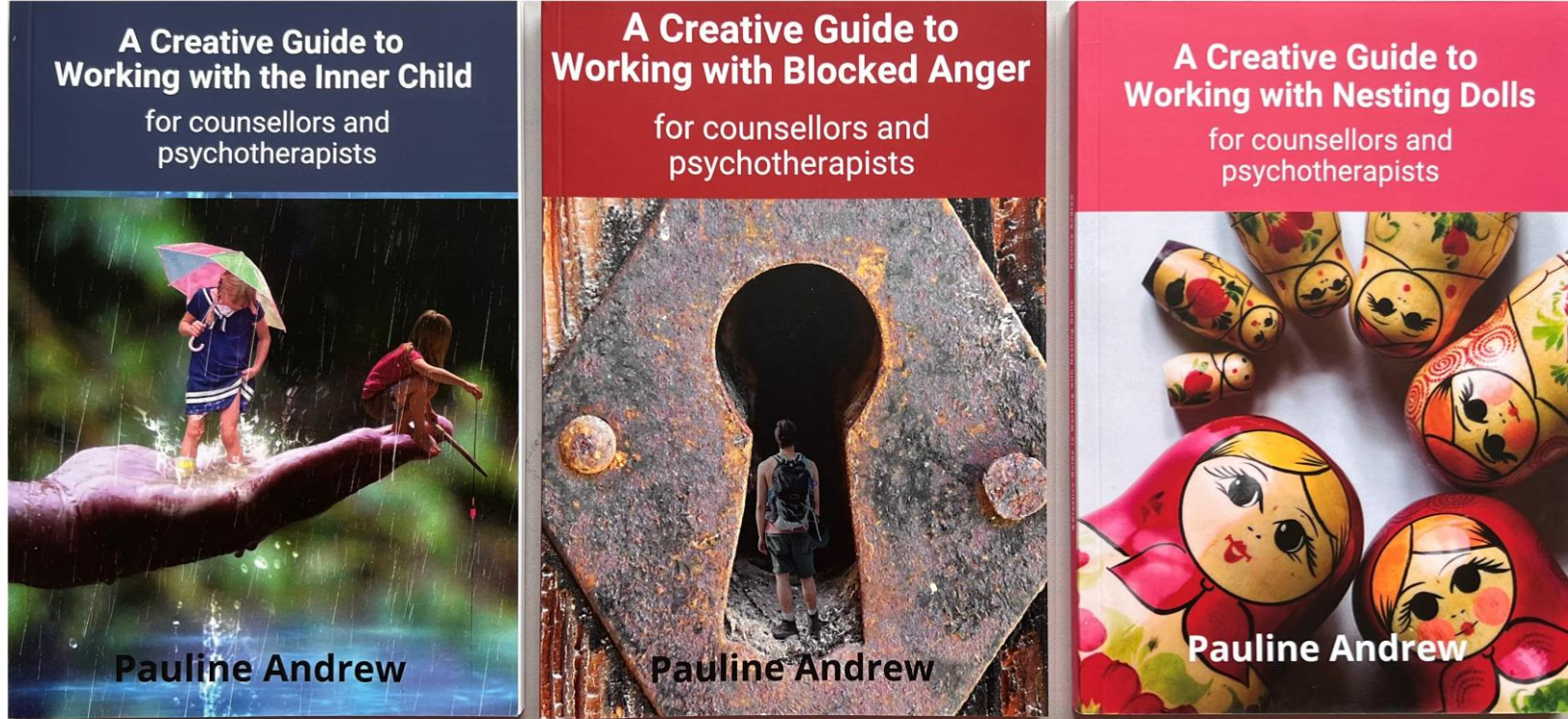


Resources

PACT-RESOURCES.CO.UK

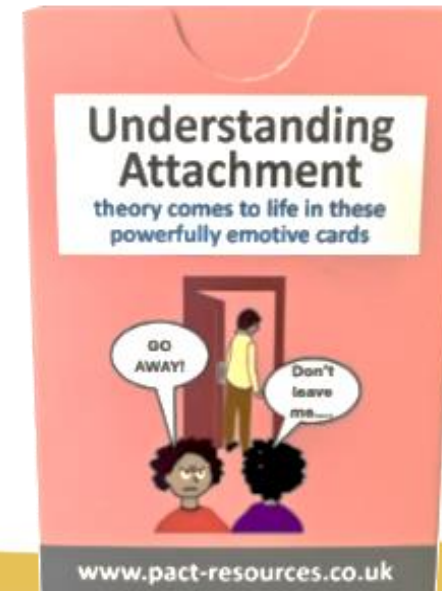
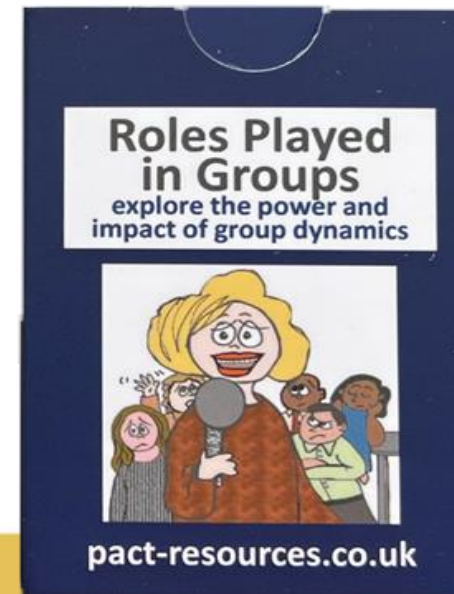
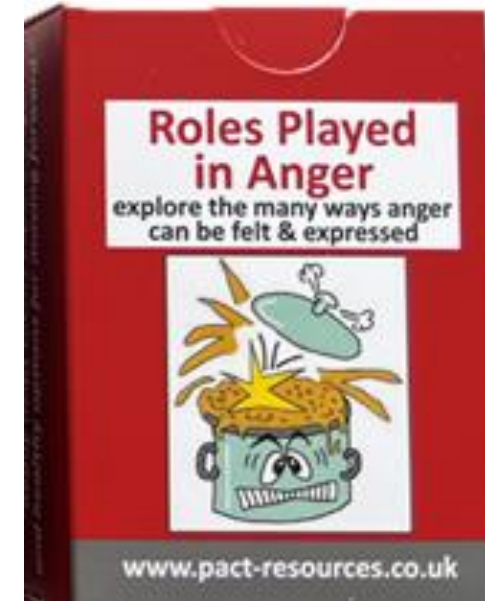
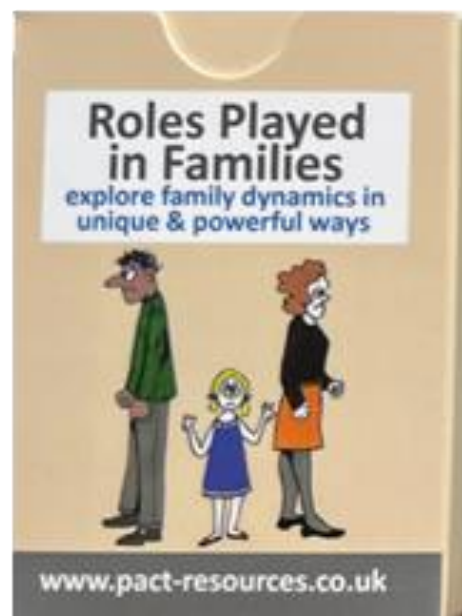
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Roles Played in Families
Extra Set A



**Sand Tray
Web App**



**The Wheel of
Life**



**Erikson's Life
Stages**



**Erikson's for
Adolescents**



**Roles Played in
Families**



**Core Needs in
Families**



**Roles Played in
Anger**



**Roles Played in
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**The In-Out
Model**



**Nesting
Dolls**



**Understanding
Attachment**

e-Resources



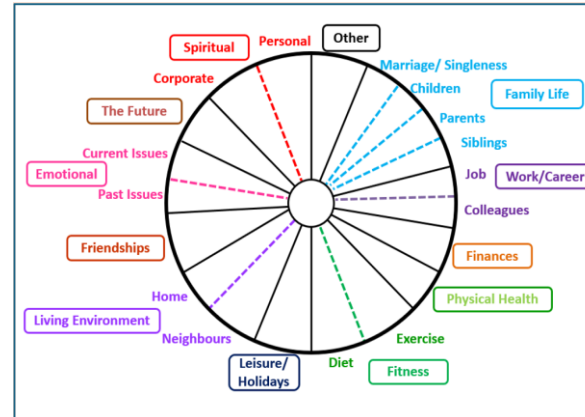
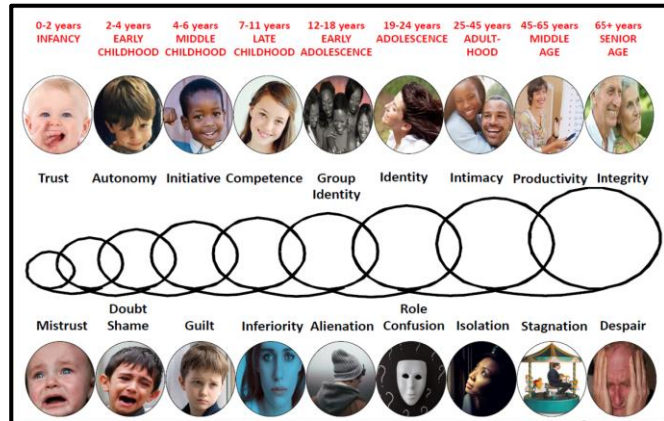
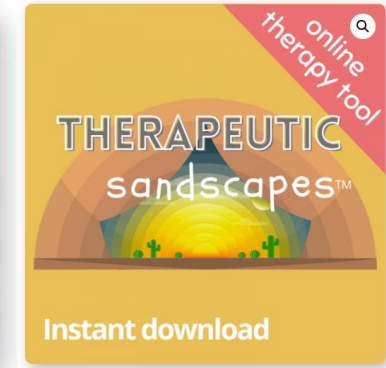
Erikson's Life Stages
£3.50



Wheel of Life
£3.50 – £5.00



Working with Animal
Figures Online Pack



Use PowerPoint for these e-resources – please also investigate our web apps!



HARD FEELINGS

empathy cards for counsellors

CARDS TO SHARE DIFFICULT EMOTIONS TOGETHER

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When the feelings
are too hard...

And I can't
tell you...



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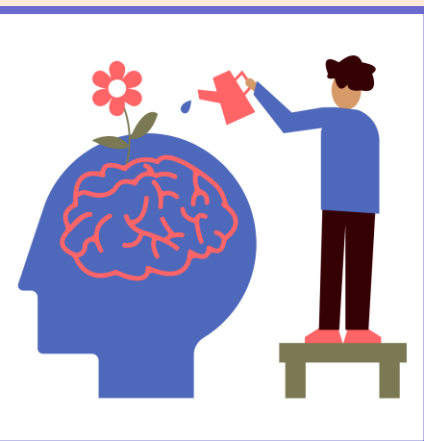


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The Scapegoat & the Golden Child: Healing the Wounds of Family Blame & Favouritism with Katy Bodman
27th June



Mind Matters with Dr Chris and Pauline Andrew
9th July



Losing the Will to Live: Working with Suicidal Clients with Pauline Andrew
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Toxic, Tense or just Tough? A Fresh Look at Relationships with Dr Chris & Pauline Andrew
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Moor Hall, Cookham, 12-14th September 2025

Please send us
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Thank you

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