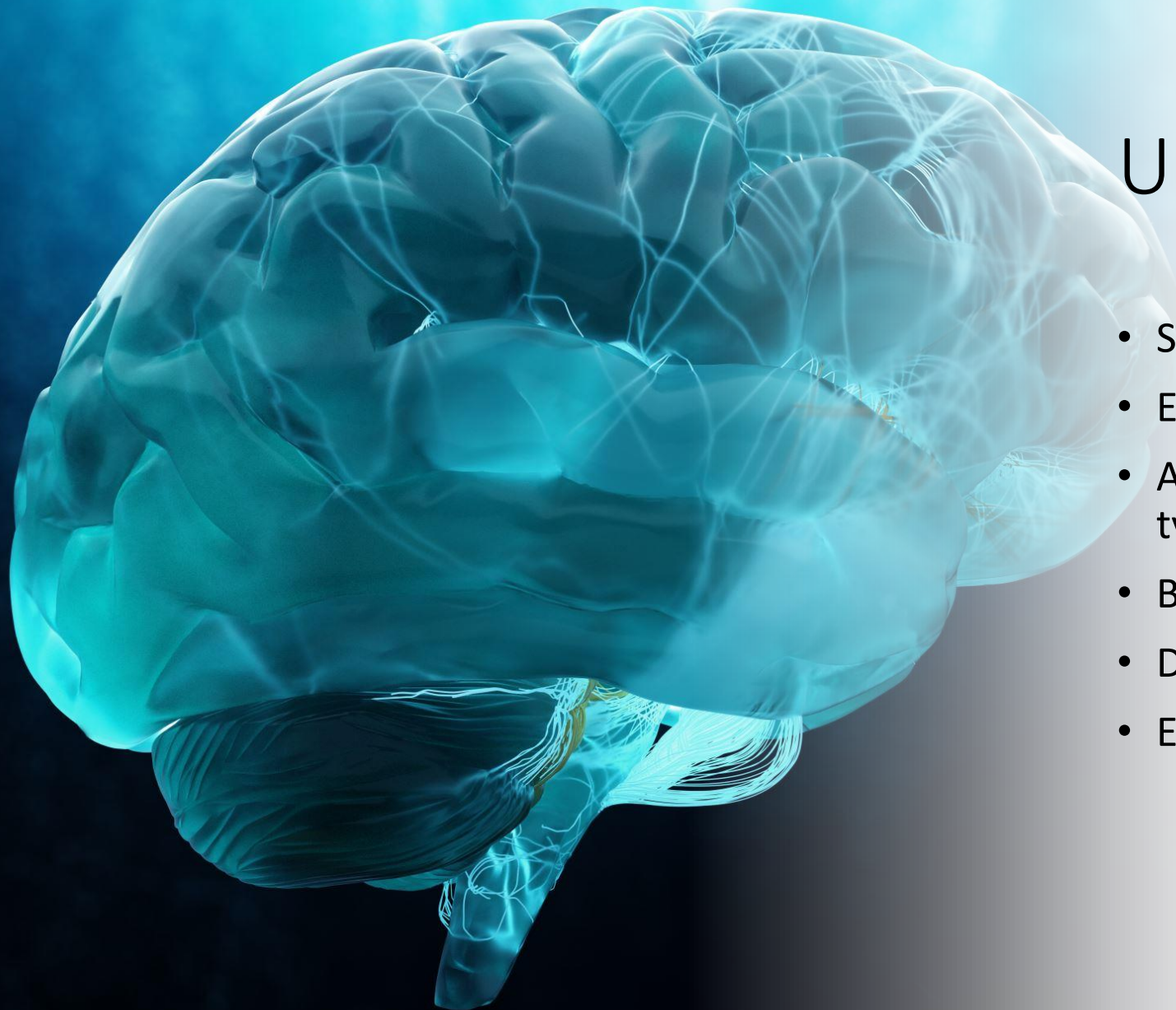




Courage to Risk Conference 2025
Wired and Connected:
Understanding and Teaching Impulse Control
and Executive Functioning to Students

Craig A. Knippenberg, School Consultant, LCSW, M.Div.

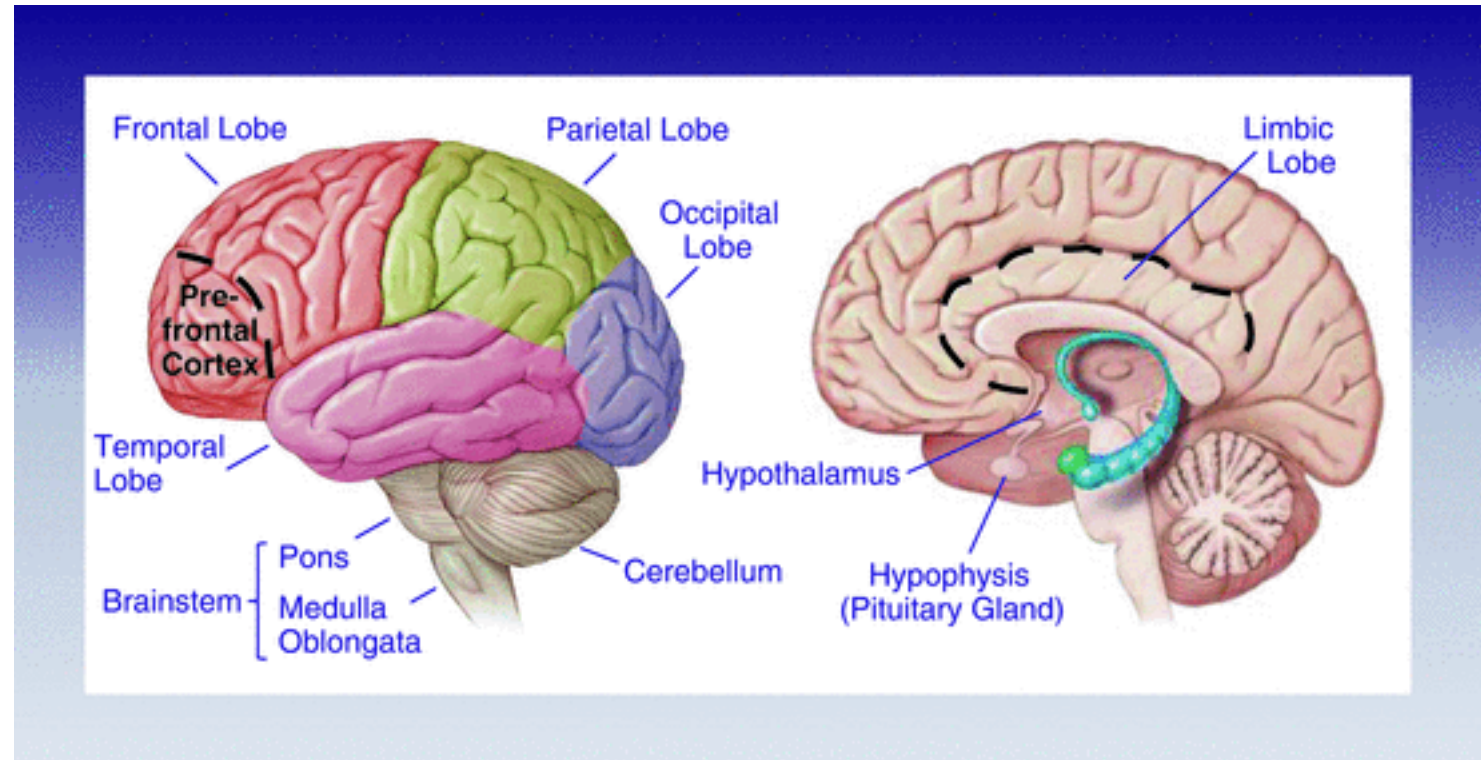


Underlying Thoughts

- Social Brain Perspective
- Evolutionary Biology/Psychology
- Adequate Environment & Neuro-typical Brains
- Boys' Brains/Girls' Brains
- Differentiated Teaching
- Empowering Students!



Mike the Headless Chicken



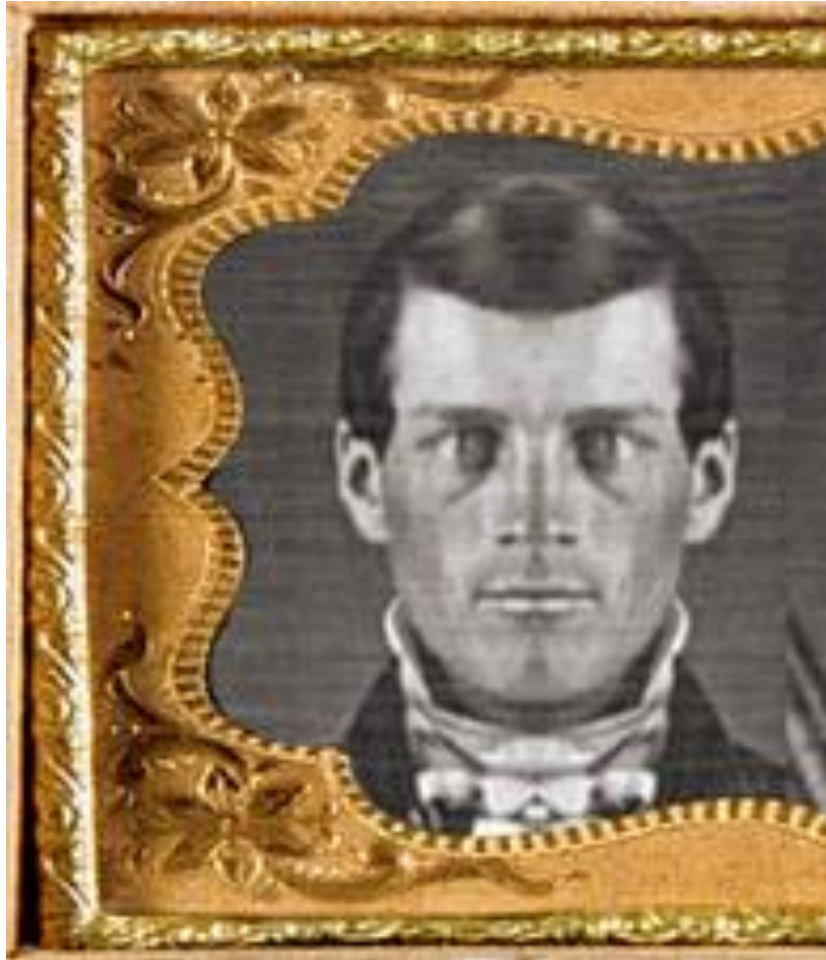
Our three brains

- 1) automatic brain
- 2) emotional brain
- 3) thinking brain

The History of Nick

- 1945, Fruita, Colorado
- Chicken dinner for grandma
- 18 months without a head!

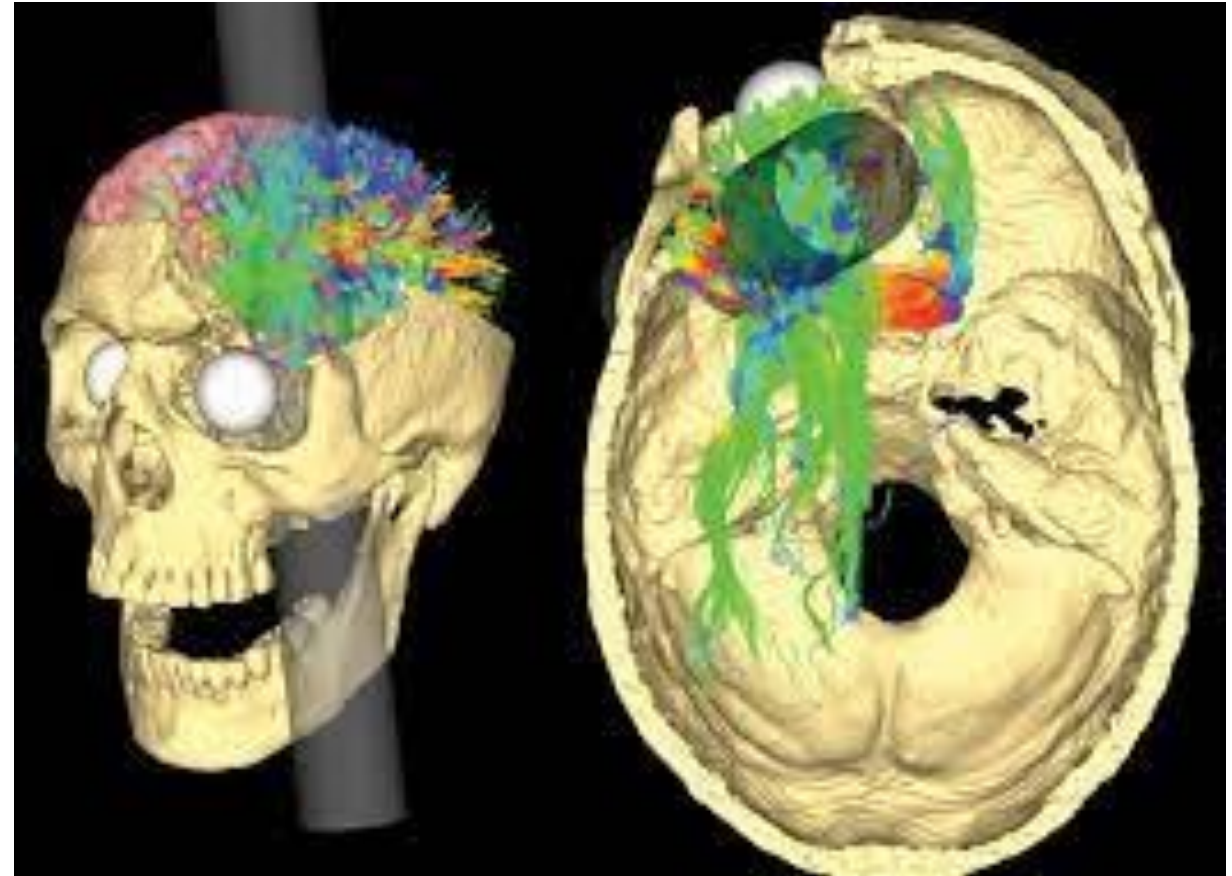
Phineas Gage



- The incident occurred in 1848 in Vermont
- Head of a blasting crew
- Polite, hard-working, did not drink, did not fight, organized, good time management and attention, good working memory
- *What changes do you think they noticed in Phineas afterwards?*

Phineas Gage After the Accident

- Rude
- Drinking
- Fighting
- Gambling
- Inappropriate language
- Late
- Distractable
- Poor organization
- Poor memory
- Lost his job



The President

- ▶ Frontal Lobe Functioning



- ▶ Attention
- ▶ Organization
- ▶ Working Memory
- ▶ Time Management
- ▶ Movement Control
- ▶ Impulse Control

Spectrum of Presidential Functioning



On average, the females are a year and a half to two years ahead in brain development

Where are you on the spectrum?

What do you think school is like for those who are different at a different place on the spectrum?

A Dopamine Highway

The President –
Executive Functioning

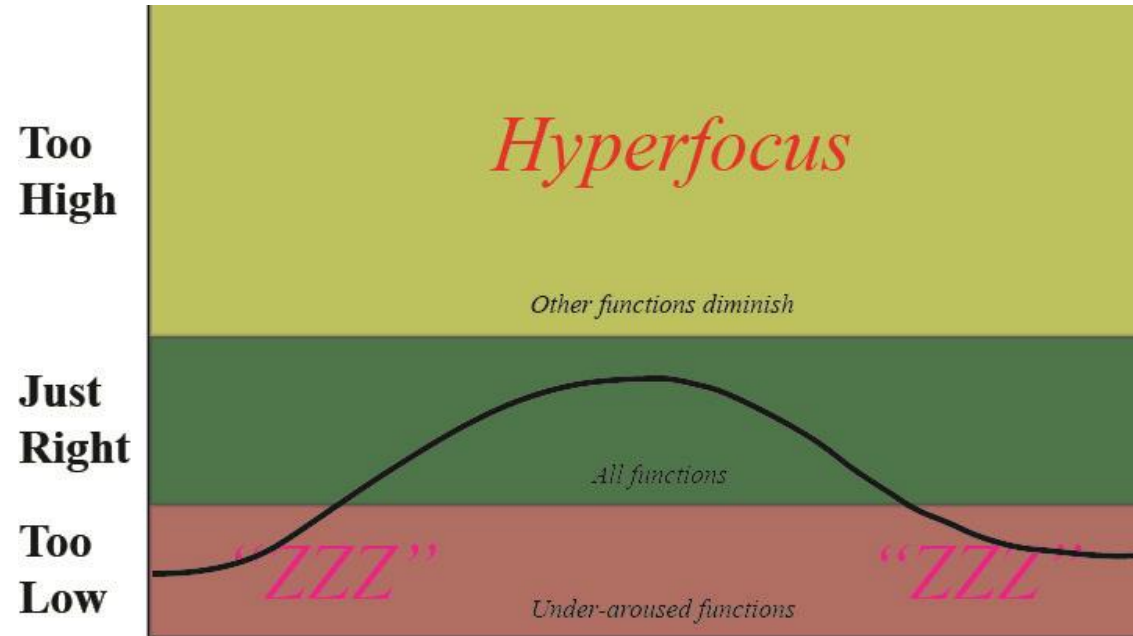
The Lymbic System –
Emotions and Pleasure



The Amygdala

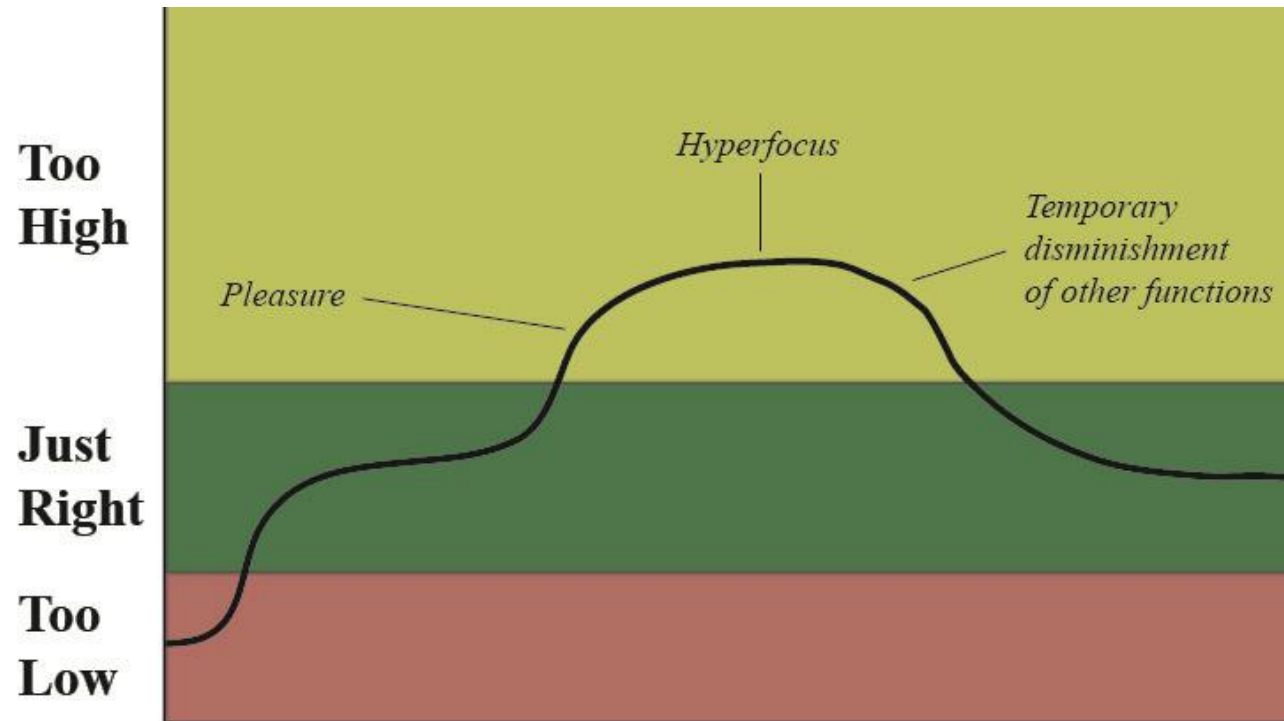
The Brain Stem
(Dopamine produced
In the mid-brain)

The Dopamine Sweet Spot



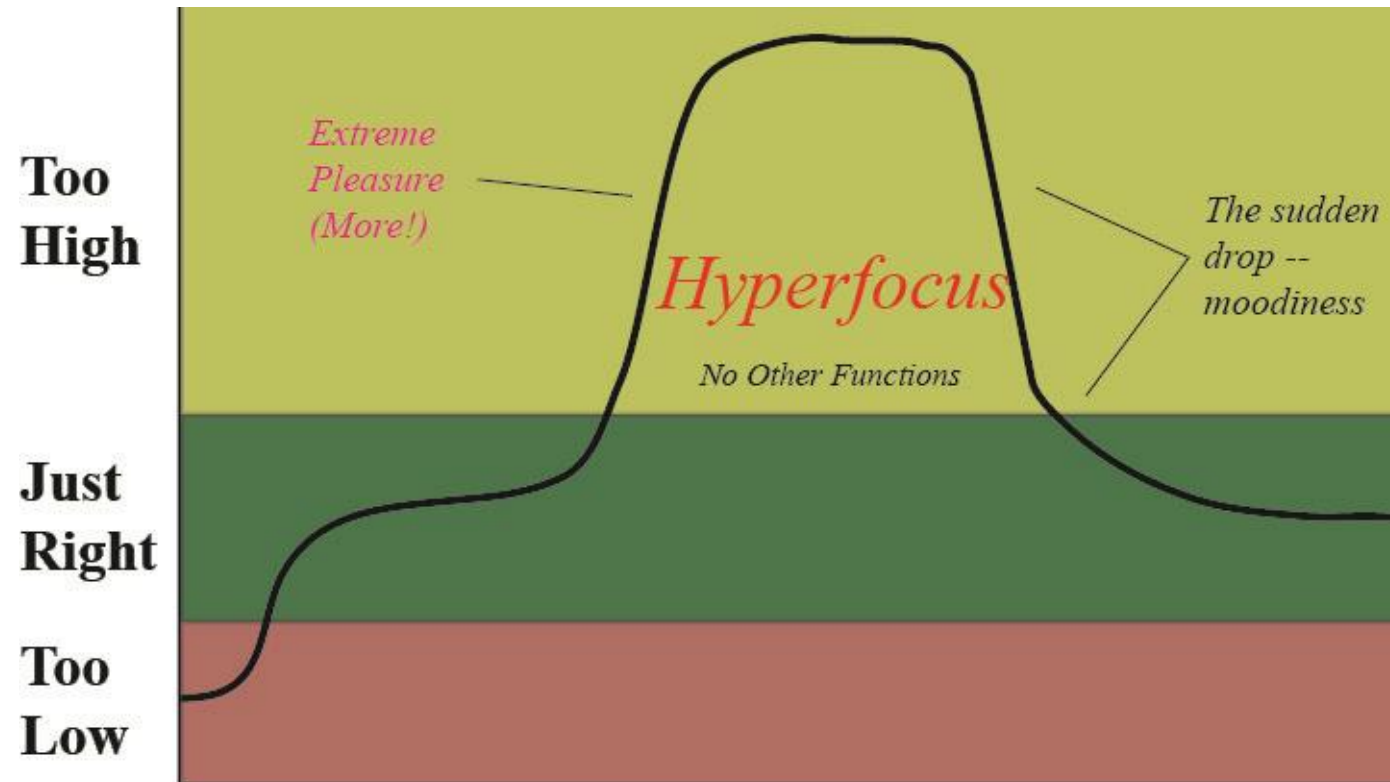
- ◆ Pleasurable activities naturally increase dopamine levels
 - ✦ “Do it again!”

Singlemindedness



What activity puts you into a slight hyper focused zone?

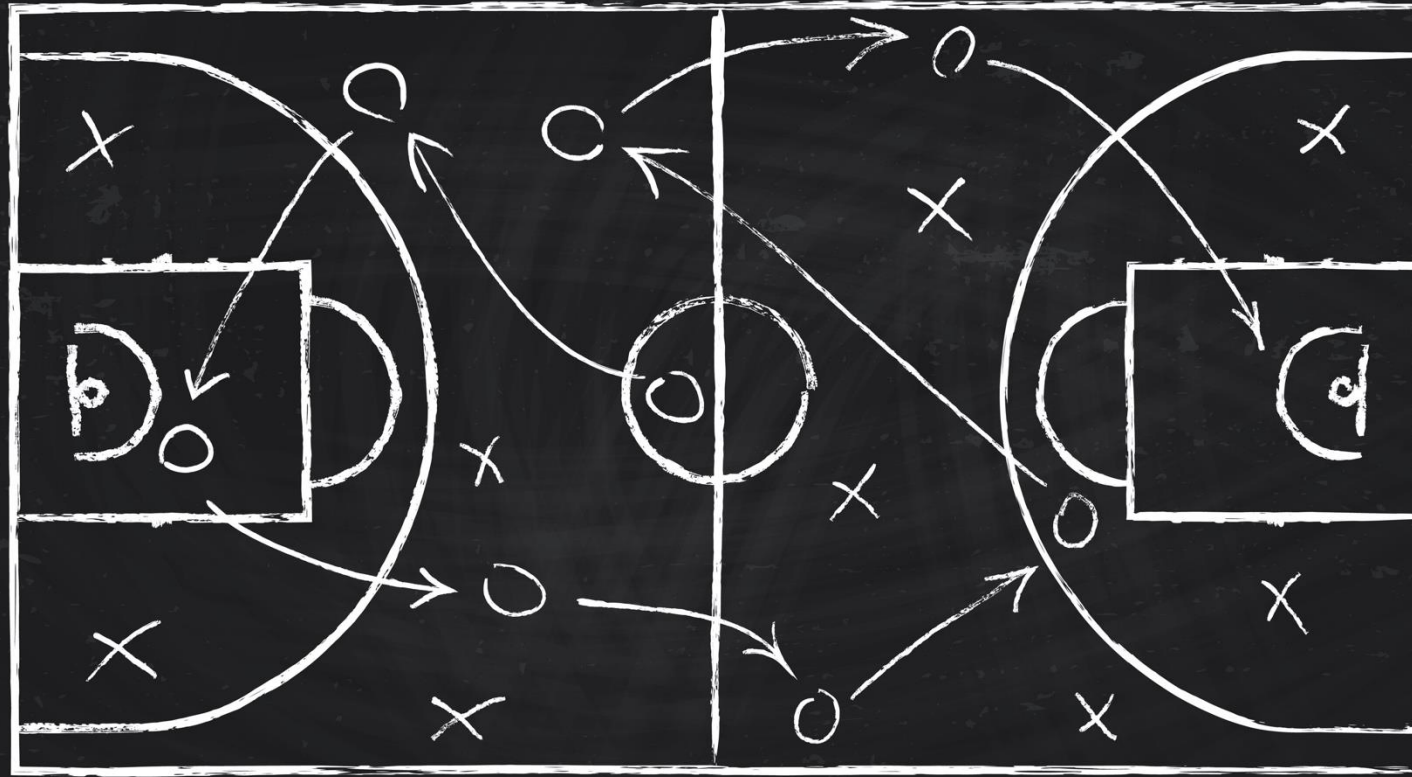
Extreme Hyperfocus



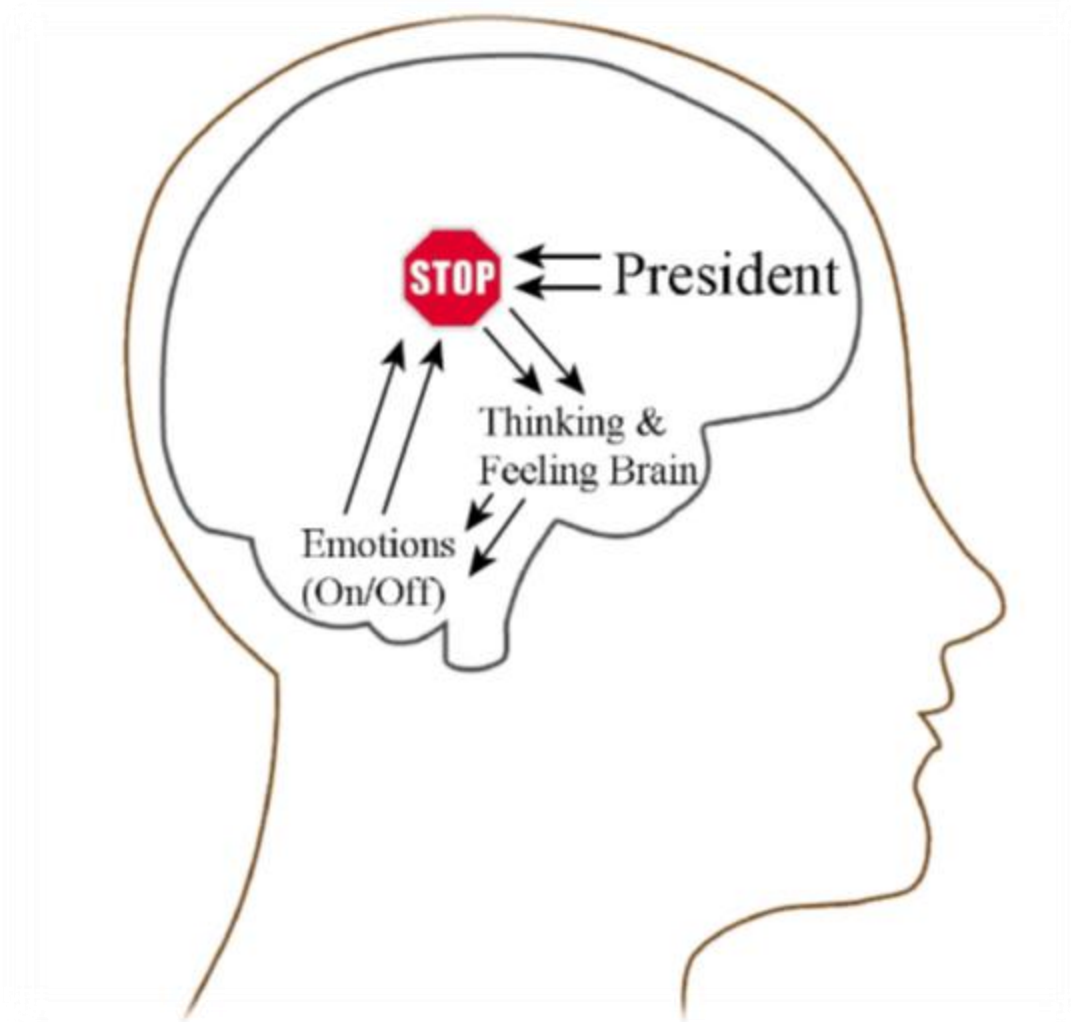
◆ “But I just started!”

What common activities puts students into an extreme hyper focused state?

How's Your Defense



Blending it Together: The Orbitofrontal Cortex



The Care and Feeding of the President

- Water
- Nutrition – complex carbs and protein
- Sleep
- Exercise
- Limited electronics
- Positive messages and appreciation of Presidential Functioning

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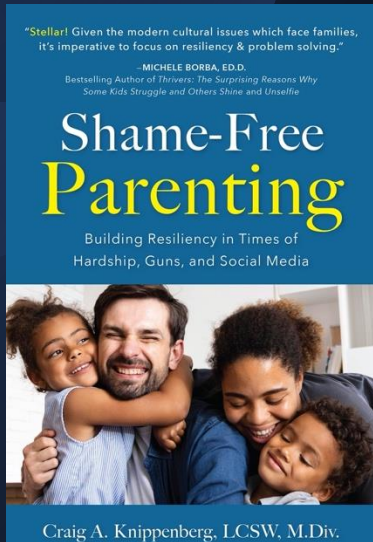
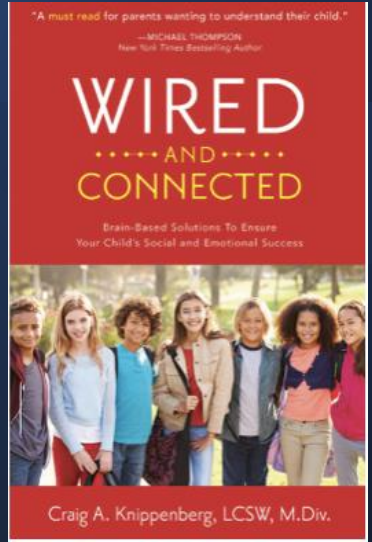
Author of:

Wired and Connected: Brain-Based Solutions To Ensure Your Child's Social and Emotional

Shame-Free Parenting: Building Resiliency in Times of Hardship, Guns, and Social Media

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Legit Parenting
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▶ Resume

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