

# The thrive Exchange

SSPS Thrive Newsletter

April 2019



Dear all,

We continue at SSPS to use Thrive to help our young people fill the social and emotional gaps in their personal development. As one of our whole school measures it really helps to 'narrow the gap' in social and emotional development and allows other whole school measures such as attendance to increase as they become/feel 'safe, special and secure' in our school and with us too.

Clear and positive boundaries that are constant and consistent in our school expectations and through points booklets are allowing us to keep pupils safe and secure. Be on time—have a mind to be kind—do your best.

Routine is definitely relationship.

As soon as we get pupils out of 'being' and into 'doing' and 'thinking' we are then moving them out of reptilian brain and into mammalian brain. Mammalian brain is the play, care, nurture, social bonding and curiosity area (the thumb in the hand model see p 2.)

This is where we are learning!

This is where we and our pupils are starting to learn. This starts to become mutually trusting relationships. Look at page 3 to see how we help our pupils when things don't or aren't going so well—the VRF's.

Learning manners, rules, taking turns, creating wonderful artwork, writing poetry, solving maths puzzles, cooking, climbing, messy play, laughing and having fun. All those feel good happy brain chemicals are whizzing around in this learning mammalian brain and leading on and into our higher cortex thinking brain.

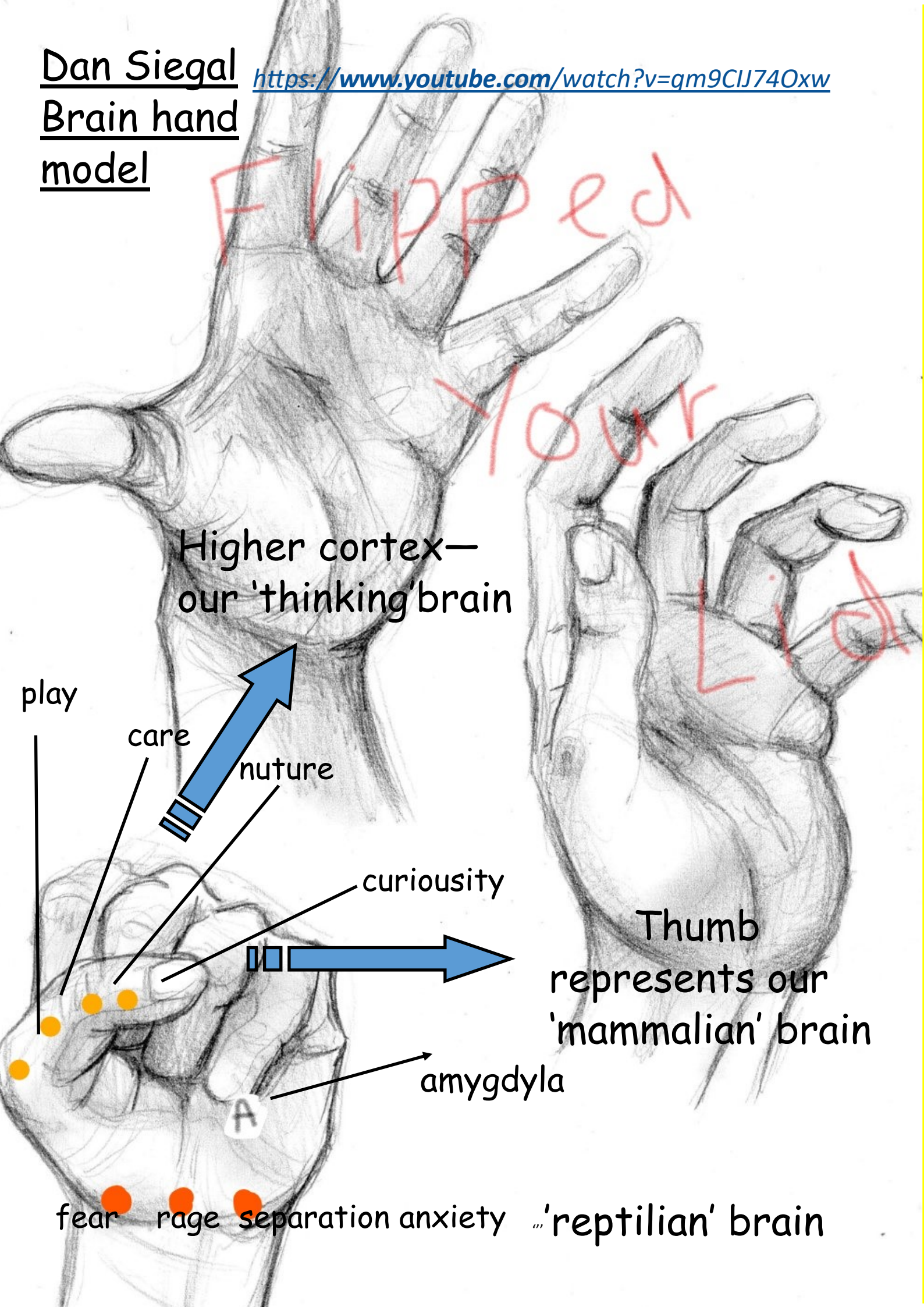
Many of our pupils are at 'power and identity' and 'skills and structure' and into their age appropriate development stage of Thrive. However, in times of stress and with a full window of tolerance we 'all' can slip back into the 'being' state and back into our reptilian brain. How quickly we can recycle and recover back to our 'thinking' brain is important here. Many of our young people are in a constant state of recycling their experiences, feelings and emotions - how we 'are' during this can have a positive influence –see page 3 on the VRF's.

We have had some CPD implicitly on the Siegal hand brain model and the window of tolerance. In this Thrive exchange I have included all of this with hyperlinks to specific helpful videos. Please have a look at them . If you would like more any more information, help in understanding better or feeling more confident to deliver this to our pupils then please speak to Rebecca, Jac, Louise or I and we will be more than happy to help.

Happy reading and watching. Steve

Dan Siegal  
Brain hand  
model

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qm9CIJ74Oxw>



# The VRF'S (vital relational functions)

## Attunement

- Validate the young person's perspective/experience.
- This needs to happen before moving them to regulation.
- This is the beginning of being able to think about feelings.
- Avoid reassuring, deflecting, distracting, or making light of the young person's feelings

**NB Validation of feelings is NOT collusion with unacceptable behaviour**

## Validation

- Being alert to how the young person is feeling
- Attune to their emotional state through facial expression, body language, gesture, noises
- Show you understand the intensity, pitch, pace, volume of the young person's emotional state
- Catch, match and name/communicate their emotional state

## Regulation

### ***Soothe and Calm or Stimulate***

- Look
- Think
- Use voice, tone, body language
- Meet, match and then change the young person's energy.
- We have to experience being calmed before we can do it for ourselves
- A depressed young person will need you to tickle their interest

## Containment

- Show that you can see, understand and bear the young person's feeling.
- Make it a survivable experience through
  - catching it /matching it/staying steady in the face of its enormity /digesting it by thinking about it and /offering it back in named, small manageable pieces
- Staying regulated yourself

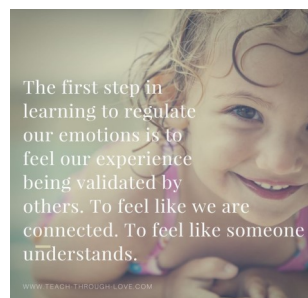
## Levels of Regulation

Emotional regulation – Three levels

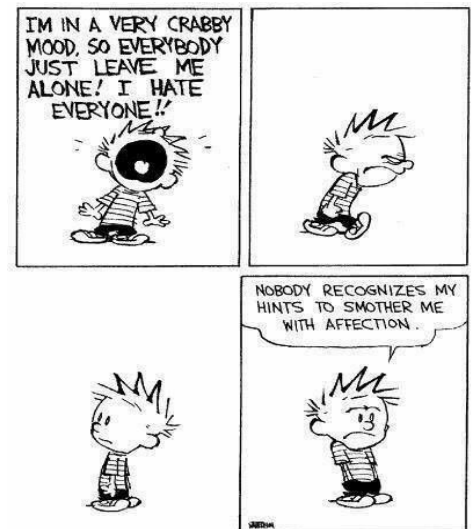
**Being:** physiological regulation; breath, hold, calming voice, strong presence, slow down, stop, be together.

**Doing:** emotional/relational regulation; holding hands, going with, doing with, showing how, trying together, VRF's.

**Thinking:** cognitive regulation; name what's going on, sequence, order, categorise, cause and effect, lending the brain and the language.



CHILDREN MAY CLOSE THEIR EARS TO ADVICE, BUT THEY KEEP THEIR EYES OPEN TO AN EXAMPLE.



## The importance of relationships

"Recognising the power of relationships and relational cues is essential to effective therapeutic work and, indeed, to effective parenting, care giving, teaching and just about any other human endeavour"

Perry, B 2006: 67

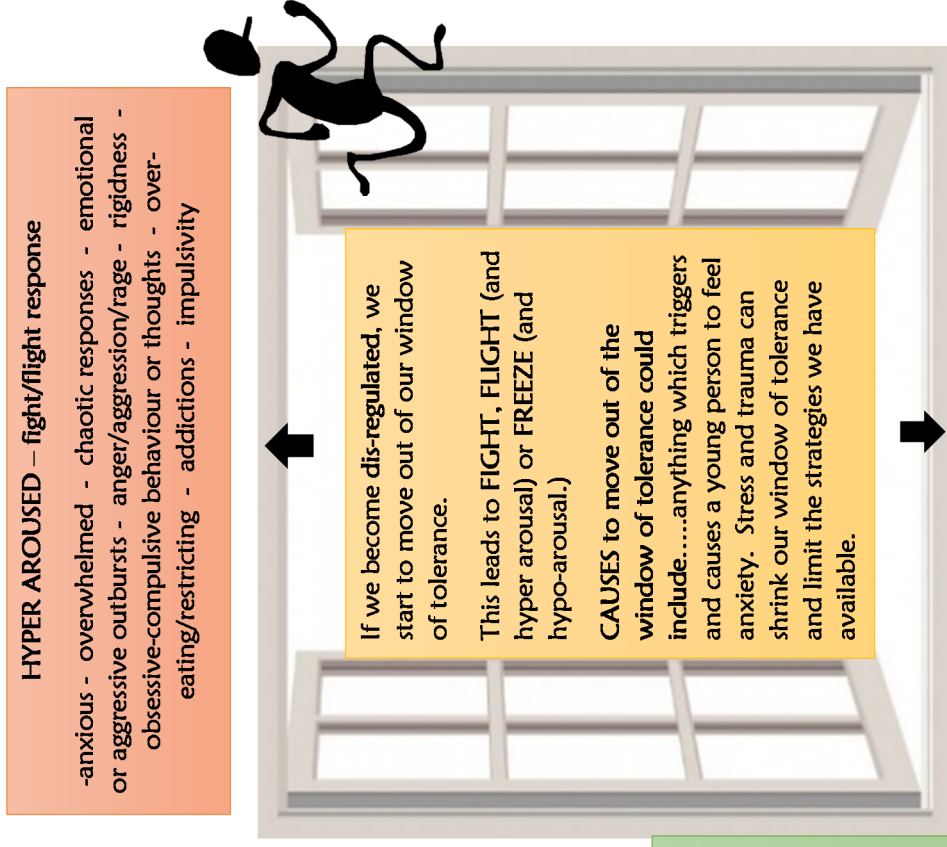


# The Window of Tolerance – Dan Siegal

*Each one of us has our own window of tolerance.*



<https://www.bing.com/videos/search?q=window+of+tolerance+beacon+house+video&view=detail&mid=9CA6A58249FAD16E440A9CA6A58249FAD16E440A&&FORM=VRDGAR>



How to stay in (or bring children back into) the window of tolerance:

**THRIVE** activities (depending on developmental stage) such as;

- outdoor activities (climbing, trampolining, table tennis, forest school, scooters/bikes, football, gym, building, hammering, digging, gardening, walking, swimming, whittling, running, circuits)
- relaxation activities (breathing exercises and deep, low breathing, mindfulness, yoga, tai chi, mindfulness, grounding exercises, calming techniques, touch.)
- creative activities (messy play, playdough, friendship bracelets, slime, drumming, music, pom poms, organising and sorting, drawing, dancing, playing, painting, reading/being read to, massage, pampering activities.)
- psychosocial education (teaching about themselves) – voice and facial expressions, mirroring, brain work, emotional literacy.
- strategies – providing a safe place, a trusting adult, well planned lessons and a clear, structured timetable, consistency, allowing mistakes, lots of chances to experience success.