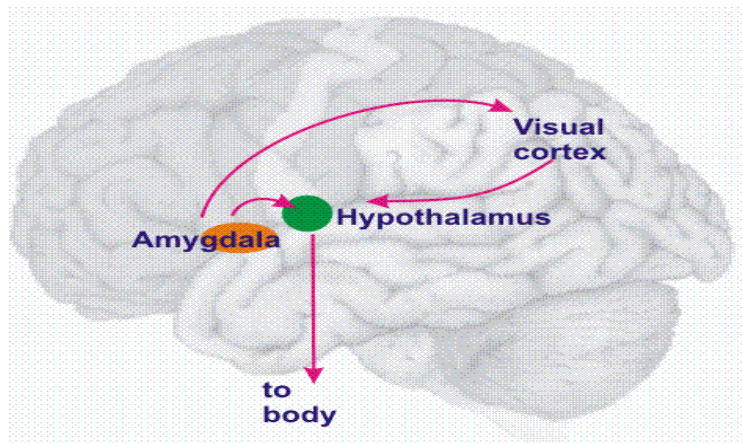


Emotional Mind

The emotional mind is found in the **amygdala**



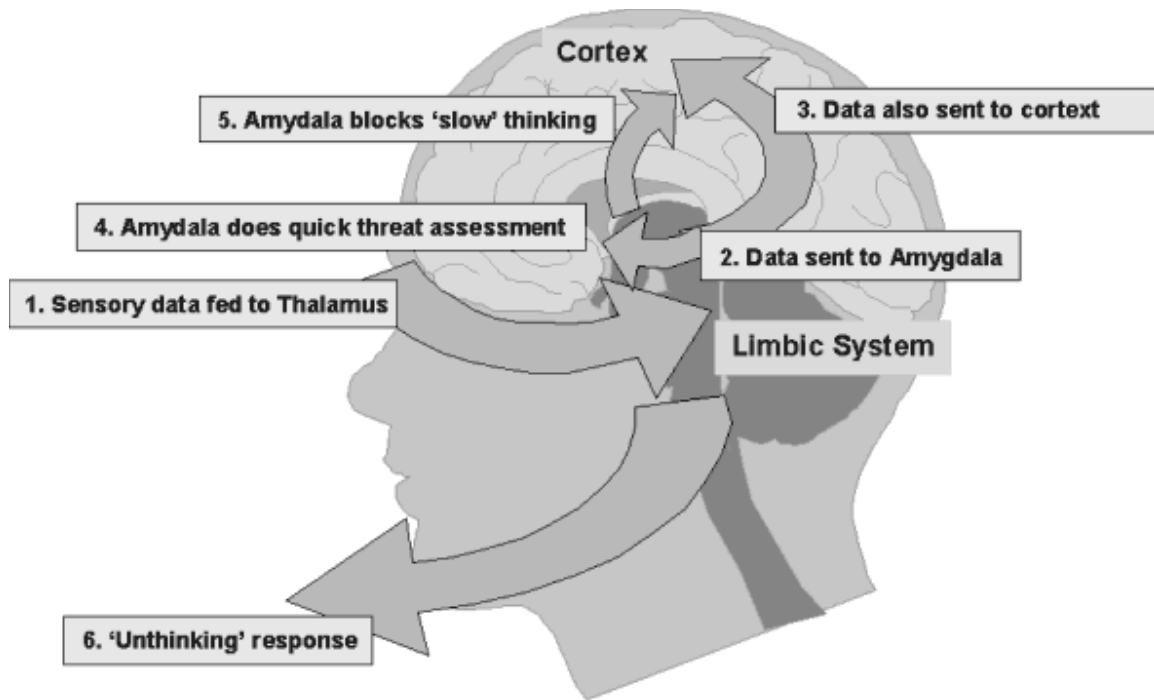
- The amygdalae are found deep within the medial temporal lobes of the brain which is known as the **limbic system**. This part is embryologically older than other parts of the brain and was developed to provide **the management of the fight or flight chemicals for survival response**. They perform a primary role in the processing and memory of emotional reactions.
- They send impulses to the **hypothalamus** for important activation of the sympathetic nervous system. They are responsible for sending messages to activate reflexes and facial expressions of fear and the activation of chemicals dopamine norepinephrine and epinephrine (adrenaline chemicals that increase blood pressure and heart rate and enable flight or flight response)
- They perform primary roles in the **formation and storage of memories** associated with **emotional events**. These memories elicit fear behaviour including immobility, rapid heartbeat, increased respiration and stress-hormone release. They are involved in classic-conditioning (Pavlovian fear conditioning) and positive conditioning
- They are involved in the modulation of **memory consolidation**. Following any learning event emotional arousal influences the strength of subsequent memory for that event - the more emotion, the stronger the memory and the greater the impact.
- **This part of the brain** affects sexuality, bi-polar disorders, depression and autism. It is involved in signalling the cortex of motivationally significant stimuli such as those related to reward and fear in addition to social functions such as mating

- **Emotions are evolutionary adaptations** as they enhance an organisms ability to experience and evaluate it's environment and thus increase it's likelihood to survive and reproduce.
- The emotional brain **does not have the ability to think** - it pattern matches. It stores memories that have caused emotional trauma or positivity in the past. It then looks to pattern match for future traumas to stop them happening again. If it senses a pattern match it sets off a **fight or flight response** - depending on the strength of the pattern (how much trauma or a trauma that has occurred several times previously) it will match a response. This could range from feeling a mild discomfort to a full blown panic-attack or an urge to run away literally from a situation.
- The emotional mind is our **burglar alarm system** or our **Inner Dog**. It barks when it gets a match. It's nature means that **it does not think only respond**. It cannot cognitively access a risk so it goes by the **strength of the pattern** -

for example if we had an absent parent as a child we may have had several episodes where we had an expectation that the parent was going to visit us. Each time the parent was late or didn't have a birthday or Christmas present they had promised it resulted in the child having disappointment and hurt feelings. A pattern was created - **this parent=this trauma**.

In future we may have gone on to create an adult relationship. If this person did not do what they had committed to we may have experienced a **similar pattern trauma**. This would have added to the original child pattern like an ever increasing snowball. As none of these emotions are totally released the pattern becomes bigger. **The emotion increases in intensity**. We then have another adult relationship and in 99% of the relationship everything is great. However one day the person lets us down on some minor issue - however by this time this **emotional pattern alarm is huge** (these patterns are largely unconscious until we actively seek to work to acknowledge them- because in our cognitive level of reasoning in the cortex part of the brain we may feel we have sorted them out and understood them - however our emotional mind does not operate in this way) We have a huge emotional reaction to this person, much to their amazement and **we have no idea why we have reacted so disproportionately** - we also have no control over that emotion or understanding of why it makes us feel so unsafe.

This reaction can take many forms. It can be present in crimes of passion, murders etc and is well documented. Once the fight or flight mechanism goes beyond certain stages there is no going back - the chemicals in the brain prevent this as a survival mechanism. You literally cannot think.



unthinking response

- **Sensory data fed to thalamus**- all sensory data except smell is sent by the body to the thalamus which acts like a switchboard sending it to the relevant part of the brain
- **Data sent to amygdala** - the thalamus sends data to the emotional mind to pattern match and does a **quick threat assessment** - if anything matches a pattern and the pattern is triggered the amygdala will respond
- **Data sent to cortex** - where we can use our intelligence and think about things - **sometimes too much thinking means you die** - you just have to react
- **Amygdala blocks thought** - if there is a pattern match to a fear/trauma response the amygdala sends chemicals to stop the thinking process and trigger fight or flight response
- **Unthinking response** - we act without conscious thought and get out of the way/respond emotionally/rescue someone without thought for our own safety/lash out

Patterns

- **Trauma forms patterns** - No matter how we perceive the trauma now as adults with cognitive thought or rationalisation, when the majority of our formative behaviour patterns were formed as children they would have had a **huge impact** on how we viewed the world and how our character and personality formed. A three year old sees the world in a much different perspective than a forty year old ,especially when they encounter things for the first time - **a raised adult voice can be terrifying**.
- **These patterns of the past determine how we live our lives today** - people develop in response to their environment and especially **key relationships** in those early years. We learn how to exist in the world and how to behave in the world according to our main care givers in early life. **Family rules and family patterns** shape our belief systems and we may believe that this is how the world is rather than how our family has chosen to perceive it.
- **The patterns of our behaviour are formed in alignment with our emotional mind** - moving away from things that have caused us trauma in the past and towards things where we have found positive feelings - sometimes this may be an internal state of mind or external approval from others
- **Patterns are largely unconscious** - we may be completely unaware that we have several dominant patterns of behaviour, however once we start to identify them we can see them everywhere. These patterns have a **positive intention** behind them - they seek to keep us safe emotionally. Usually when we become aware of them we realise that they are not giving us what we now want and need in life and that we need to modify them.
- **Letting go of patterns does not mean letting go of learning or logic** - we are not rewriting our memories or values or what we have learned to keep us safe - we are letting go of emotions that as children made us feel unsafe - however we now have adult perception ,learning and life experiences to be able to make informed choices. Our **emotional mind will then not need to emotionally hi-jack us on our ancient personal history** - we need it for genuine risks to our life and it will still do that but we can live our lives on choices made today that come from **inspired thinking** rather than childhood archives. This is also true of **trauma adult files** for example post traumatic stress

Modifying patterns

Pattern types - many different types however most people share similarities. These patterns **do not need to be viewed as flawed - they just are**. We can adapt them , turning them down when appropriate and turning them up when we choose.

Some examples:

- **People pleasers** tend to want to please others and receive praise. They tend to be **workaholics** who have impossibly high standards and values and will be constantly doing too many things trying to please everyone. Criticism, however well-meant will be seen to be negative. They may try and please everyone all of the time and can find themselves exhausted and miserable. They may start lots of new projects, not wanting to finish them because that can mean a judgement by someone and a possible negative response. People-pleasers often come from **well-meaning but critical care-givers** who wanted their offspring to succeed and pushed them to achieve higher and higher standards. People pleasers can deliver fantastic work but they may take on too much. They may find it hard to say no or give an honest emotional response from the heart - feeling they **"shouldn't"** They may wish to turn down this pattern and do less by **letting go of all the patterns in their emotional mind that were attributed to criticism and being less than perfect**. They may find as a result that they can allow themselves to do less and feel comfortable with that, they may allow themselves to do pastimes that they may have considered lazy or previously labelled **"pointless"** diversions that other people may call **"fun"** .

They keep this value of doing a job well and so this attribute is still there to be turned up to full volume when the situation warrants it.

- **People's champion's** tend to find themselves feeling emotional intensity around other people's **perceived acts of injustice** and want to voice their opinion, they may have been bullied in the past on several levels and feel they have been powerless to act in the past. They may start to have emotional reactions to minor issues and see others showing surprise. This may take the form of reacting strongly to their children's teachers, friends etc. They may feel (or others may point out to them) that this has got out of hand and is not in the best interests of forming good relationships and promoting communication. They decide to look at their **historical issues of bullying and powerlessness/injustice** so they can act in future from a point of neutrality and objectivity.

Their underlying value of fairness and justice can be upheld in a more diplomatic assertive nature as they let go of these bullying traumas and release that emotion.

- **Inability to stand up for oneself** feeling tearful or unable to deal with direct confrontation. Allowing more confident individuals to walk all over them and becoming more depressed by their inability to make any progress. Again looking at past trauma where these individuals could not speak out against a more dominant person because of family/school rules etc and allowing them to let that go.

Their value of remaining sensitive rather than an arrogant outspoken individual can be upheld - however they can assert themselves when required.

- **Attention seeker** having a need to be in the limelight and have recognition often comes from patterns formed in early childhood. This can be due to feeling insecure and ignored and wanting validation from others and can escalate to bigger and bigger projects to get the attention. On releasing these patterns individuals can find security in their own recognition of self-worth and seek relationships that embrace demonstrating love and affection. They no longer seek the illusive fix for ultimate confirmation of their excellence.

Their value of feeling recognised can be upheld in a more manageable and safer way

- **Hoarder** having a need to keep everything in case they need it. It is important to recognise that it can be immaterial what objects they choose to hoard. This pattern is about finding safety in stuff rather than life and relationships. **The outside environment reflects on what is going on inside in the patterns of the person.** It shows holding onto the past and an inability to release the past. It can often happen when an elderly relative dies and a person needs to hold onto their possessions as a way of holding onto the person. As they look at **unfinished business** patterns they can release the stuff they don't need in the physical world.

Their value of keeping in touch with relationships, values and people from the past can be honoured in their hearts rather than their house

And many more