
Learning the components of the story and the impact of trauma and abuse

-How to learn about the impact of harm and the redemptive power of an engaging narrative while growing in awareness of our own story.

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“We’re wired for story. In a culture of scarcity and perfectionism, there’s a surprisingly simple reason we want to own, integrate, and share our stories of struggle. We do this because we feel the most alive when we’re connecting with others and being brave with our stories—it’s in our biology.

B. Brown, *Rising Strong*

“Storytelling is fundamental to all human cultures, and our shared stories create a connection to others that builds a sense of belonging to a particular community. In this way, stories both are created by us and shape who we are. For these reasons, stories are central to both individual and collective human experience”.

D. J. Siegel; Mary Hartzell, Parenting From the Inside Out

“Your earliest relationship with your primary caretakers has had the most shaping power on your brain”.

Adam Young

“The overwhelming experience (due to trauma) is split off and fragmented, so that the emotions, sounds, images, thoughts, and physical sensations related to the trauma take on a life of their own”.

Bessel van der Kolk, *The Body Keeps the Score*

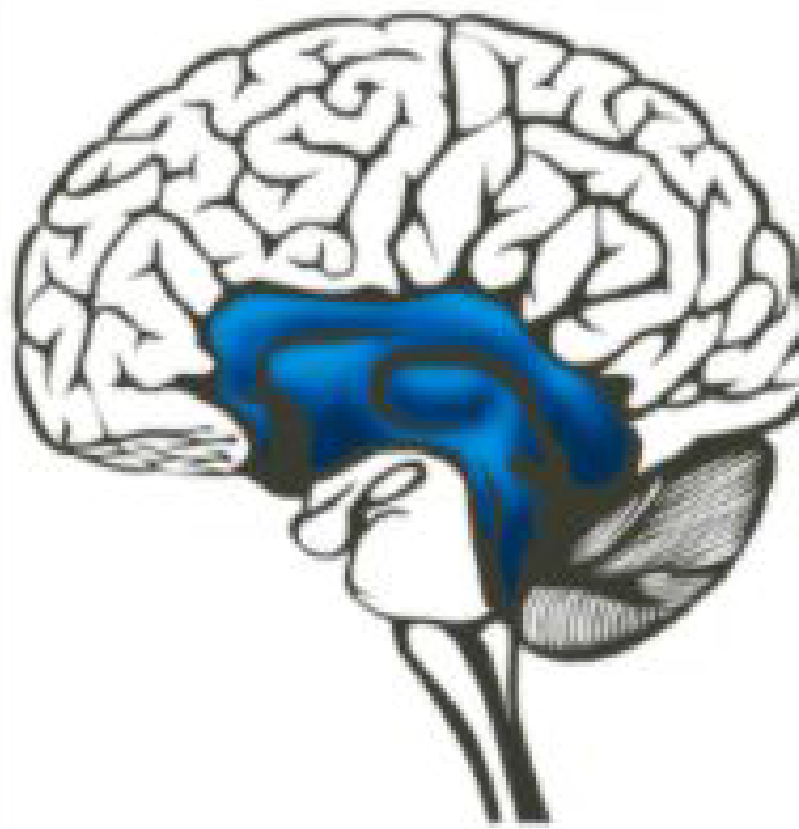
“Not only “What happened to you?” is the key question if you want to understand someone, it is the key question if you want to understand the brain. In other words, your personal history—the people and places in your life— influenced your brain’s development. The result is that each of our brains is unique. Our life experiences shape the way key systems in our brain organize and function. So, each of us sees and understands the world in a unique way”.

Bruce D. Perry, *What Happened to You*



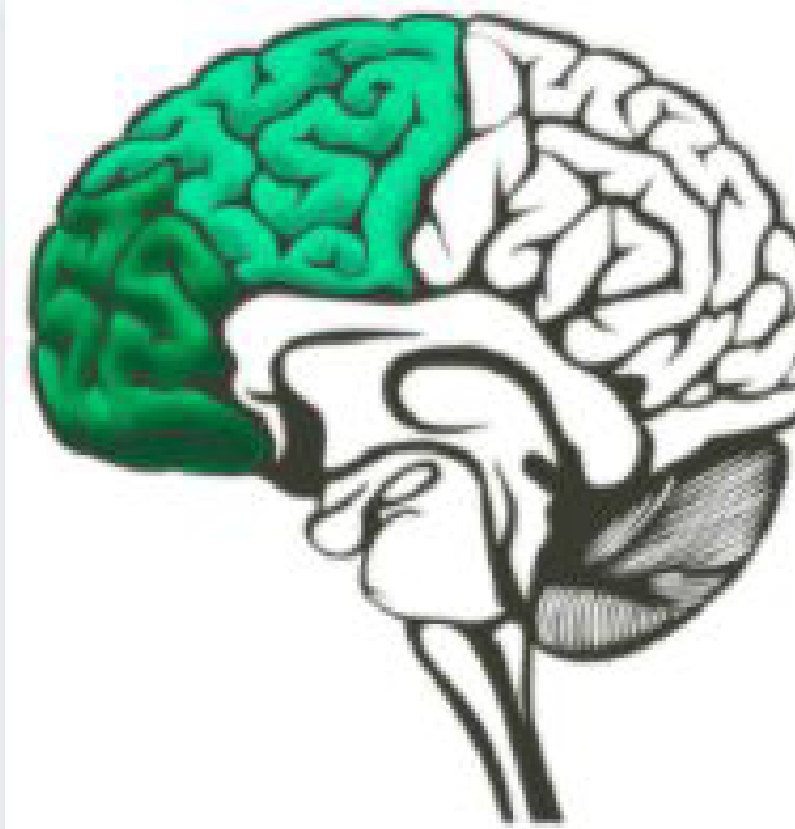
— Survival State

Brain stem



— Emotional State

Limbic system



— Executive State

Prefrontal cortex

“As a therapist, I’ve learned that when trauma is present, the first step in healing almost always involves educating people on what trauma is. Trauma is all about speed and reflexivity—which is why, in addressing trauma, each of us needs to work through it slowly, over time. We need to understand our body’s process of connection and settling. We need to slow ourselves down and learn to lean into uncertainty, rather than away from it. We need to ground ourselves, touch the pain or discomfort inside our trauma, and explore it—gently. This requires building a tolerance for bodily and emotional discomfort, and learning to stay present with—rather than trying to flee—that discomfort”.

R.Menakem, *My Grandmother's Hands*

“The goal is to learn how to regulate your nervous system so you can tolerate external and internal stressors and triggers. For this to happen, the brain's thinking, feeling, and instinct parts and the rest of the body must communicate to sense and register what is going on, interpret, and understand it, so one can figure out what's best to do”.

Reminded.org

“Most people who are in the process of excavating the reasons they do what they do are met at some point with resistance. “You’re blaming the past.” “Your past is not an excuse.” This is true. Your past is not an excuse. But it is an explanation— offering insight into the questions so many of us ask ourselves: Why do I behave the way I behave? Why do I feel the way I do? For me, there is no doubt that our strengths, vulnerabilities, and unique responses are an expression of what happened to us”.

Bruce D. Perry, *What Happened to You*

“We wrongly believe that we will be happy if we can escape the past. But without our past we are hollow and plastic beings who have only common names and conventional stories. When we enter into our story at the point we lost our name, we are most likely to hear the whisper of our new name. Remember, God is still writing”.

D.Allender, To Be Told

“I am telling you all this because I am deeply convinced that the Christian leader of the future is called to be completely irrelevant and to stand in this world with nothing to offer but his or her own vulnerable self. That is the way Jesus came to reveal God’s love”.

Henri Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus*

“We are not the healers, we are not the reconcilers, we are not the givers of life. We are sinful, broken, vulnerable people who need as much care as anyone we care for. The mystery of ministry is that we have been chosen to make our own limited and very conditional love the gateway for the unlimited and unconditional love of God”.

Henri Nouwen, *In the Name of Jesus*

“Because narrative creates and sustains social community, it’s the glue, the atmosphere of all social life. The key to innovating missional community is formation of a people within a specific memory and narrative. This begins by engaging the lived stories of people and bringing those stories into dialogue with the biblical narratives. Missional leaders need skills and resources for creating an environment in a congregation that invites people into these dialogues”.

Roxburgh, Romanuk, *The Missional Leader*

“We lose ourselves and our identity in moments of unnamings, but we must return to those places to find ourselves and, even more so, to find God. This concept is hard to grasp because it’s the opposite of what we assume to be true. We think we’ll be happy if we can escape the past, but it is truer that without our past we are vacant beings with bland names and cookie-cutter stories. As we enter the places where we lost our name, we are most likely to hear the whisper of our new name—the name

God will give us.

D.Allender, To Be Told

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