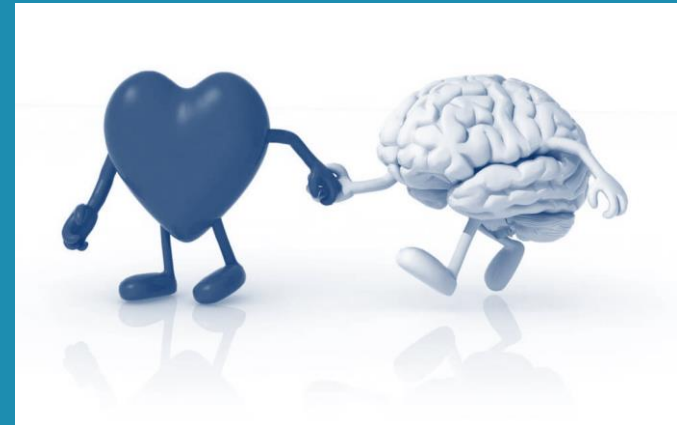


# Inner Side of Forgiveness

Transformations of heart and mind



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You won't help shoots grow  
by pulling them up higher



# How can we understand & foster forgiveness dynamics?



# Stick to the emotional & regulatory needs of the person



# Story of Mr. Thompson

- 50 year
- Two divorces, two young adult daughters (first marriage)
- High position in European Organisation
- Very precise, responsible, demanding attitude
- Help request: burn-out, feeling lost in his work and life, collapsed after a big argument/ nearly fight with his boss, serious fatigue

# Story of Mr. Thompson

- Unfair treatment
- No position in decision taking
- Getting all the credits without acknowledgment
- Loss (sickness, resignation) of three colleagues who couldn't stand the pressure anymore



# Story of Mr. Thompson

➡ forgiveness as solution?  
not for Mr. Thompson:

“I want to regain control over my live &  
a solution how to go back to work and  
not being compelled by my boss”

➡ following his own request and emotions will  
lead us into meaningful pre-forgiveness work



# Processes of Forgiving Another- Enright

- **Uncovering phase**

defenses, anger, injustice and hurt

- **Decision phase**

change of heart, insight, willingness

- **Work phase**

understanding offender, acceptance

- **Outcome phase**

meaning, emotional release





# Processes of Forgiving Another- Enright

- **Uncovering phase > pre-forgiveness work**
- Decision phase
- Work phase
- Outcome phase



# Emotion-regulation

## Cornerstone of Self-control



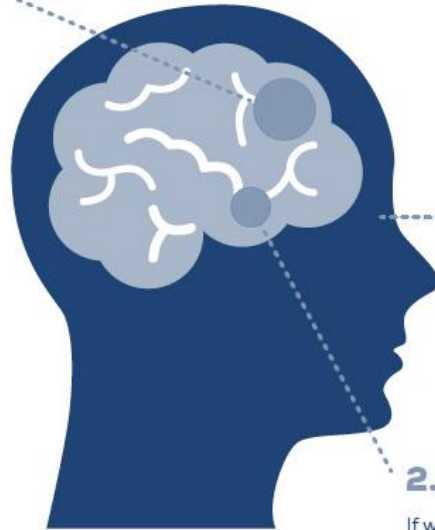
# Stress: cornerstone of regulation

## THE AMYGDALA HIJACK

### 3. PREFRONTAL CORTEX

Under stress, this brain region shuts down.

This brain region has been implicated in **planning complex cognitive behavior, personality expression, decision making, and moderating social behavior**. The basic activity of this brain region is considered to be orchestration of thoughts and actions.



### 1. PERCEIVED THREAT

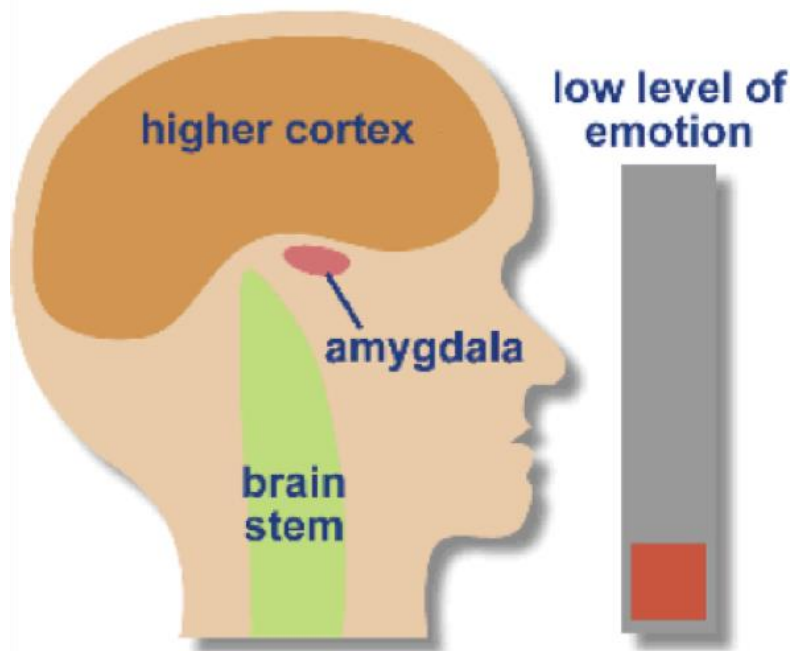


### 2. AMYGDALA

If we perceive a threat, our amygdala triggers a fight, flight or freeze response before we have a chance to process whether the threat is real.

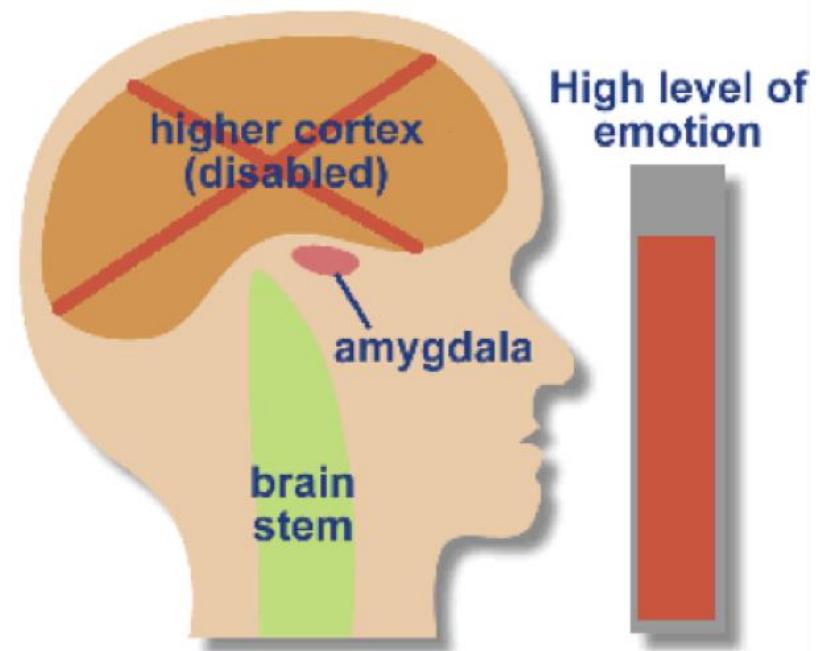
The amygdala can house memories and response repertoires that we enact without quite realising why we do so. Physiologically, this occurs because neural responses bypass our neocortex.

# Forgiveness requires the whole brain



**Low emotion**

(calm, relaxed)



**High emotion**

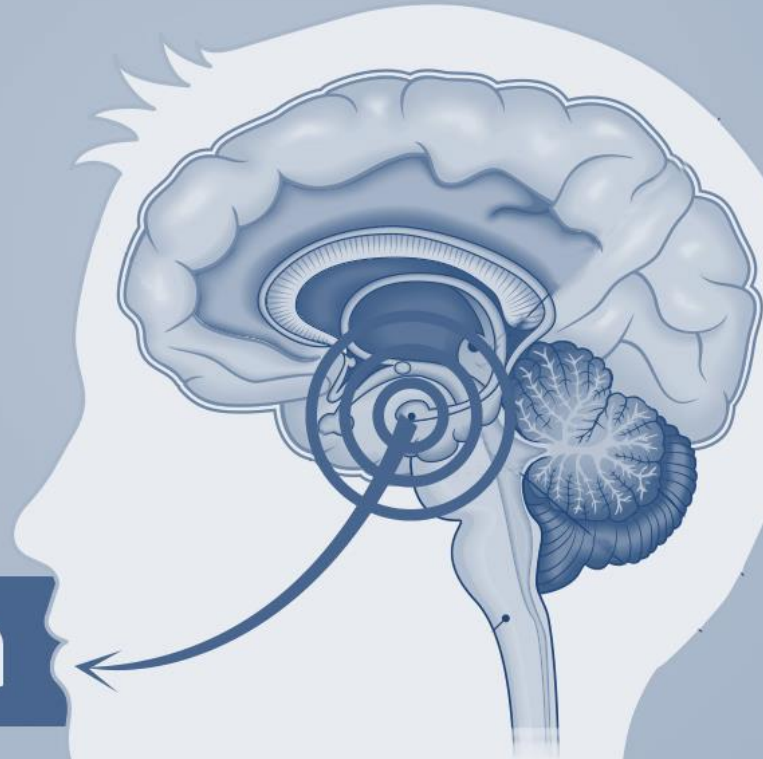
(anger, fear, excitement, love, hate, disgust, frustration)

# Old hurts & losses resonates

Located in the  
temporal lobe  
of the brain,

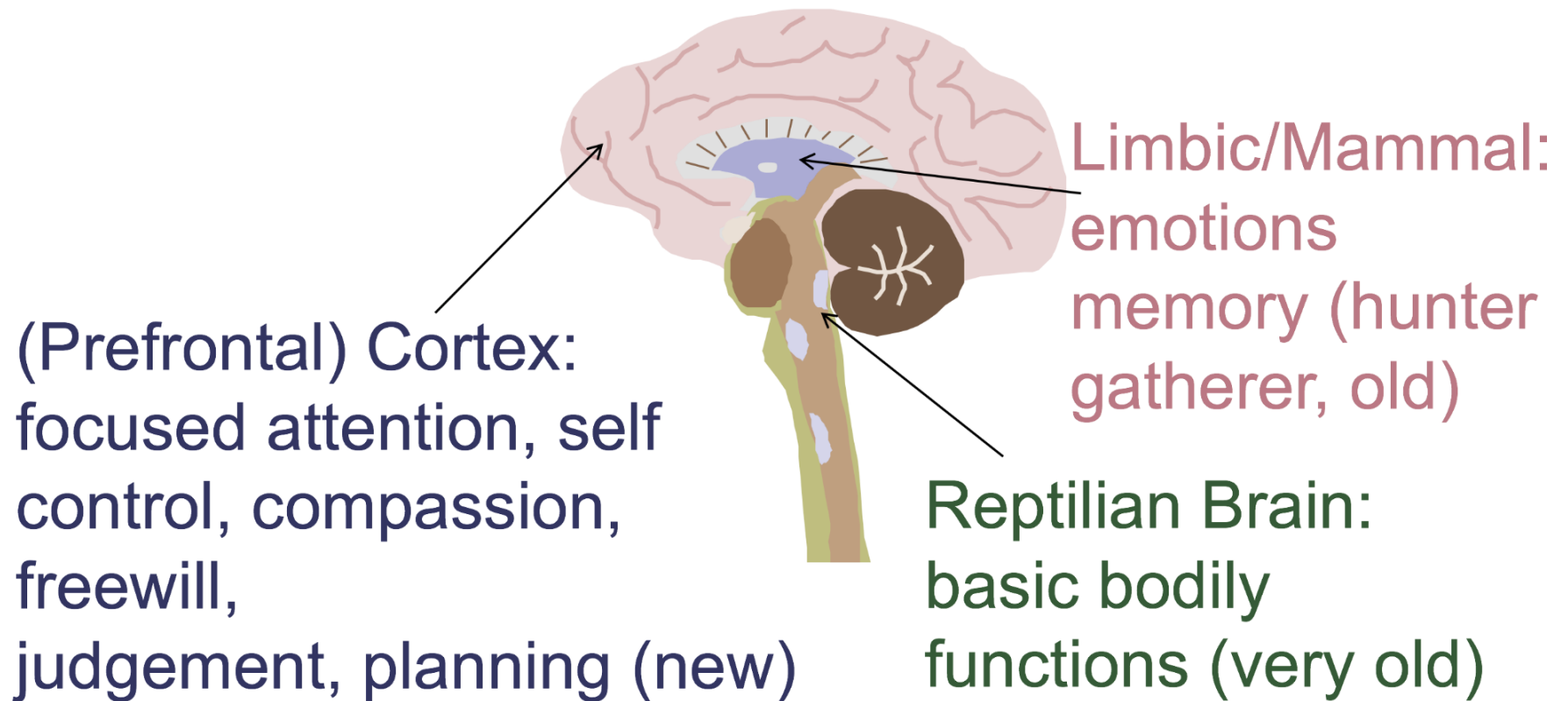
**the amygdala**

helps trigger the  
fight-or-flight response.



Buzzle.com

# Forgiveness requires the whole brain





# Processes of Forgiving Another- Enright

- **Uncovering phase > pre-forgiveness work**
- Decision phase
- Work phase
- Outcome phase



# Psychological defense & confrontation of anger

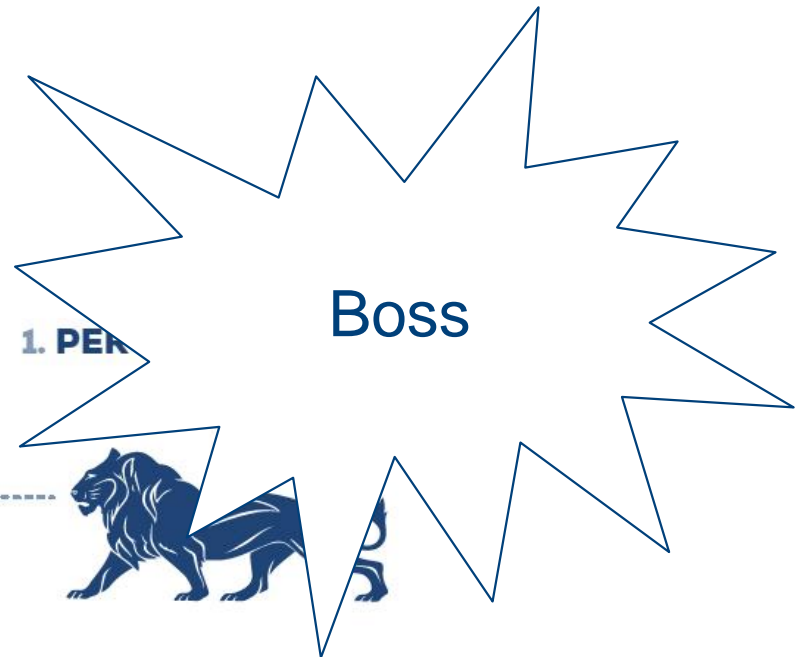
- Denial & justification to harbor anger
- “I ‘m not angry, it’s because of the incompetence of my boss, that’s why everything went wrong”



# THE AMYGDALA HIJACK

## 3. PREFRONTAL CORTEX

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## 2. AMYGDALA

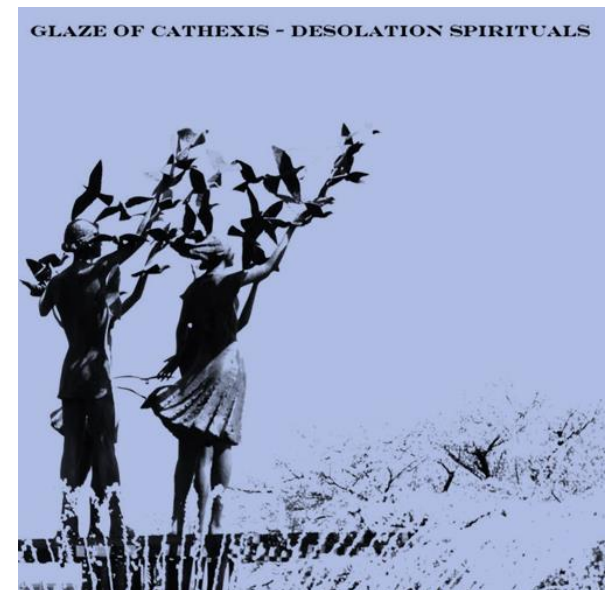
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The amygdala can house memories and response repertoires that we enact without quite realising why we do so. Physiologically, this occurs because neural responses bypass our neocortex.

# Cathexis

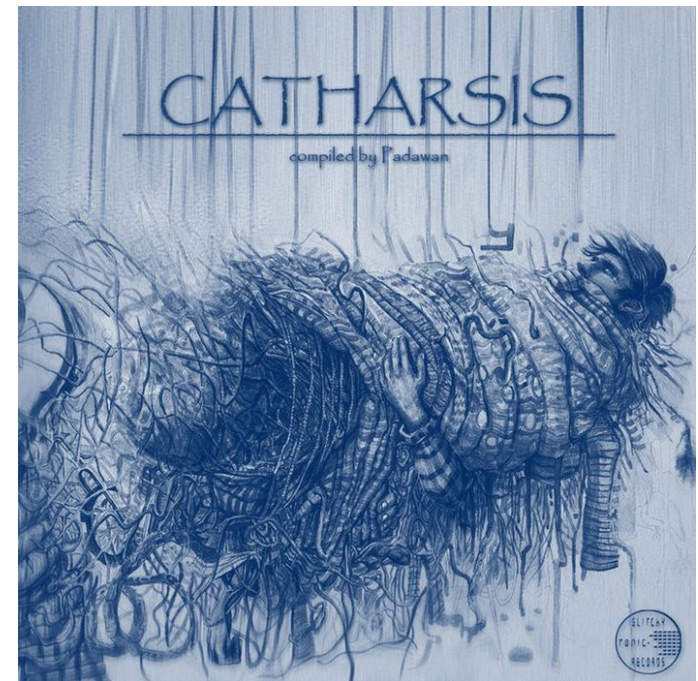
the process of investment of mental or emotional energy in a person, object, or idea

- “I’m so tired, I don’t want to think of him or my work, but I even dream of him”



# Catharsis

- Discharge of pent-up emotions through art, music, therapy,...
- “I think I understand...  
I feel how anxious I was  
of my second wife,  
it was a trauma.”



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1. PER



## 2. AMYGDALA

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Boss

Resonating  
Second Wife

T  
R  
I  
G  
G  
E  
R



# THE AMYGDALA HIJACK

## 3. PREFRONTAL CORTEX

Under stress, this brain region shuts down. This brain region has been implicated in **planning complex cognitive behavior, personality expression, decision making, and moderating social behavior**. The basic activity of this brain region is considered to be orchestration of thoughts and actions.



1. PER

Parental Mismatch

Dominant Teacher

Boss

Resonating Second Wife

Under estimated in Army

Unanswered Love

2. AMYGDALA

If we perceive a threat, our amygdala triggers a freeze response before we have a chance to process if the threat is real.

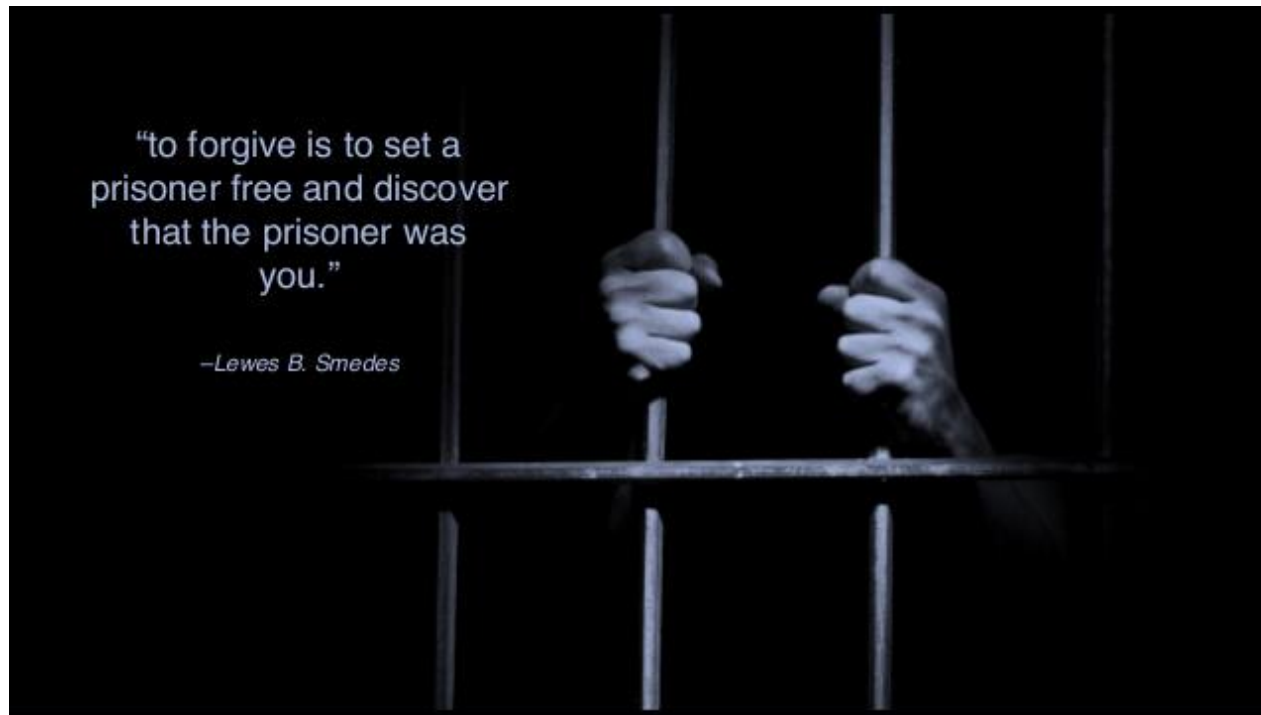
The amygdala can house memories and response reactions we enact without quite realising why we do so. Physiologically, this occurs because neural responses bypass our neocortex.

**axellite**

◀ LEADERSHIP & PERFORMANCE ▶

**KU LEUVEN**

“Shedding the self-as-victim belief and asserting personal power that leads to healing for the person choosing to forgive”



# Clarity & Peace of mind



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Thank you for your attention!