



Education

## **Strategies for Success**

# **Techniques for Reducing Stress and Increasing Creativity**

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- Have you ever wondered why certain situations seem to “plug you in”? Have you ever said anything that you regretted? Are there situations at work or home that cause you to lose sleep, feel stressed or become irritable? During this session you will learn how the brain functions when confronted with rapid change, stressful situations or uncertainty. While our brain is a complex organism, you can learn simple techniques to access imaginative and creative resources to solve stressful situations or complex problems. These techniques allow you to immediately lower your blood pressure, heart rate and respiratory system. Knowing how your brainwave frequencies impacts your ability to multitask, become single point focused, creative and intuitive will assist you in every aspect of your life.
- This seminar will introduce you to the basic technology of the brain, brainwave pattern characteristics and how you can access deep levels of creativity to solve complicated issues and relieve stress.

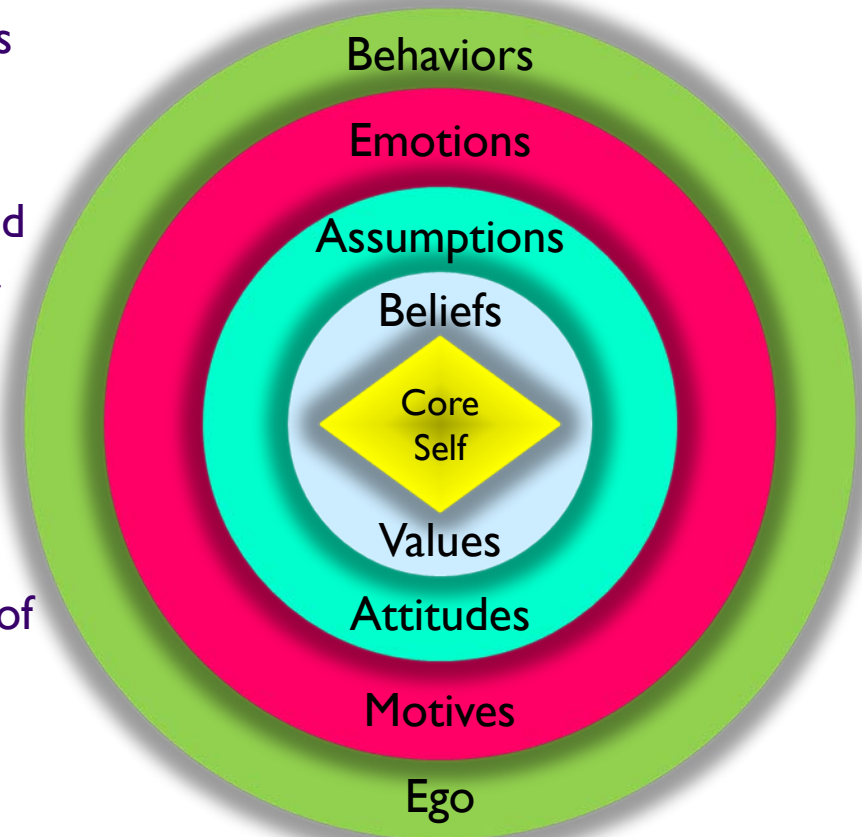
# You will learn how...

- We basically develop our individual psychological makeup
- Our filters affect our choices and how the length of our “choice gap” determines our response or reaction to life situations and events
- Different parts of the brain influences our decisions and choices
- Our brainwaves determine physiological changes in our body
- To manage stress through breathing and meditation
- Simple strategies can be used to make sound intelligent choices, increase your creativity and personal performance

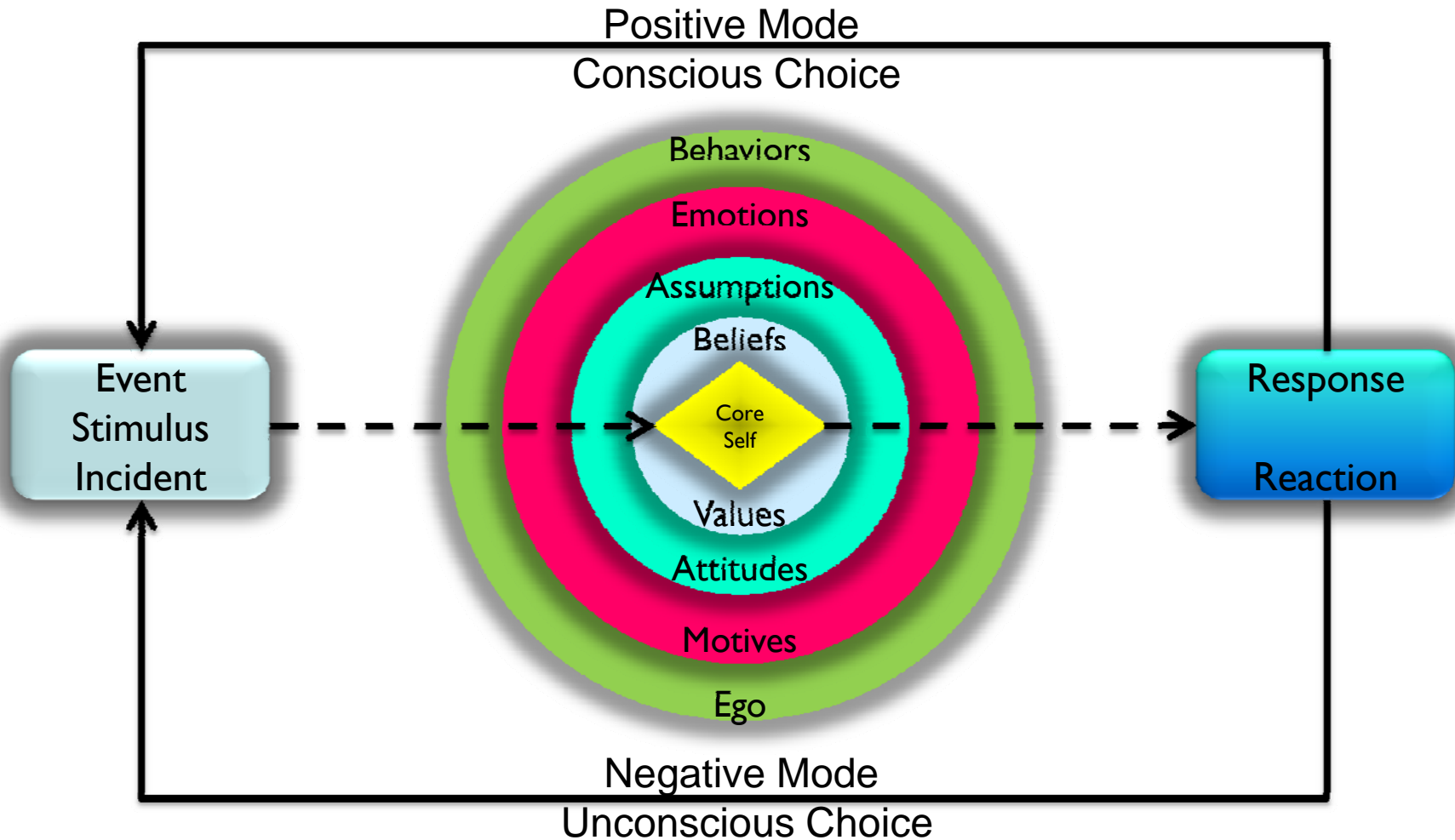


## ➤ Our individual psychological development

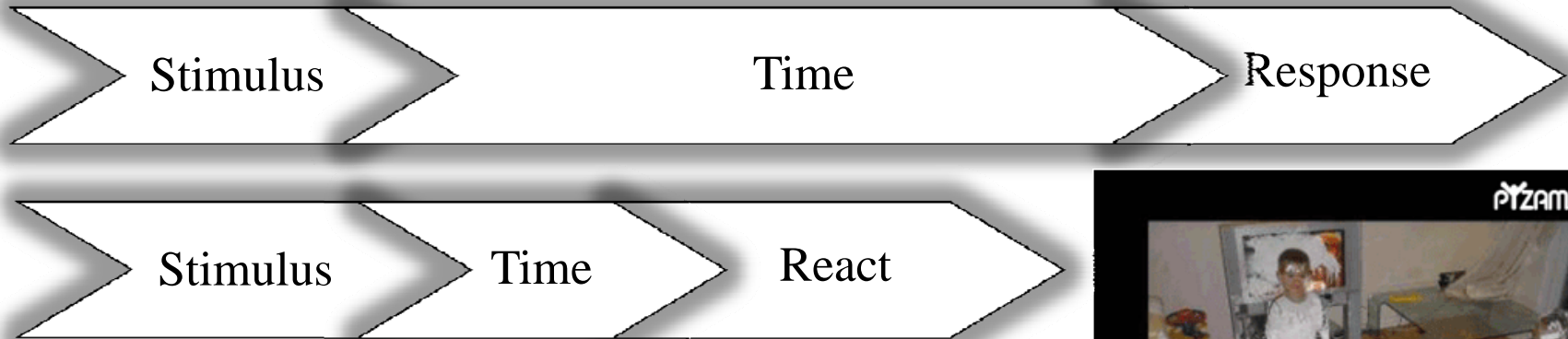
- ◆ Everything starts with our unconscious core self
- ◆ Belief system development based on experiences and exposure to the world
- ◆ Values developed by what we think or are taught is the “right way”
- ◆ Assumptions based on our belief system, values and experiences
- ◆ Attitudes reflect our disposition
- ◆ Emotional development or lack there of provides unpredictable element
- ◆ Motives – our agenda
- ◆ Behaviors as seen by others
- ◆ Ego made up of our exaggerated sense of self-importance



# Everyone has individual & unique filters...



# What determines the difference between responding and reacting?



## ➤ Time

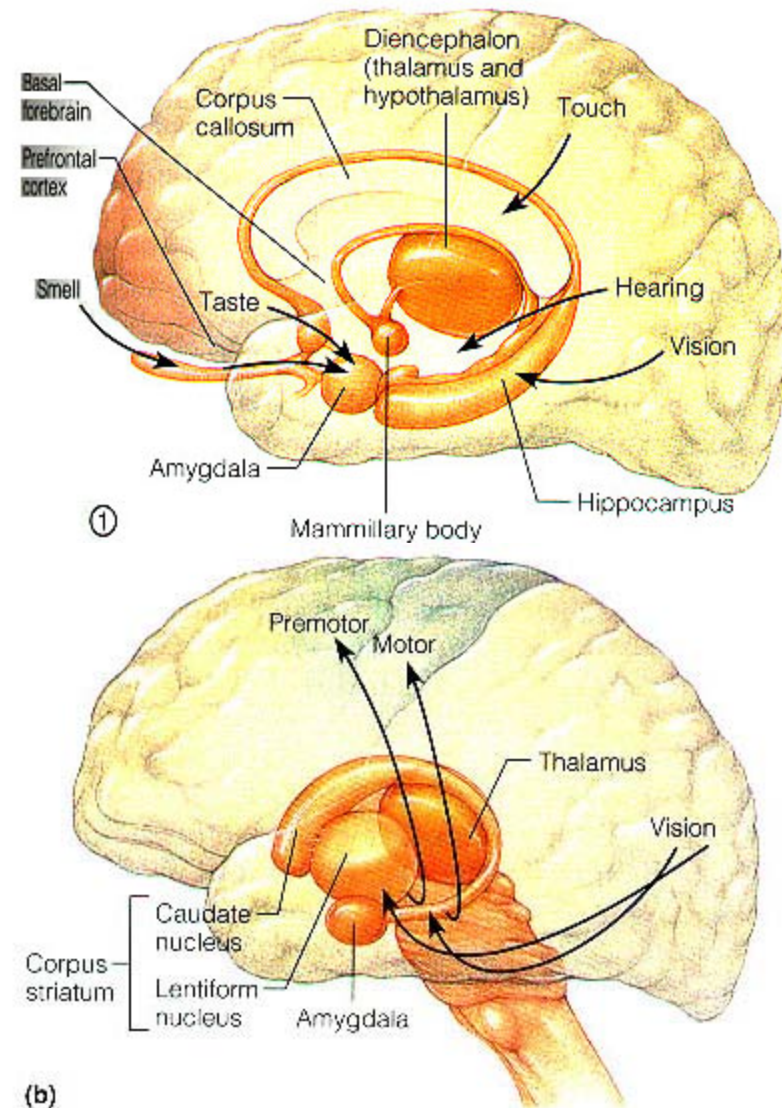
## ➤ Choice gap

- ◆ Size of choice gap determines whether you're in reaction or are being responding
- ◆ Determines which part of your brain is engaged
  - › Response -> Cerebral Cortex i.e. frontal lobes
  - › Reaction -> Amygdala



# Amygdala

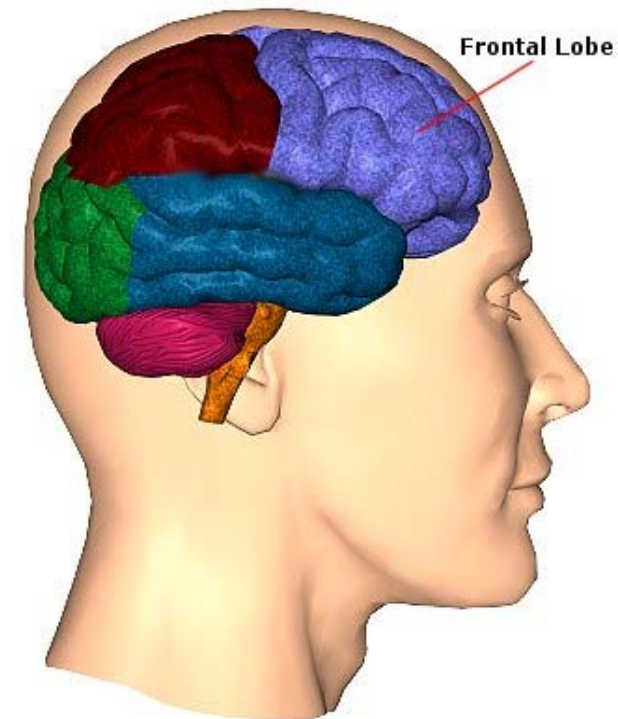
- The **amygdalæ**, singular **amygdala**, from Greek, *amygdalē*, 'almond', 'tonsil', listed in the Gray's Anatomy as the **nucleus amygdalæ**
  - ◆ almond-shaped groups of neurons located deep within the medial temporal lobes of the brain in complex vertebrates
- Stores painful and emotion-related memories
- Initiates memory storage in other brain regions based on emotional significance
- When engaged causes a fight, flight or freeze reaction





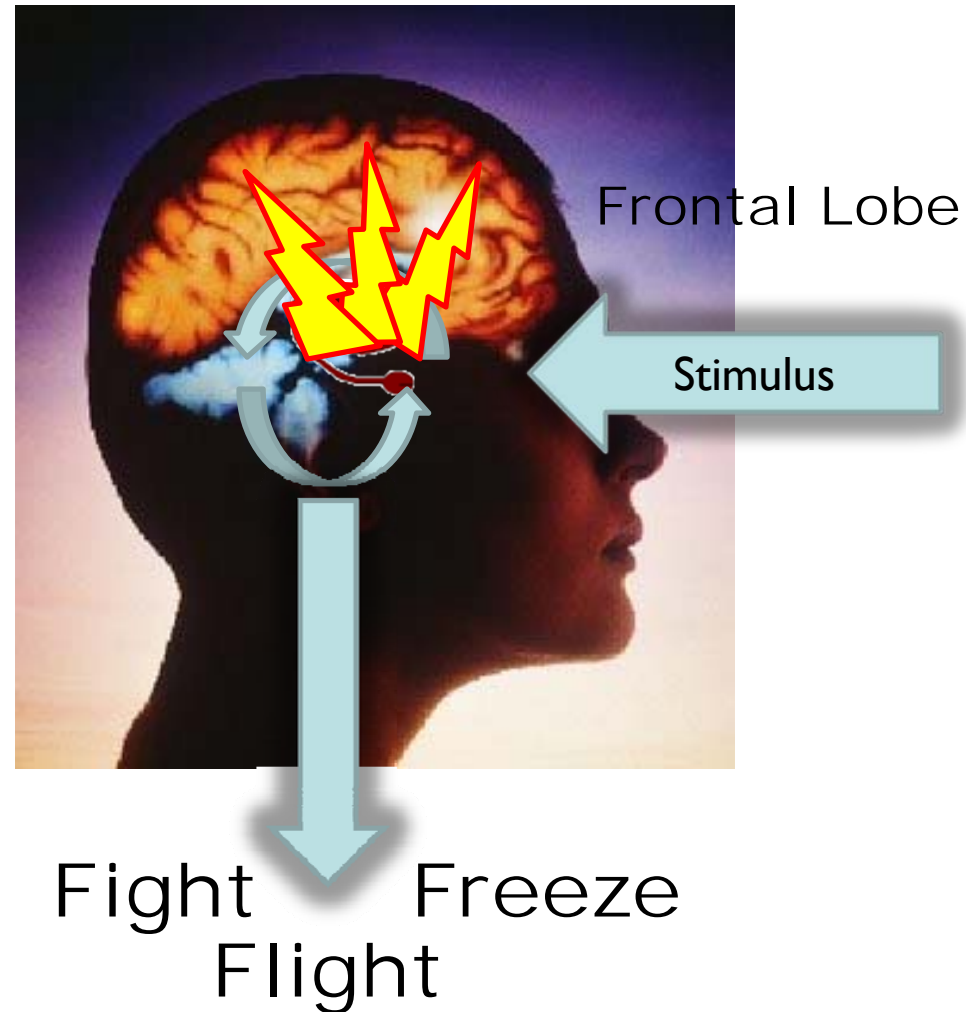
# Frontal lobes

- Our emotional control center and home to our personality
  - ◆ Involved in motor function, problem solving, spontaneity, memory, language, initiation, judgment, impulse control, and social and sexual behavior
- When our brain is “balanced”
  - ◆ We are able to weigh our options
  - ◆ Bring in our emotional reactions and use our intuition
  - ◆ Make sound choices based on good judgment and understanding of the consequences



# When the amygdala is engaged...

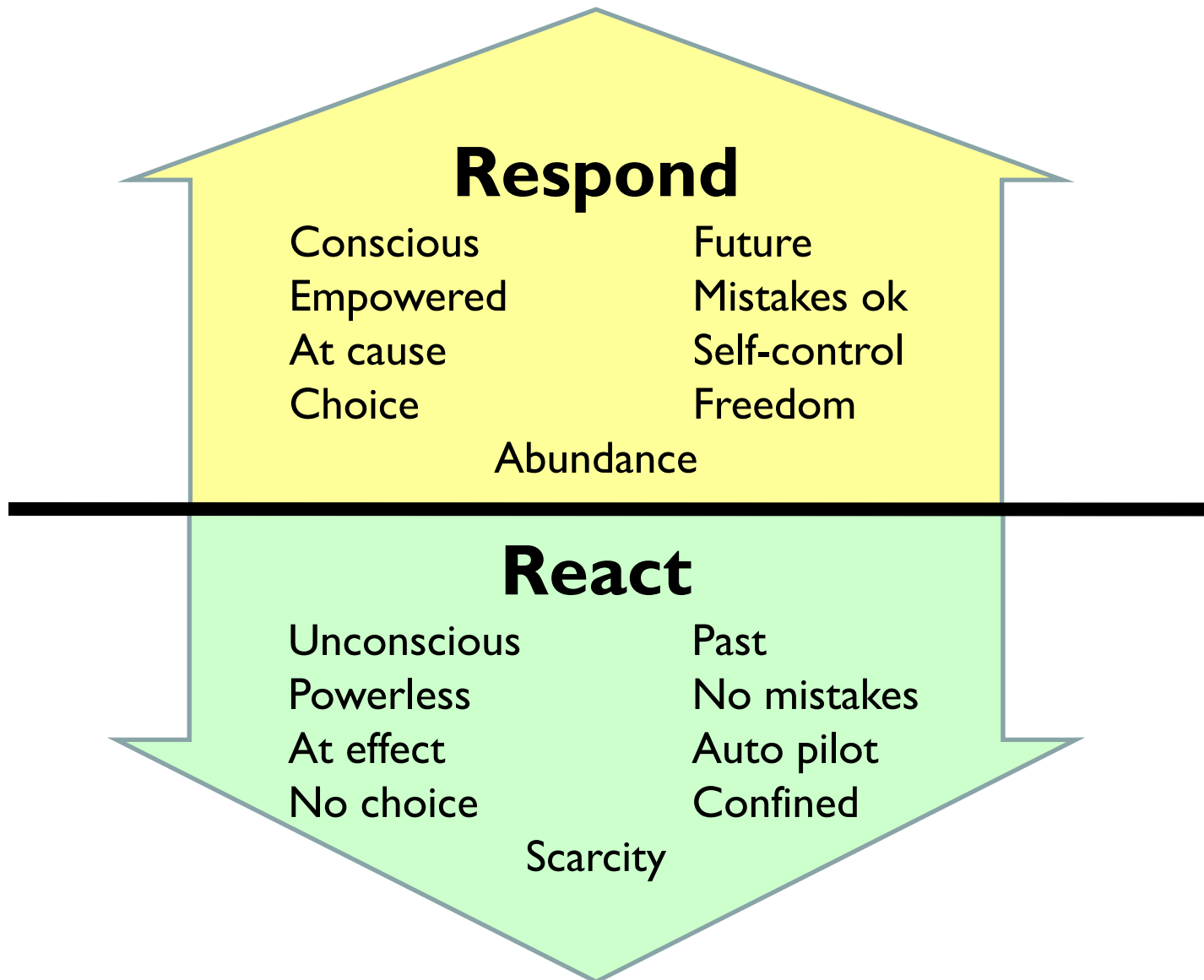
- Intense feelings takeover our Frontal Lobe
- Leads to impulsive reactions
- Poor judgment and decisions are made without planning and consideration of the consequences
- Causes a fight, flight or freeze reaction
- Triggers physiological reactions in our bodies
  - ◆ Speeds heart rate, raises blood pressure, freezes muscles, releases adrenaline



# Responsible choice...

- We are metaphoric icebergs...
  - ◆ 90% of the time we make are unconscious choices
  - ◆ Even the best of us are subject to going on auto pilot (reacting) and making choices based on our past
    - › Not the present circumstances
- Does not guarantee that we will always make great choices
  - ◆ It means we are responsible (accountable) for the choices we make
  - ◆ It means taking an empowered approach to the consequences of our choices verses “being a victim of circumstances”
- Is practicing responsible communication
  - ◆ Being respectful towards others
- Shows up in our actions and behaviors
- Requires the essential element of time which determines whether we make conscious or unconscious choices (STOP)

# Above the line or below the line...



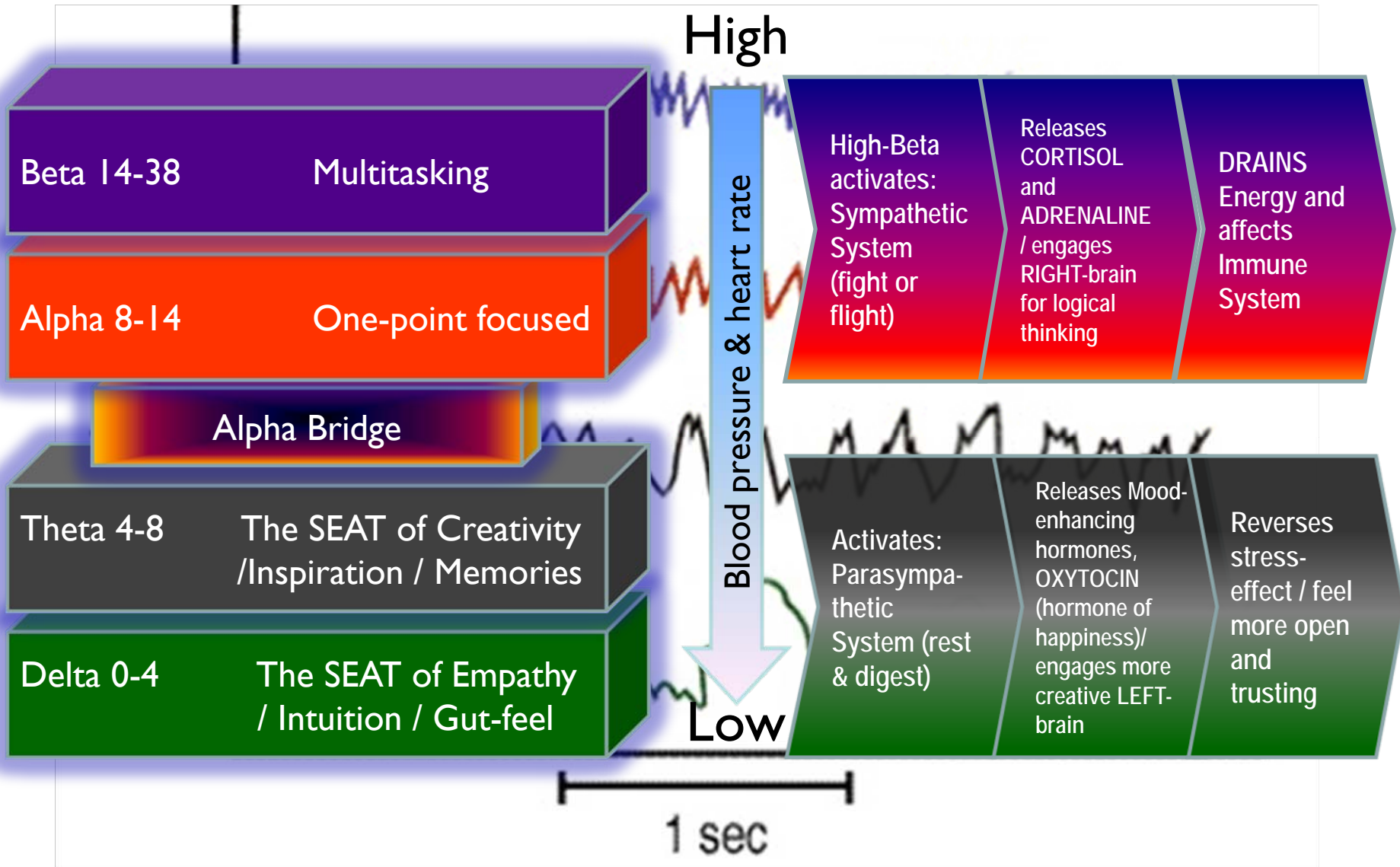
# Responsibility strategy...

- When you feel like reacting or are ticked off
  - ◆ STOP and count to 10
    - › It takes at least 10 to 12 seconds for the physiological effects of the amygdala to subside
- Breath
  - ◆ Take full deep breaths, hold, exhale and hold – do not sigh
- It helps to set a physical anchor
  - ◆ Pick a non-intrusive action that slows you down
    - › Tap your thumb and index finger together
    - › Touch you watch
    - › Twirl a ring
    - › Touch your heart

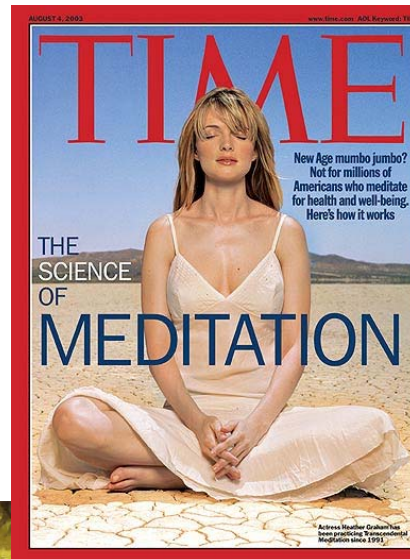
# Managing stress

- It all starts with our brainwaves
  - ◆ Faster brainwaves are used to multitask
  - ◆ Slower brainwaves allow us to access our creativity and intuition
  - ◆ You have to slow down to speed up
- Performance = Potential – Interference (T. Gallwey)
  - ◆ External interference: noise, other people
  - ◆ Internal interference: negative internal dialog, worrying
- Too much time is spent trying to minimize external interference
  - ◆ We can only manage our own internal resources

# Brainwaves are measured in Hz



# Meditation – what do you think of?





# Meditation encompasses a wide variety of techniques

Concentrative

- Meditative technique that directs the mind to a single focus, such as on the breath or a mantra

Mindfulness

- Teaches an even handed, accepting awareness of whatever arises in the senses

Movement

- Heightens awareness of the sensations of movement, such as in walking or Tai Chi

Visualization

- Generates a mental image, from simple crosses or complex symbols such as the elaborate mandalas of Tibetan Buddhism

Lovingkindness

- Cultivates a positive mood or beneficent outlook through the contemplation of such feelings as compassion for all people

Transformative

- Seeks solace or solution to specific problems by turning negative emotions into positive energies

# Meditation practice has many benefits

## Reduce stress

- Reduce blood pressure
- Lower heart rate
- Decrease psychological distress

## Improve health

- Has positive impact on healing of medical conditions such as psoriasis
- Prevents relapse/recurrence of major depression
- Boosts immune response, increasing antibodies after flu shot
- Helps manage chronic pain

## Heightened awareness

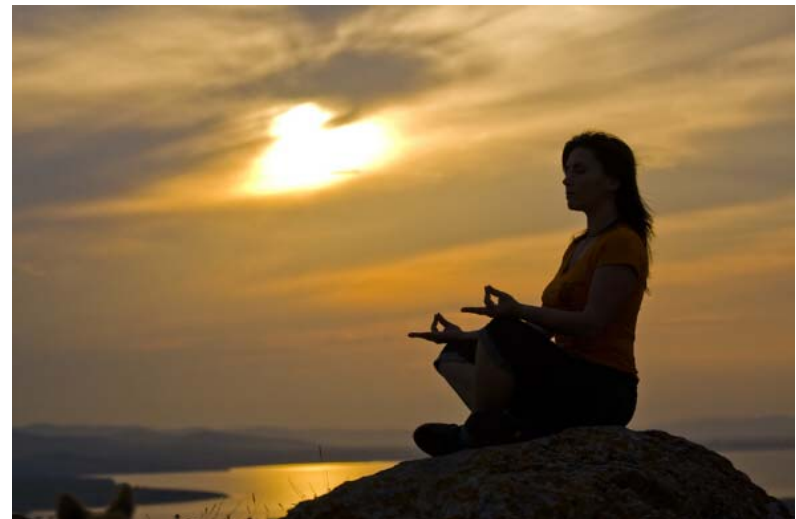
- Improve memory
- Increase learning skills
- Improve academic performance

## Positive affect

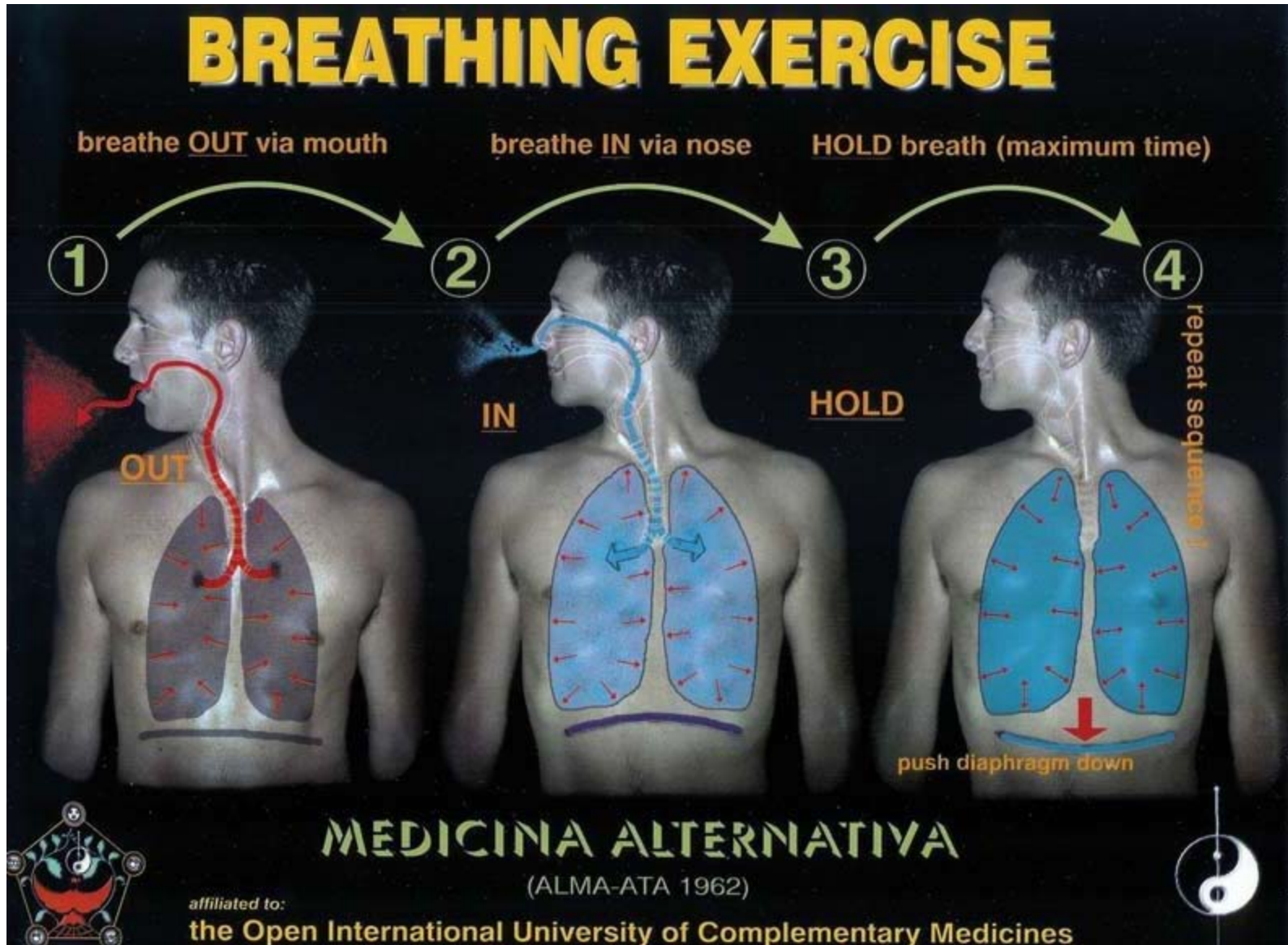
- Increase positive affect
- Increases adaptability
- Decreases frustration
- Increases in vigour and energy

## Impact on brainwaves

- Decrease in beta waves, associated with logical thinking, multitasking
- Increase in theta waves, associated with creativity
- Increase intensity of alpha waves, associated with single-pointed focus



# Breathing exercise



# Breathing rates

<b>Brainwave</b>	<b>Inhale</b>	<b>Hold</b>	<b>Exhale</b>	<b>Hold Out</b>
Beta (14Hz - 30Hz) Awake normal alert consciousness	1	0	1	0
Alpha (8Hz - 14Hz) Relaxed	4	8	8	4
Alpha Bridge Going down	8	8	8	4
Theta (4Hz - 8Hz) Deep relaxation	4	8	16	4
Delta (0.5Hz - 4Hz) Deep dreamless sleep	4	8	32	4

# Building Blocks For Meditation

- Sit in good posture
- Close eyes
- Relax body
- Focus on breath
- Move through any thoughts
- Visualize



- Start out small
  - ◆ Just sit quietly for 2-3 minutes
  - ◆ Sit someplace in nature – forest, stream, backyard
- Build a weekly practice
  - ◆ Meditate once a week
  - ◆ Again start out small – could be just 5 minutes
  - ◆ Don't get discouraged – meditating takes practice
- At work take 5 minutes to close your eyes and simply concentrate on your breathing
  - ◆ Do not suppress your thoughts – just let them come and then simply say “I will get to you when I'm done”

# Speaker information

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