

How to manage difficult and challenging conversations – using psychology, neuroscience, empathy and courage.

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Aim & Objectives

Aim:

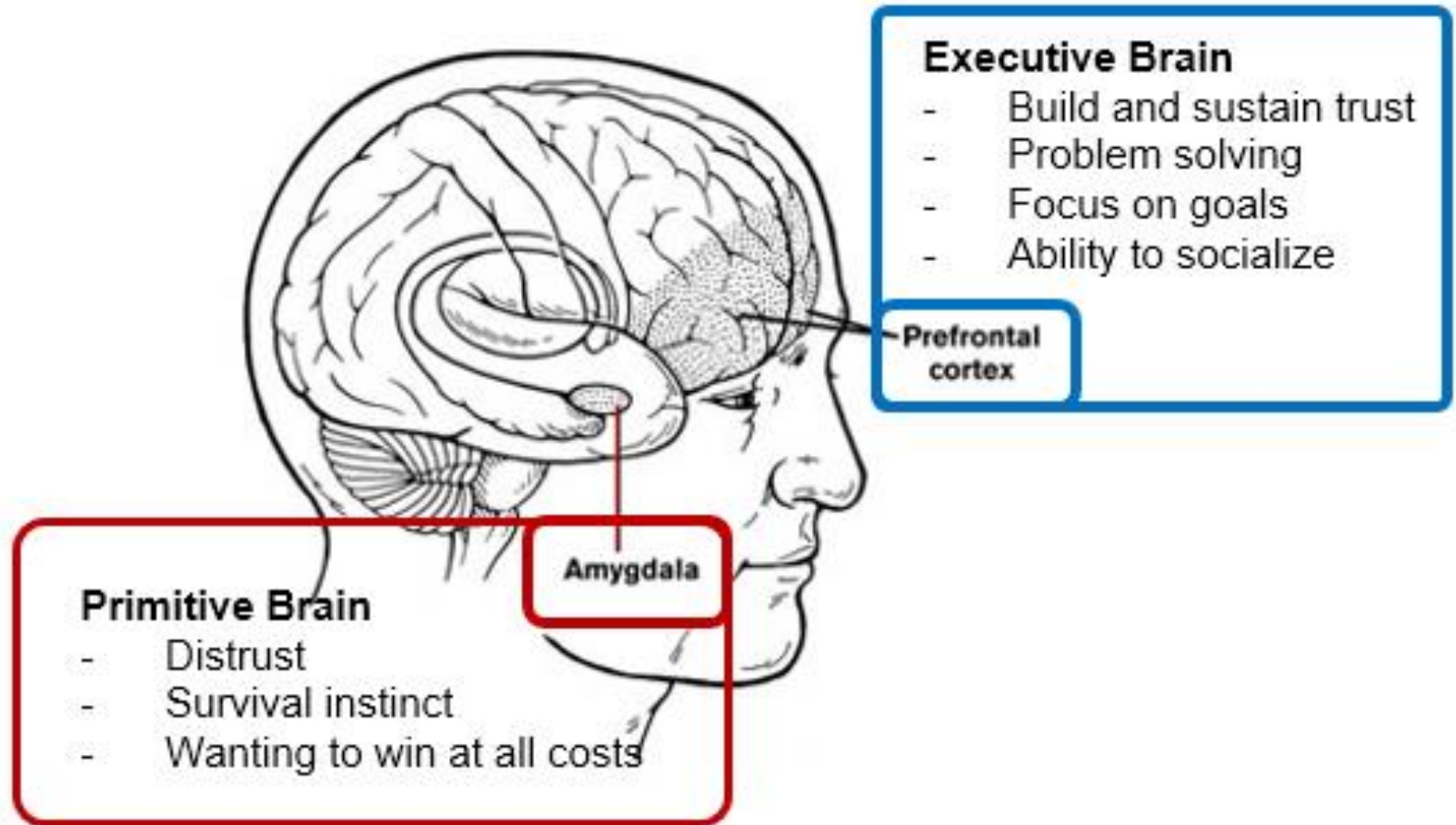
To increase knowledge, skills and confidence in having difficult conversations focusing on the emotional elements

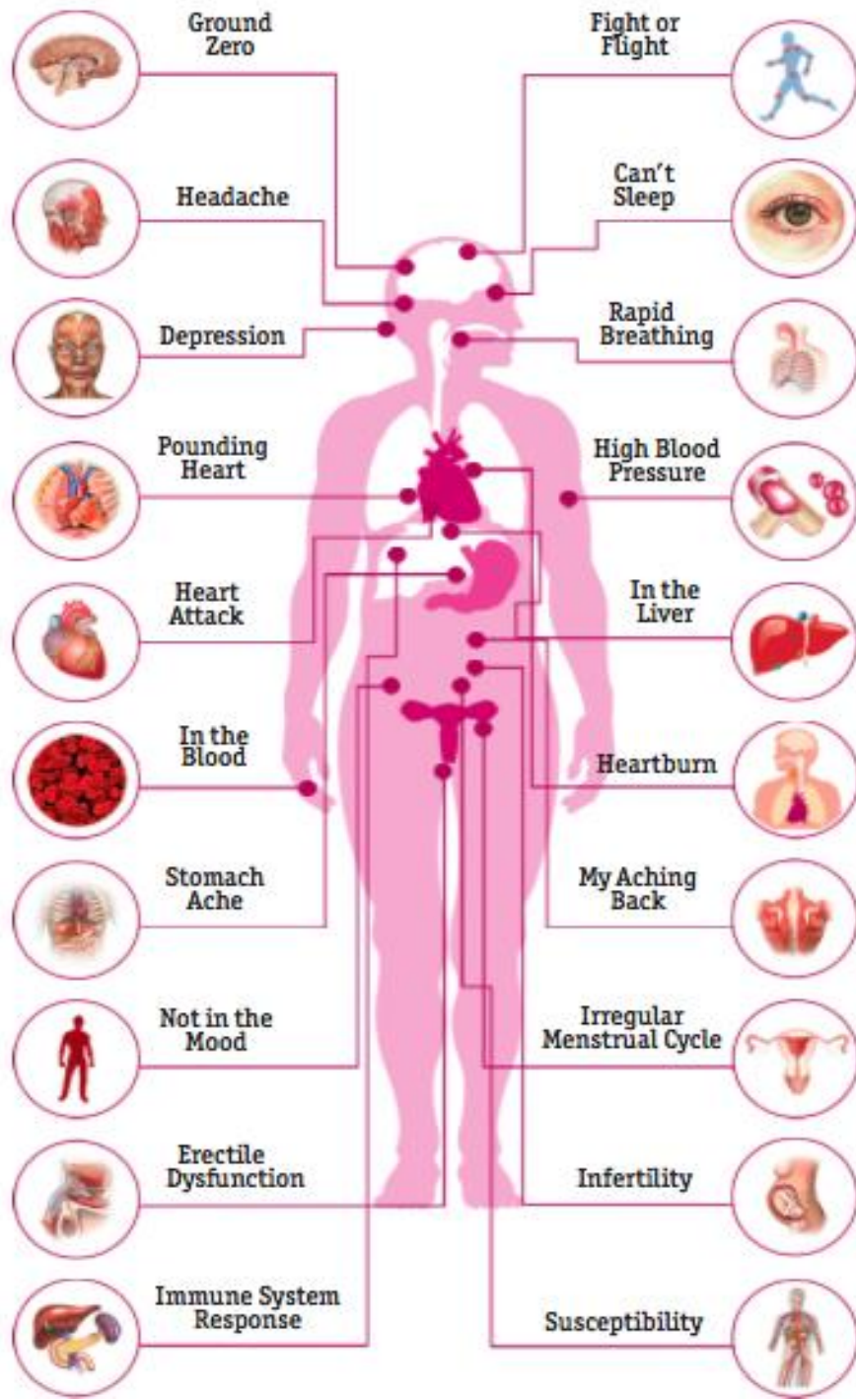
Objectives:

- To explore the science of emotion
- To explore how emotions can help and hinder difficult conversations
- To offer a model of communication that helps to maintain flow, focus and manage emotions

**What do you love
about your job?**

Understanding the emotions





Bodily response to emotional situations

How do we think and feel when we are emotionally stressed

?

'No-one can help me'

'There is no way out'

'I am the only person with this problem'

'It's all my fault'

'It's everybody else's fault'

'If only I had done things differently'

'Everyone will judge me'

'I am stupid'

'I am alone'

'I can't talk to anyone about it'

Worried

Lost

Sad

Anxious

Distressed

Out of Control

Overwhelmed

Numb

Furious

Confused

Frightened

Rage

Irritated

Upset

Shock

Angry

Inability to concentrate

Irritability with colleagues

Exaggeration of everyday stresses

Blowing things out of proportion

Withdrawal from colleagues

Explosions of anger

Crying

Rapid changes of emotion

'I am right, everyone else is wrong'

'It has to be done my way'

'I can get away this'

'I am not like anyone else – I am special'

'I am ultimately powerful'

'I will win at all costs'

'I have to tell everybody'

'No one cares'

Bodily preparation

Positive, calming mantra

Relax your body
(don't clench)

Talk about it,
Prepare words

Breathe Deeply (5,3,7)

Positive Self Talk

Y Position

Hydrate

Move/ Walk

Mindfulness

Straighten Posture

Discussion in small groups

Imagine a scenario in your workplace where you have to have a challenging and/or emotional conversation?

- **What is your role?**
- **Why are you needing to have the conversation?**
- **Are you the right person to be having the conversation?**
- **How is your emotional state likely to be, before the start?**
- **How will you calm your internal state?**
- **What is the other person's emotional state likely to be at this time?**
- **How is the other person likely to respond?**
- **What assumptions are you making about the situation?**
- **Are your expectations realistic?**
- **How would like the conversation to end?**
- **Are you prepared to compromise?**
- **Can you afford to compromise?**

Direct difficult messages

- . **FACTS** - What has happened?
- . **FEELINGS** – Articulate the range of emotions likely to be felt
- . **FUTURE** – What is going to happen, what are the expectations?

Difficult conversations

Begin – find a protected, safe space,
Role – describe what you are doing and why it is you
Articulate – explain your concern and how you see the situation



Listen – to the response, verbal and non verbal
Paraphrase – the main messages to check understanding
Explain – be clear about what you would like to happen
Manage the emotion – expect disagreement, anger and resistance
Focus on movement – re-iterate why you are having the conversation and what will happen moving forward



Summarise – if required, to round up the main points
End – articulate the next steps and agree the plan

How to begin?

I have something I'd like to discuss with you that I think will help us work together more effectively.

I'd like to talk to you about, but first I'd like to get your point of view.

I need your help withcould we talk about it?

I need your help with what just happened, do you have a few minutes to talk?

I think we have different perceptions (understanding/expectations) on this, I'd like to hear your thoughts.

I'd like to talk about I think we may have different views/ideas/understanding.

I'd like to see if we might reach a better understanding about.....I'd really like to hear your views.

It's hard work

RATE yourself

Rest and refresh. (Hydrate, eat, exercise, sleep, have fun.)

Acknowledge the impact of the work you have been doing and assess whether you have enough training and support.

Take whatever action is required to ensure you feel safe and you are feeling well.

Evaluate what you have learned. (Evaluate your skills, and what went well, and not so well. Would you do anything different next time?)