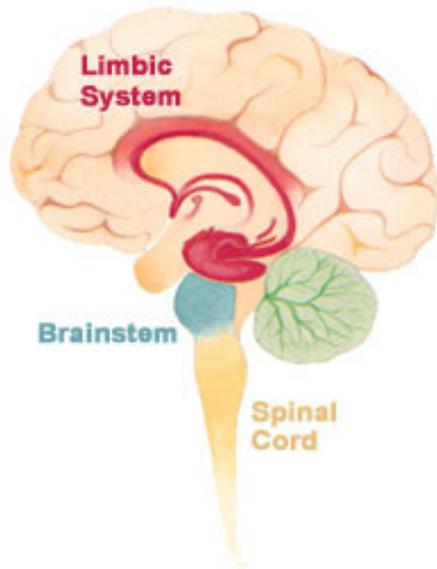


Healthy Intimacy in Relationships

HEALING THE BRAIN:

NEUROLOGICAL INSIGHTS INTO EMOTIONAL REACTIVITY AND RELATIONSHIP CONFLICT

Abstract: The brain is very formable or impressionable when traumatic events occur from ages 1-7. These traumatic memories can be triggered in marital conflict causing couples to become reactive and not resolve conflict. Helping the brain heal from past trauma (core wound) can enable people to become less triggered and reactive in marital conflict and thus resolve their issues in a healing manner.



The Deep Limbic System Functions:

- Modulates motivation
- Controls sleep
- Processes smell
- Modulates libido
- Sets the tone of the mind
- Filters external events by associating them with past positive or negative events and tags them as internally important
- Responsible for your fight or flight mechanism
- Controls heart rate, perspiration, pupil dilation, and digestion
- Is atemporal has no sense of time
- Short circuits part of the brain so you cannot think rationally when it is activated

KEY CONCEPTS

Core Wound—a basic need, probably from childhood, that was not met, that in some way impacted the soul. Internalizing this wound will, in most cases, create basic fears the individual learns to adapt to.

Old Brain—the mechanism in the soul by which childhood traumas or wounds are stored in the brain. These wounds are not collected in the new brain, or conscious mind, but rather in the unconscious mind. The old brain, or primitive brain, is the seat of our basic instincts, initiating a fight-or-flight response, and it is also atemporal. It has no concept of time. Therefore, a wound recorded in the old brain at age 5 can be relived at age 35, with the same feelings, emotional responses, and intensity.

Reactivity—giving an issue too much energy or emotion because that issue has triggered a wound in the old brain.

Interactivity—when one spouse's reactivity is triggered, this triggers the other partner's soul wounds and he or she becomes reactive as well. Hence, both persons, in that one issue, have had wounds impacted simultaneously, to which they both react with reactivity.

Ownership—the ability to see the part you play in marital conflict and acknowledge your soul wounds and how they impact you in marital struggles.

Intentionality—the willingness to do whatever it takes, to heal a person and/or a relationship, no matter how or you feel. It is the motivation to move consciously in a healing direction in order to heal your woundedness and resolve conflict. It is being "transformed by the renewing of your mind in Christ Jesus." Romans 12:2

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