



Hand Model of Your Brain on Stress

The closed “fist” represents the brain, with the thumb tucked in.

The wrist, and palm of thumb, represent your “Reptilian Brain” or Survival Center of the Brain

The Thumb” represents your Limbic System or your Emotional/Mammalian Center of the Brain (amygdala, Hippocampus, Stress response)

And your Fingers together represent your “Frontal Lobes” or Higher Reasoning and Conscious Part of your brain

When you are functioning at your optimal state, your brain is represented by a fist or “intact” or “integrated”. When you are faced with a very intense emotional event or a big Stress in your life, you may “flip your lid”, meaning that your hand will fly OPEN.

Your Frontal Lobes/NeoCortex, and Higher reasoning essentially goes “offline” and is no longer integrating its response with the rest of the brain and body. Your Survival and Emotional Brains are running the show. And your words and actions will reflect a more threatened, and survival based response.

The point of the exercise is to realize that this happens to everyone... its not a bad habit, or something you are doing wrong. It's the way we were designed and it has its roots in self-protection, self survival. But in order to manage this response and move back to balance and a calmed state, we have to DO things that bring our Frontal Lobes back "online".

These are grounding exercises:

Yoga, (cat/cow, legs up the wall, standing breathing raising and lowering arms.)

Deep Breathing, with the focus on the OUT breath

Breathing with a hold at the top of an in breath.

Doing a "noticing exercise" where you notice things around the room with your senses:

1. Name 2 things that you can see
2. Name 2 things that you can smell
3. Name 2 things that you can hear
4. Touch 2 things and say what you feel.

Talking, hugging, going for a walk, etc. wait until you notice that you feel calmer and your breathing and heart rate have returned to normal.

Grounding Exercise Meditation on my website under Meditations, or in Week 1

