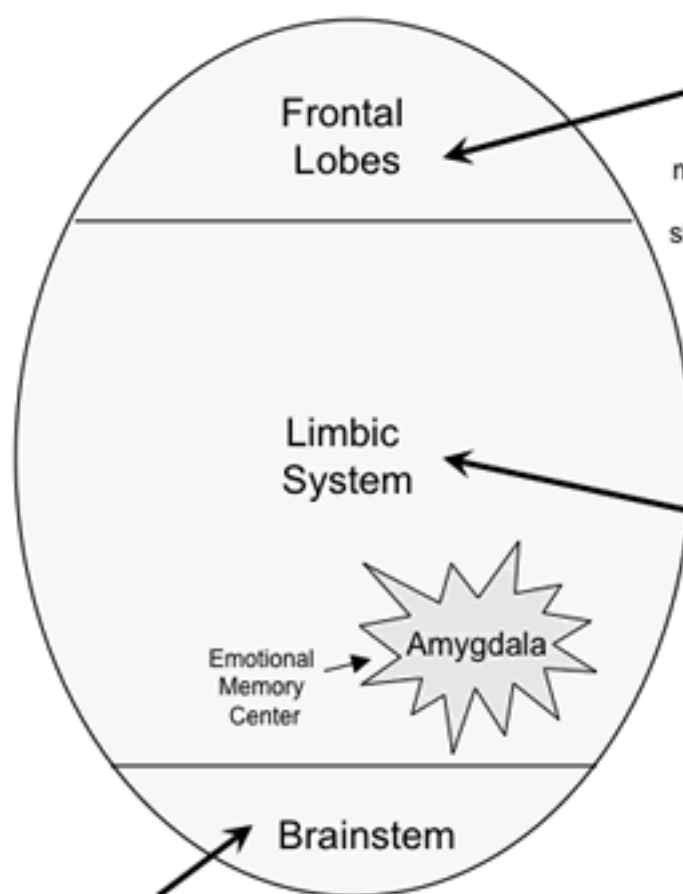


We remember trauma less in words and more with our feelings and our bodies

[van der Kolk & Fessler, 1995]

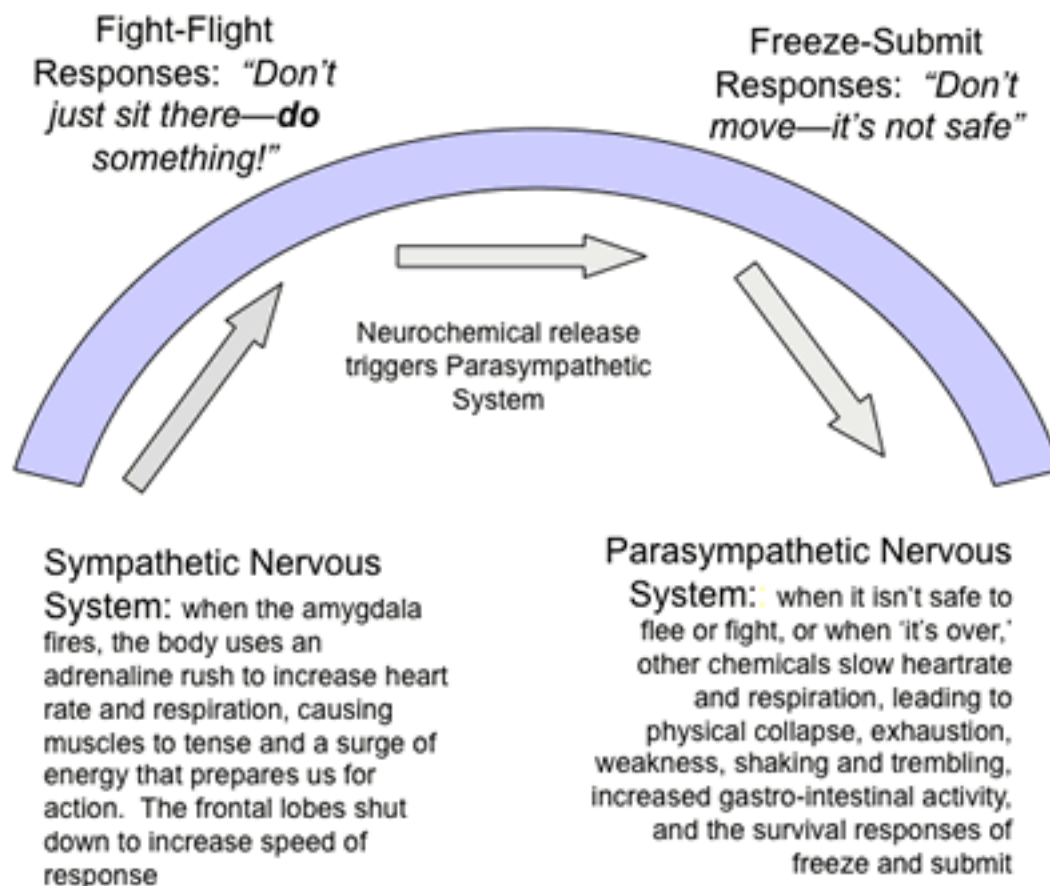


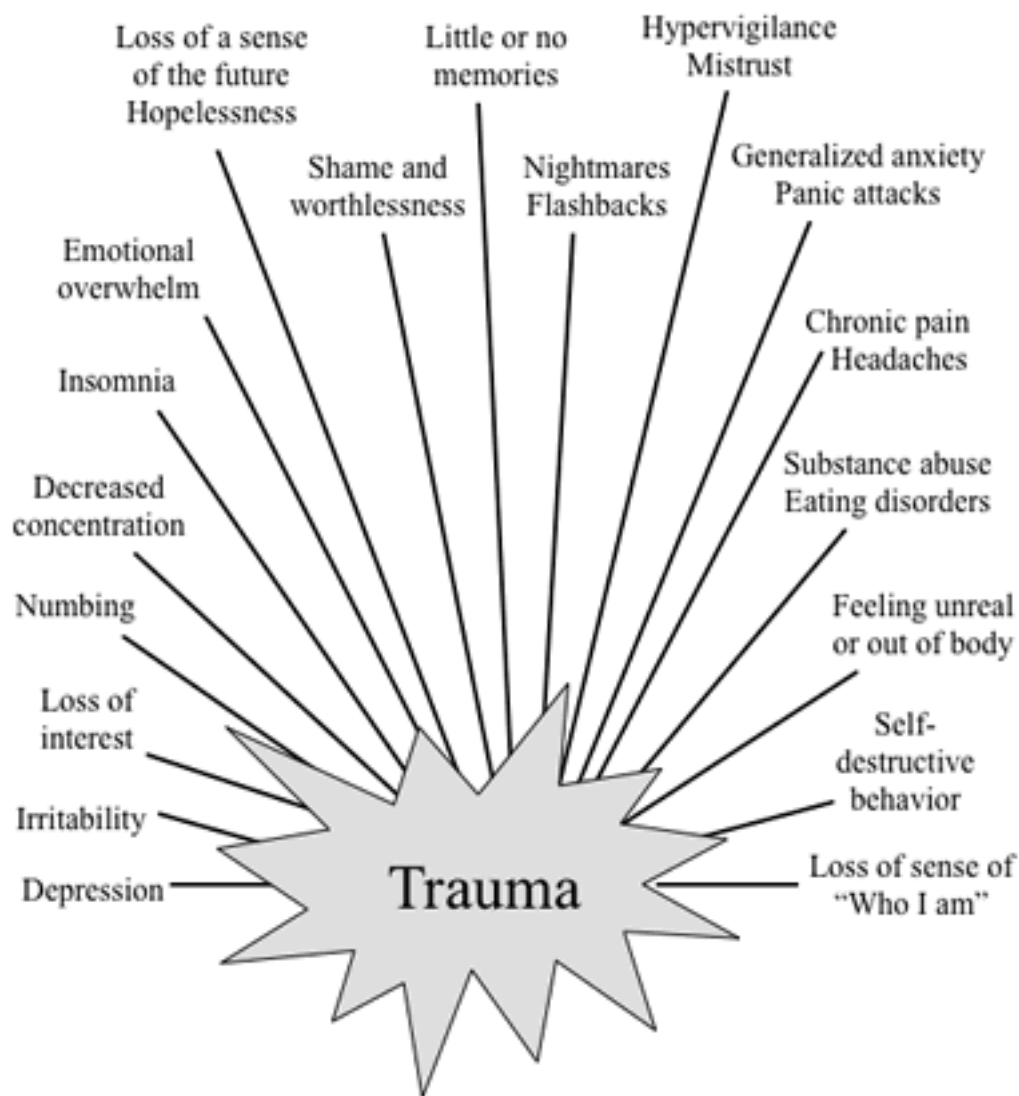
Brain scan research shows that, when we remember a traumatic event, memory centers in the frontal lobes shut down, and we get overwhelmed by feelings and impulses or driven to action.

The limbic system responds to memories with increased activity, especially in the **amygdala**, the brain's and emotional memory center. The amygdala "sounds the alarm" as if we were in danger right now.

The reptilian brain reacts instinctively to the amygdala's 'alarm.' Heart rate increases. We stop breathing or hyperventilate. Muscles tense. We either speed up or shut down.

How the Nervous System Helps Us Defend Ourselves





"Trauma survivors have symptoms instead of memories" [Harvey, 1990]

Adapted from Bremner & Marmar, 1998

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Trauma Causes "Disorganized Attachment:" is it safe to be attached?

