

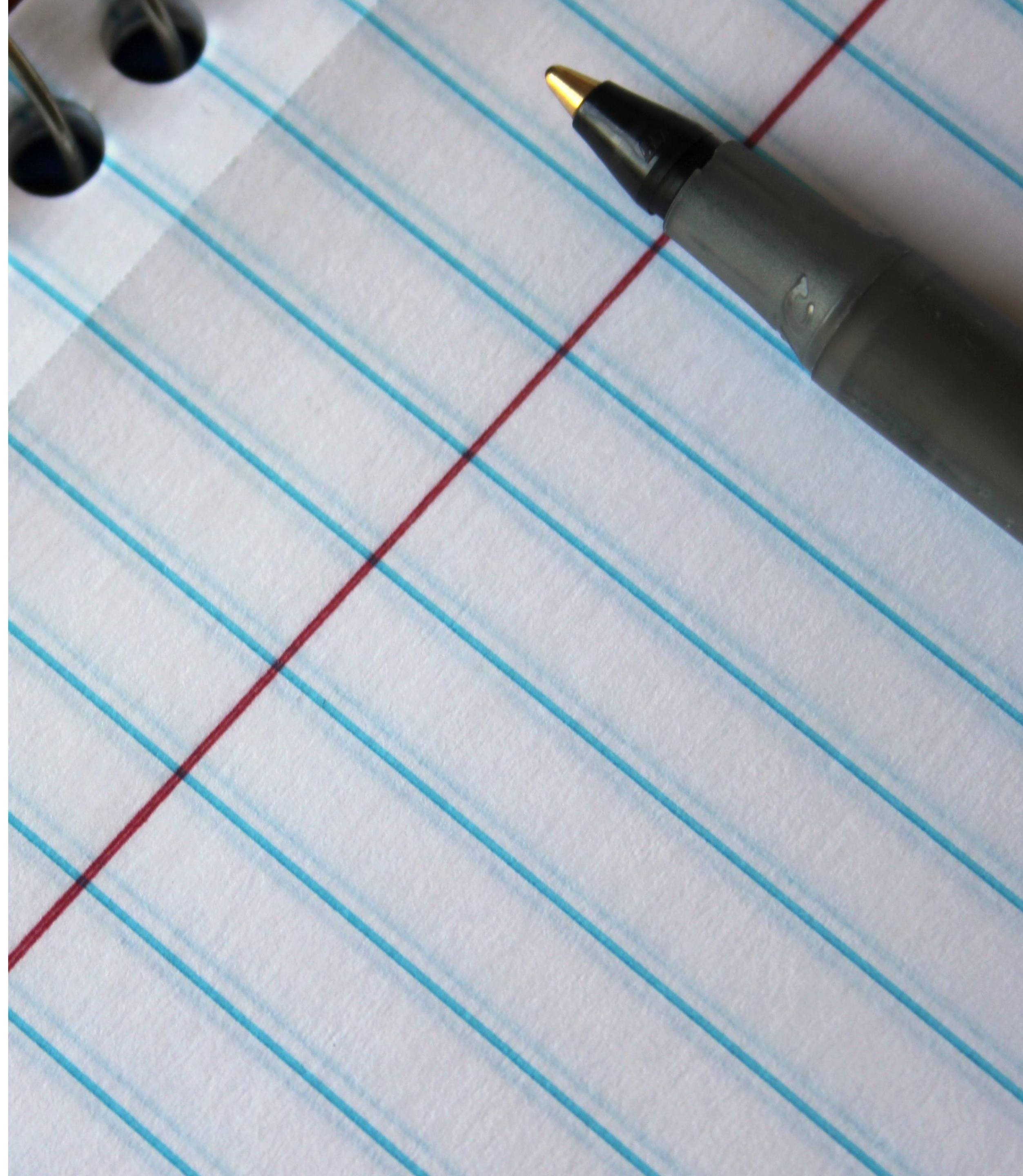
Introduction to Trauma & Trauma Informed Care



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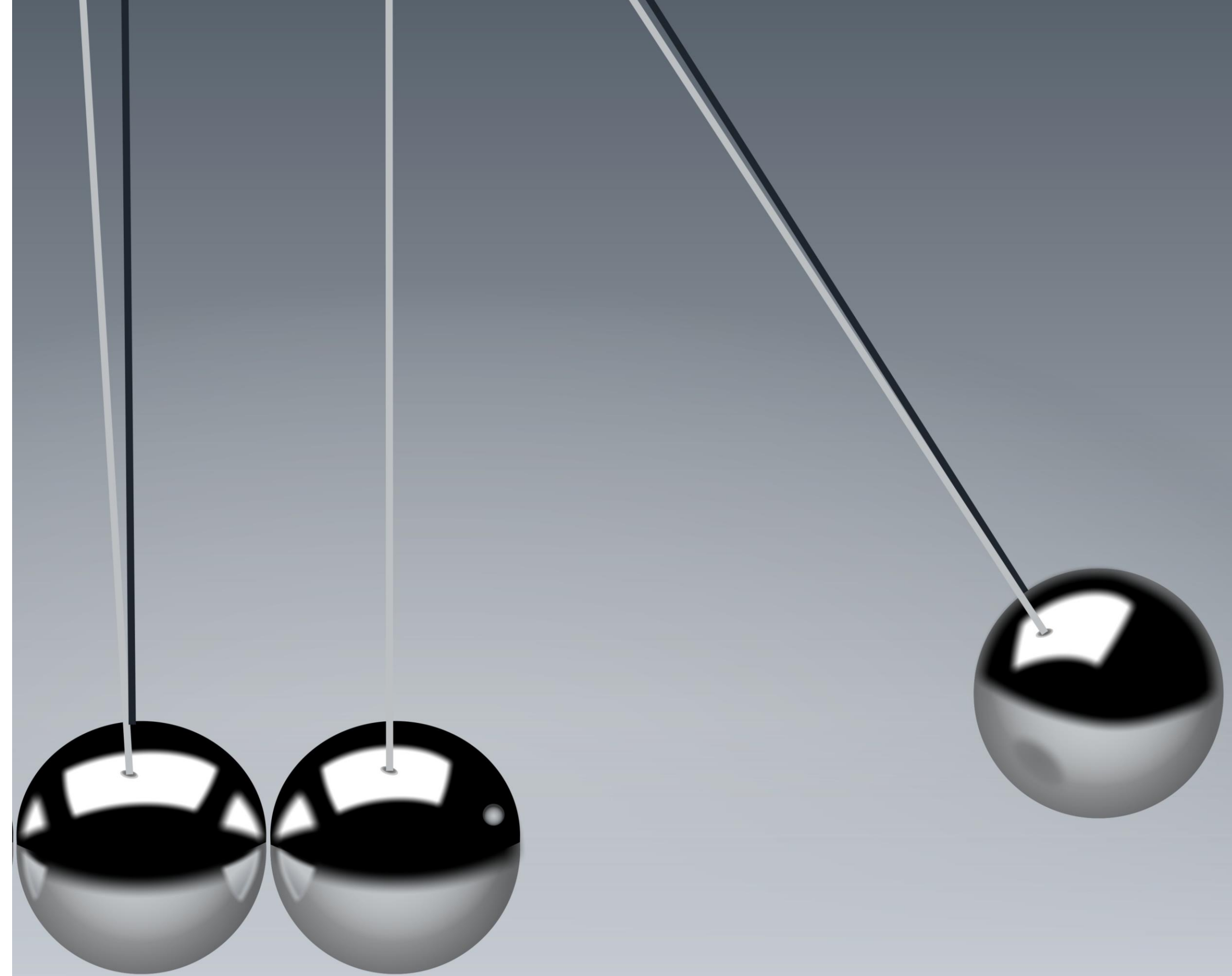
Learning Objectives

1. To define trauma and understand its relationship to the brain, addiction and mental health.
2. To recognize signs that a trauma response has been activated.
3. To integrate practical tools to implement trauma informed care in a clinical setting.



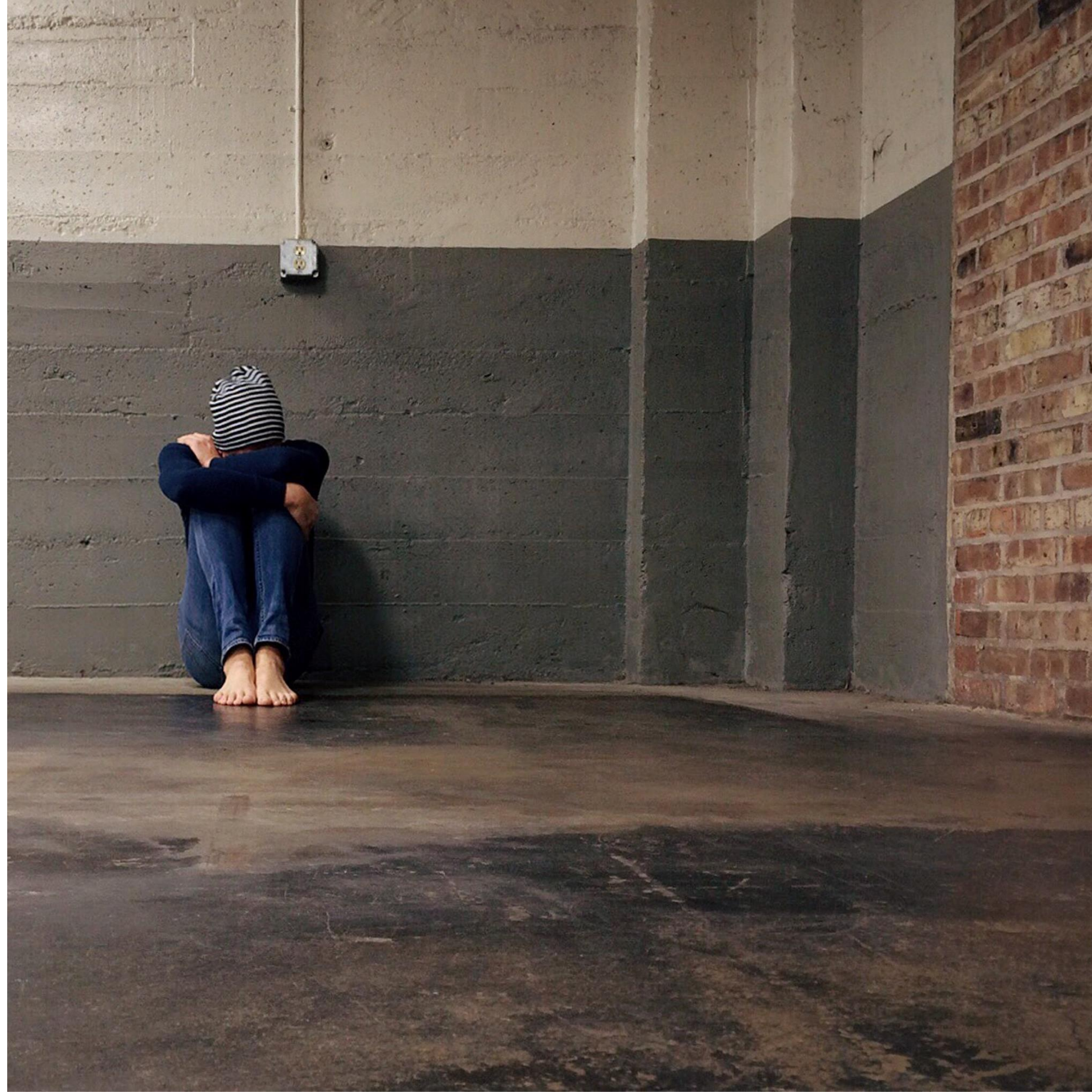
What is Trauma?

- Trauma is a set of experiences or situations that are emotionally painful and distressing, and that overwhelm an individual's ability to cope.
 - Powerlessness
 - Fear
 - Helplessness



Big 'T' and Little 't'

- Big T: A single event.
- Little t: A series of cumulative experiences.
- Trauma often occurs when a person's basic life assumptions are shattered.



P

T

S

D

PTSD Symptomatology

There are four types of PTSD Symptoms:

1. Reliving the event through flashbacks, nightmares, and triggers.
2. Avoidance of people, places and things that remind of the event
3. Negative changes in beliefs and feelings about self and the world.
4. Hyper-arousal (agitation, restless, emotional outbursts)



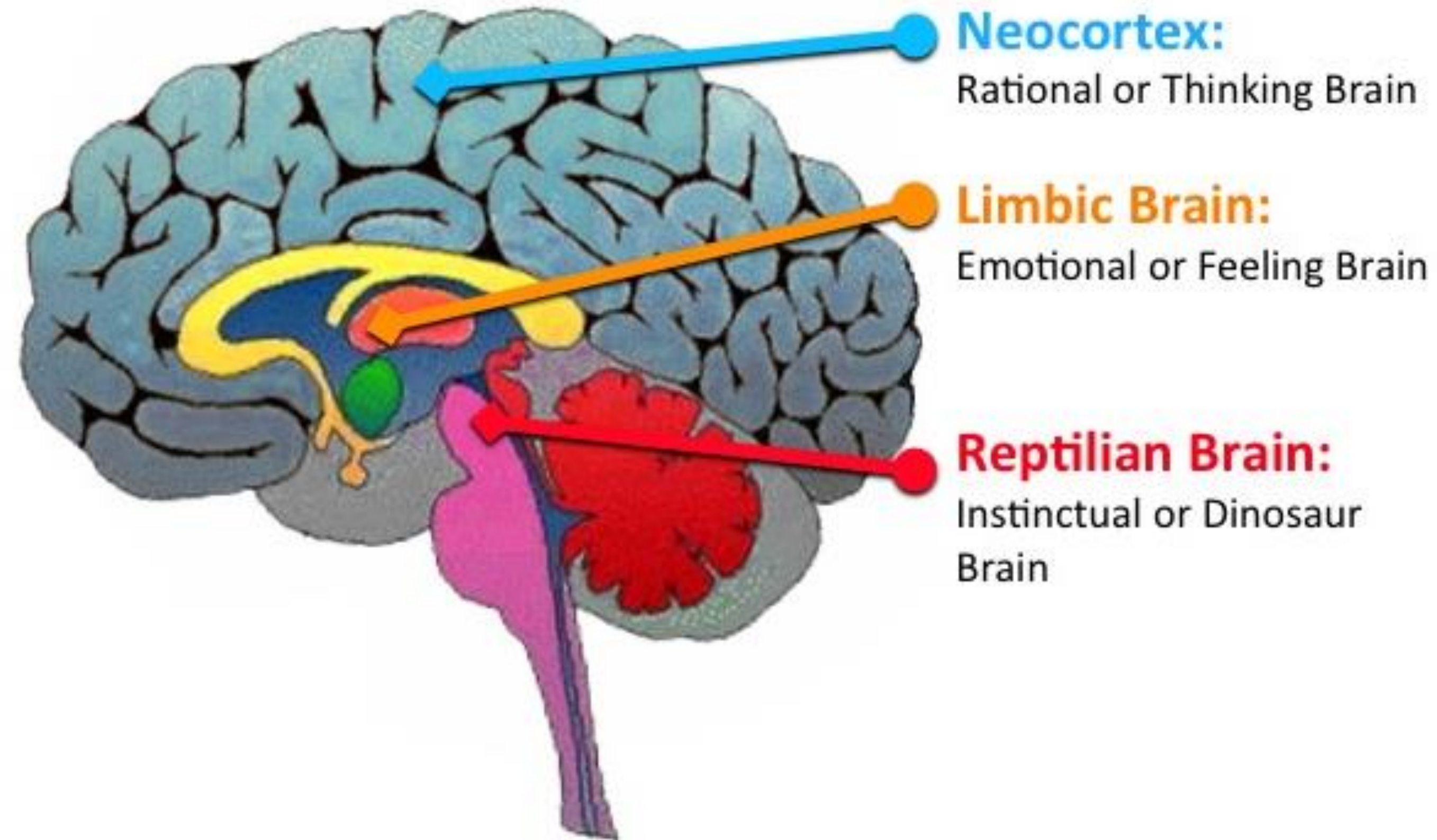
Trauma, Addiction & Mental Health

- Addiction is a traumatic lifestyle.
- Self-medication to handle trauma symptoms and reactions.
- Misdiagnosis potential
- Trauma and mental health spiral

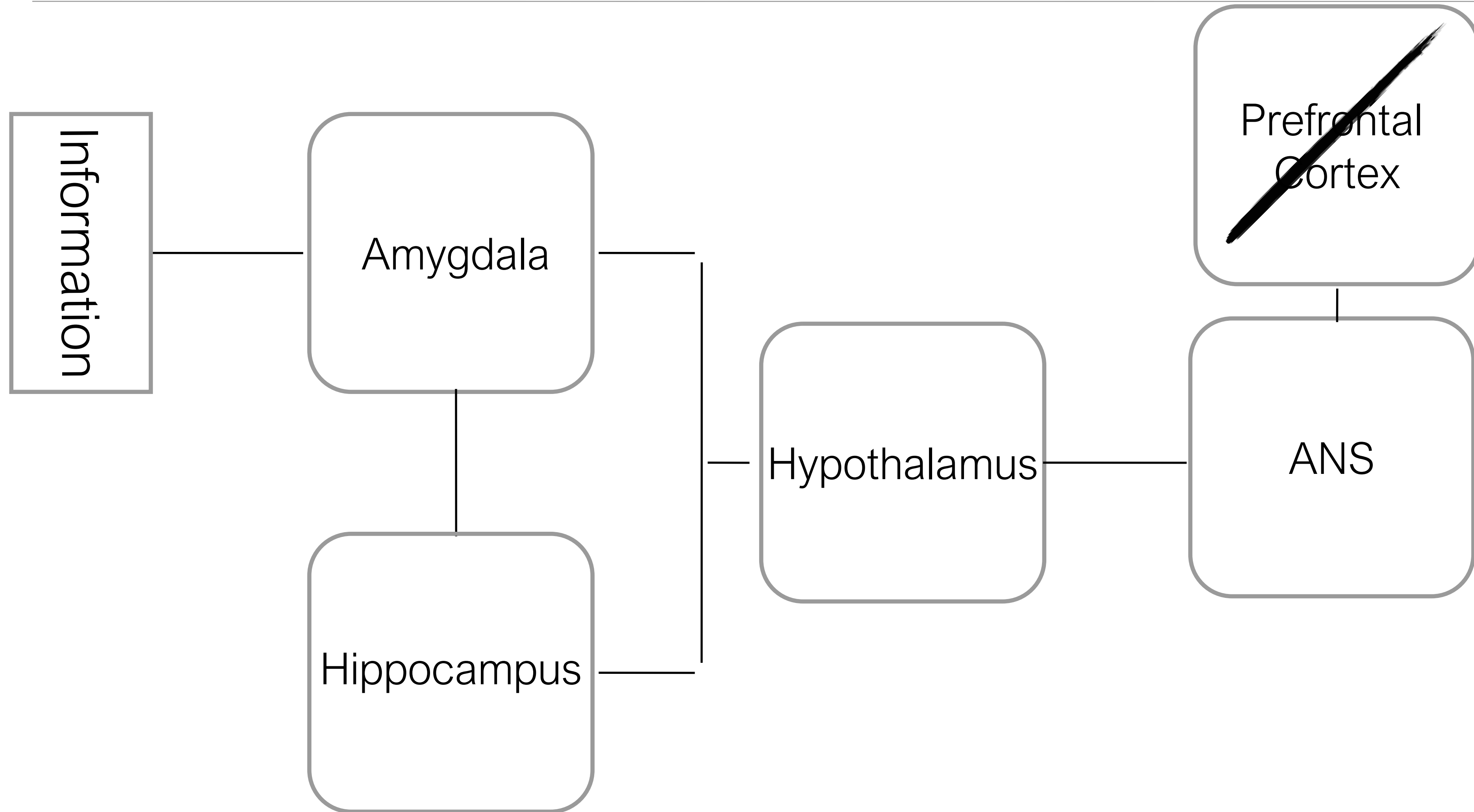


The (Triune) Brain

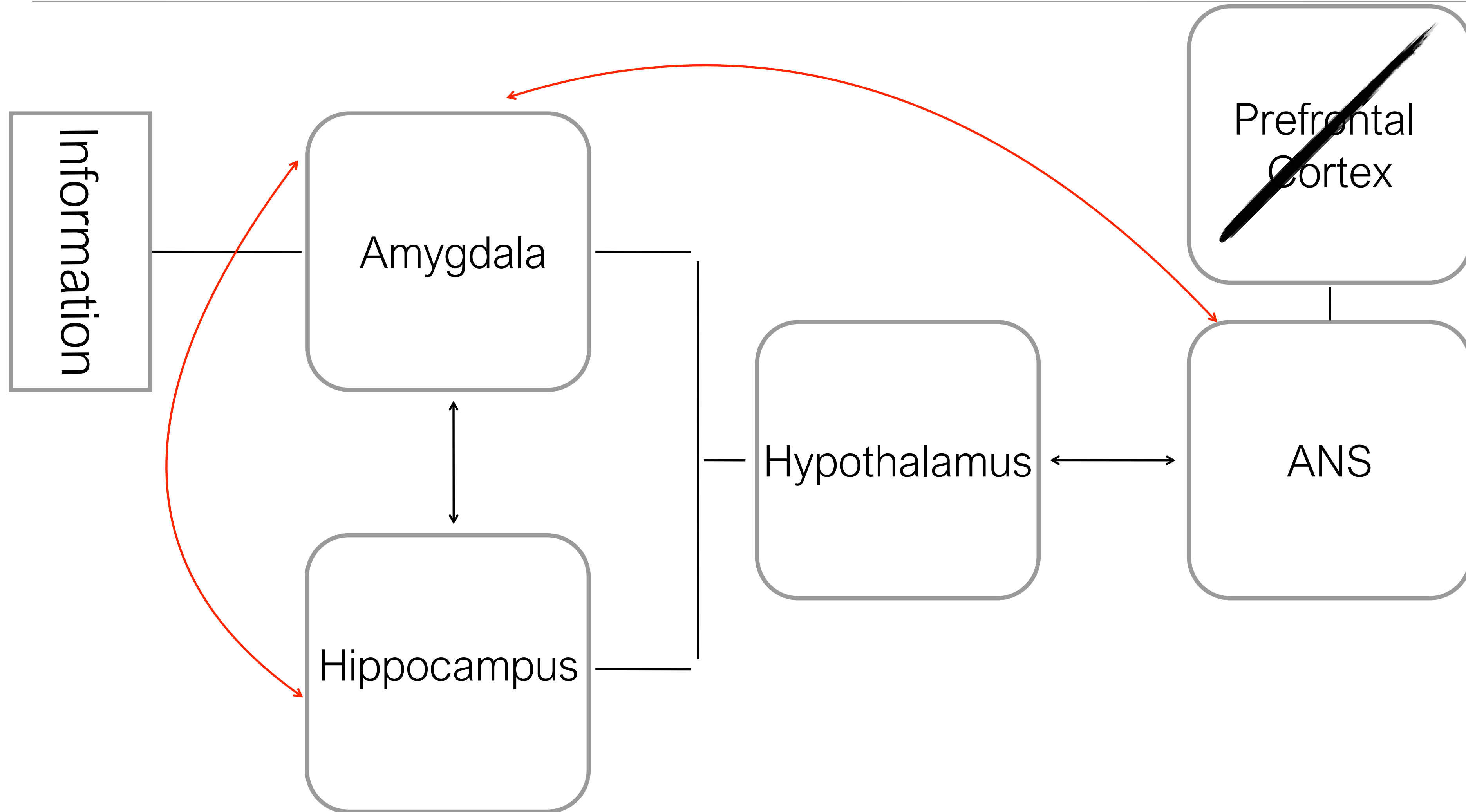
- Reptilian Brain
 - Responsible for Autonomic Nervous System (ANS) also called fight, flight, freeze.
- Limbic System
 - Responsible for memory (hippocampus), emotion (amygdala), and regulation (hypothalamus).
- Neocortex
 - Responsible for thinking, learning, problem solving, language, executive functions, etc.



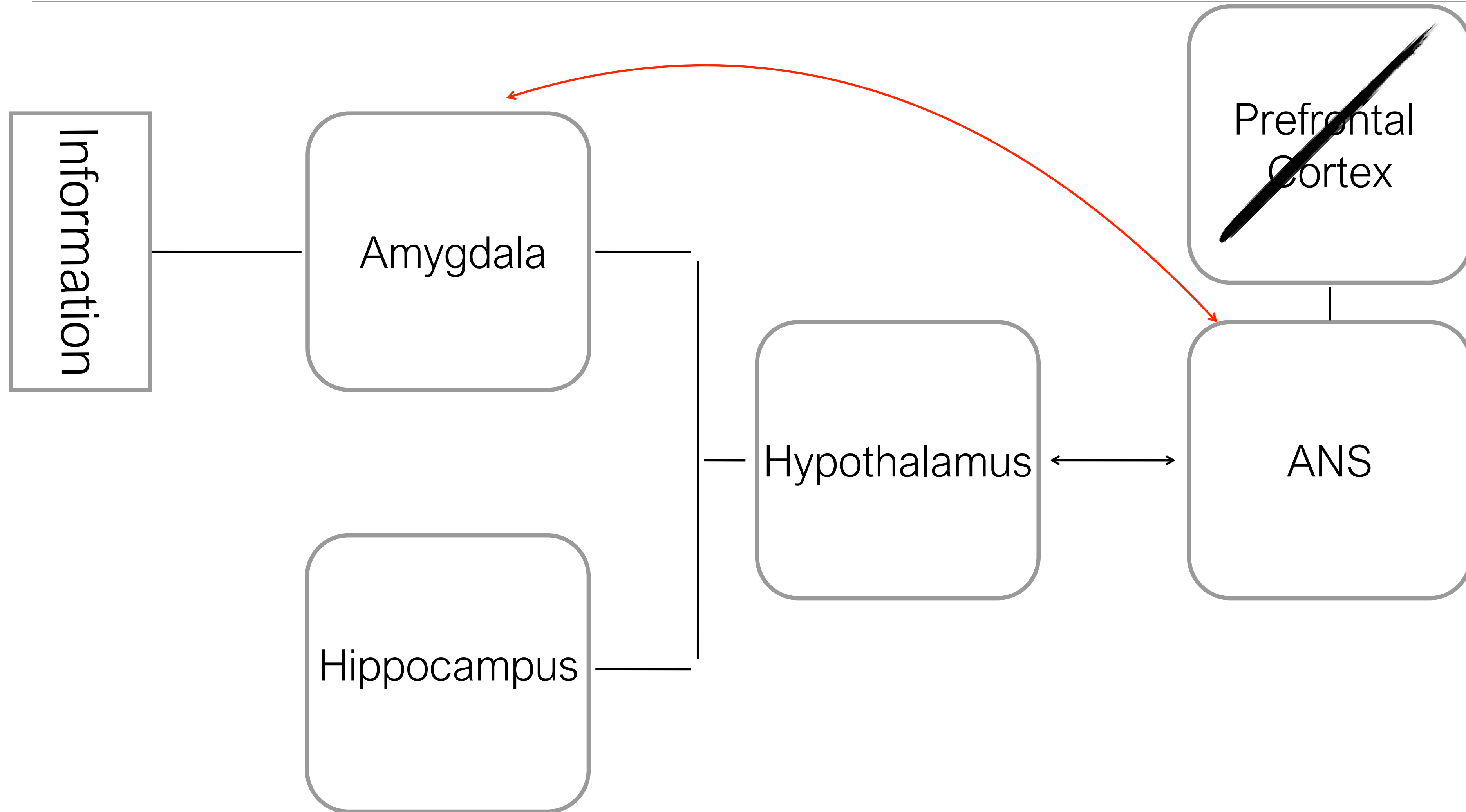
A Healthy Brain with Threat Present



A Healthy Brain with Threat Present



A Traumatized Brain with Threat Present



Normalizing the Trauma Response



- Fight, Flight, Freeze
- Survival Response
- Important for trauma informed care



Why is normalizing important?

- Reduces shame
- Strengthens therapeutic relationship
- Helps reframe “you vs me” into “we”
- Gives context to reactions

Permanent Activation of Trauma Response

- **Fight:** aggressive, anger outbursts, tense body, impulsivity, defensiveness, making themselves be “bigger”
- **Flight:** anxiety, panic, emotional flooding and outbursts, fast speech, restless, unable to focus or sit still, “running” from life
- **Freeze:** depression, dissociation, numbness, shut down, disconnect, flat affect



Fight and Flight

Activated by Sympathetic System in ANS, which increases:

- blood pressure
- heart rate
- adrenaline
- oxygen
- peripheral vision

Behaviorally, a person can be aggressive, violent, irritable, experience anger outbursts, when in fight. Behaviorally when in flight mode, a person can be restless, anxious and get emotionally flooded.



Freeze

Activated by Parasympathetic System in ANS, which decreases:

- clarity of thought
- heart rate
- blood pressure
- energy expenditure

Behaviorally, a person can experience chronic fatigue, numbness, feel as if in “auto-pilot” and shut down physically and emotionally.

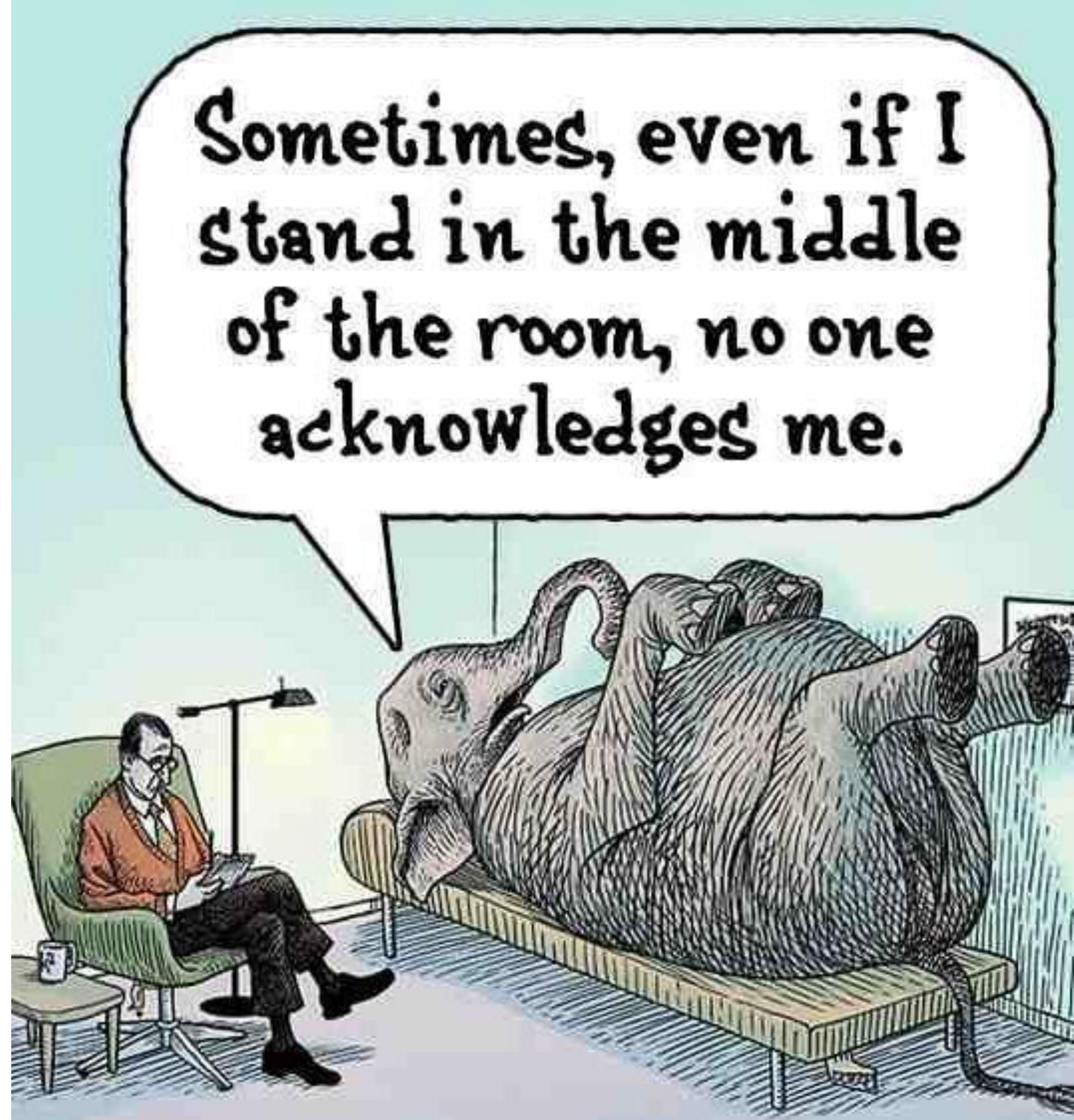


“If it’s hysterical, it is historical.”

“TIC is grounded in and directed by a thorough understanding of the neurological, biological, psychological and social effects of trauma and the prevalence of these experiences in persons who seek and receive mental health services”

–Alameda County Trauma Informed Care

The Trauma Lens



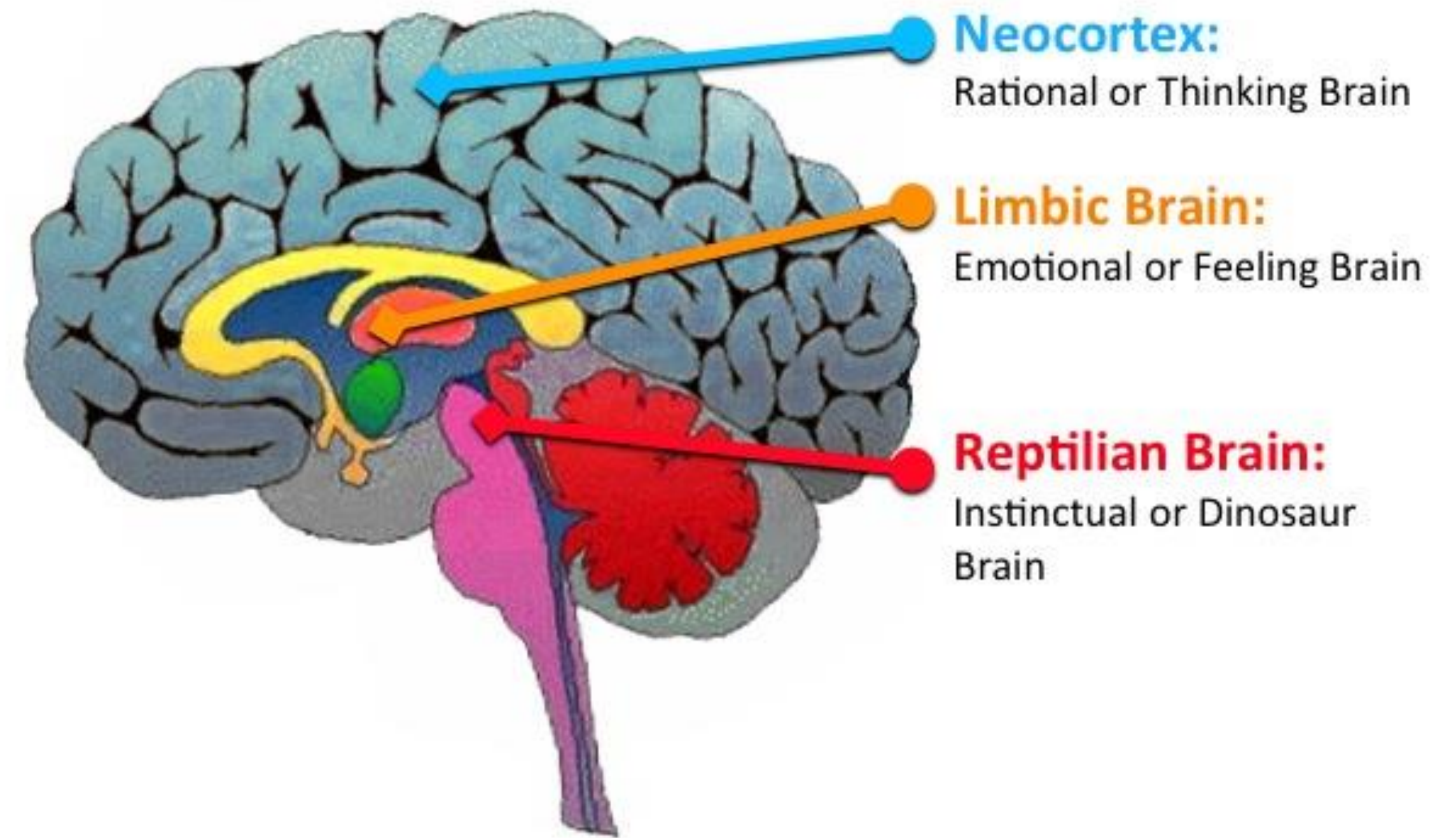


Trauma Informed Care

- Understanding of trauma
- Awareness of the impact trauma has on the individual, both during and after the trauma
- Creating an environment of physical, emotional and psychological safety
- Avoiding practices that could re-traumatize the individual
- Integrate knowledge about trauma into policies, procedures and practices.

Understanding Trauma

- Psychoeducation for staff and clients
 - Trauma and the Brain
 - Fight, Flight, Freeze Reactions
 - Relationship between trauma and addiction
- Normalize response and symptoms to traumatic experience
 - Teach self-compassion and compassion
- Promote trauma awareness and understanding



Awareness of the Impact of Trauma on the Individual

- Support, choice and autonomy after trauma
- Loss of power and control during trauma
- Conduct trauma screenings (PCL-C, Brief Trauma Questionnaire, Life Stressor Checklist, etc)
- Foster trauma resiliency skills
 - adaptability to change
 - resourcing



Creating Safety

- Ensuring environment is physically safe and conducive to recovery
- Providing emotional safety
 - Skill development
 - Management of triggers
- Creating an environment that is psychologically safe



Trauma Informed Practices

- Self of the therapist
- Preventing retraumatization
- Conduct trauma screenings (PCL-C, Brief Trauma Questionnaire, Life Stressor Checklist, etc)
- Show organizational and administrative commitment to TIC



Tools for the Tool Box

- Sensory experience
 - Smell, Sight, Sound, Touch, Taste (5, 4, 3, 2, 1)
 - Physical senses
- Deep breathing
- Body/cognitive awareness
- “You are safe right in this moment”
- Screening tools (PCL-C, LEC, ACE)
- Supportive and safe environment



What are three ways in which you can enhance trauma informed care?

Post-Traumatic Growth

- Defined as “a construct of positive psychological change that occurs as the result of one’s struggle with a highly challenging, stressful, and traumatic event.” (Calhoun & Tedeschi, 2006)
- There is hope!
- It can occur throughout the trauma process.





Questions?

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