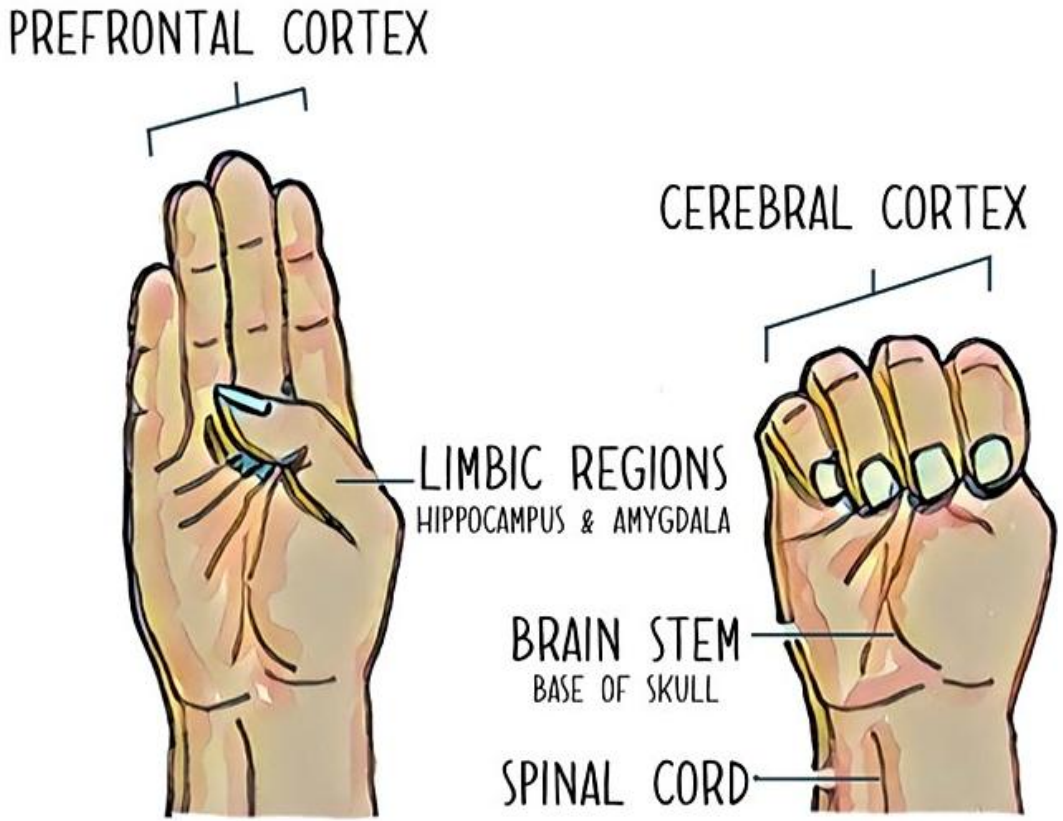
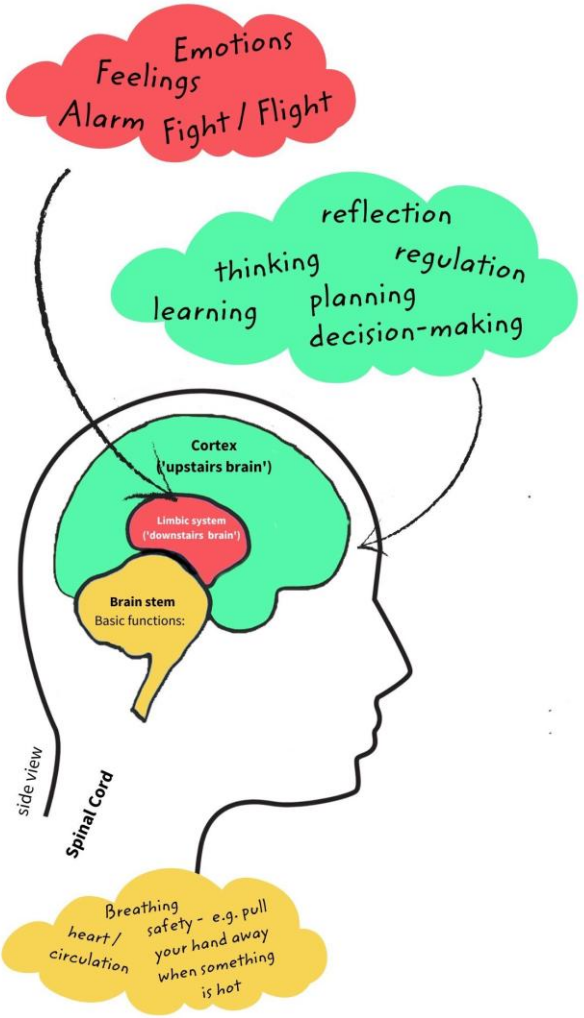
Regulate
Relate
Reason
Repair

Regulate, Relate, Reason, Repair

- This process has been developed to engage a person when their stress response is activated and they are experiencing fight, flight or freeze.
- This is especially useful for children who have experienced trauma, who may experience this response more regularly.
- The model explains that the child will need support to regulate and relate with an attuned adult to calm the ‘downstairs brain’ before they can engage their ‘upstairs brain’ in order for reflecting, reasoning and learning to take place.


PREFRONTAL CORTEX
CEREBRAL CORTEX
LIMBIC REGIONS
HIPPOCAMPUS & AMYGDALA
BRAIN STEM
BASE OF SKULL
SPINAL CORD


Emotions
Feelings
Alarm
Fight / Flight
reflection
thinking
regulation
learning
planning
decision-making
Cortex
('upstairs brain')
Limbic system
('downstairs brain')
Brain stem
Basic functions:
side view
Spinal Cord
Breathing
heart / circulation
safety - e.g. pull your hand away when something is hot

Regulate

- We need to be stress regulators rather than behaviour managers when children are experiencing fight, flight or freeze. Where possible give the child space and observe from a distance.

- Brain stem calming activities are repetitive, rhythmic, relational (offered by a safe adult), relevant (linked to developmental age), respectful and rewarding e.g. walking, running, jumping on a trampete, chair press ups, squeezing a stress ball, massage, yoga movements, bouncing a ball, colouring.

Relate

- When the child is beginning to regulate, it is important to connect with them to remind them that they are safe, understood and supported.
- A key adult, who has developed a safe and trusting relationship with the child at a time when they were regulated, is best placed to do this.
- PACE (playfulness, acceptance, curiosity and empathy) can be a useful way of relating to the child at this time as it is non-confrontational and non-threatening.

Reason

- When the child is regulated we can then support them to reflect, reason and learn from a situation.

- Listen carefully. Be curious about what happened and pay a lot of attention to the child's perspective, acknowledging and validating their thoughts, feelings and viewpoint. It's ok to be angry but it's not ok to…..

- Talk about how their actions affected others. Discussion that some behaviour is unacceptable and the effects of this behaviour. Ask them what they could have done differently. Talk about sanctions/ consequences.

Repair

- This is particularly important when relationships are ruptured during a dysregulated moment.

- Work out an act of kindness – doing something for the person or people affected. Ask the child what they think they can do to help the situation. Make a card or draw a picture. Do not suggest saying sorry unless this is offered by the child.

- All of these things should be done alongside the adult to reduce feelings of isolation and shame. This is not a time for lecturing or going over the incident again, learning from the situation has taken place during the reason phase, this is a time for rebuilding relationships. Welcome the child back into the classroom/group to try again.

Relationships

- ✓ **Regulate** – give them space. Watch from a distance if possible.
- ✓ **Relate** – Rhythmic, repetitive actions.
- ✓ **Reason** – Listen. Talk about what happened. Discuss sanctions.
- ✓ **Repair** – Acts of kindness to repair the relationship.