

THE BRAIN ON TRAUMA

ATTENTION

... is directed towards threat cues and cannot discriminate relevant from irrelevant.

THREAT RESPONSE

... is directed by the oversensitised and overreactive amygdala (smoke alarm) which does not relinquish decision-making to the front brain (prefrontal cortex and hippocampus).

ALTERED STATES OF AROUSAL

... dominate the body, triggering it from the green state of social engagement into the amber state of fight and flight or the red state of freeze, affecting relationships, and flooding the body with toxic levels of stress hormones.

TIMEKEEPING

... is ineffective with the dorsolateral prefrontal cortex impaired, leading to difficulties in discriminating past from present or being able to imagine a future.



MEMORY

... systems are hijacked by the amygdala, taking control from the hippocampus, leading to flashbacks, stuck automatic patterns of behaviour and inhibited learning.

SELF-AWARENESS

... circuits are shut down, including the insula, anterior cingulate cortex and medial prefrontal cortex, leading to difficulties with sensing emotions and responding appropriately to them, and changes in identity and self-perception.

INTEGRATION

... difficulties abound, between the front and back brain, the right and left brain, the body and mind, the past, present and future, and across self-states.

... *how we focus more on **DANGER** than **DAILY LIFE***

... *and how our **BACK BRAINS** dominate our **FRONT BRAINS***



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