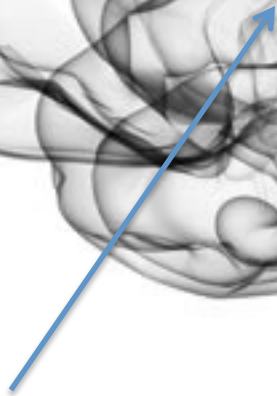


# THE TRIUNE BRAIN: ONE BRAIN, THREE MINDS

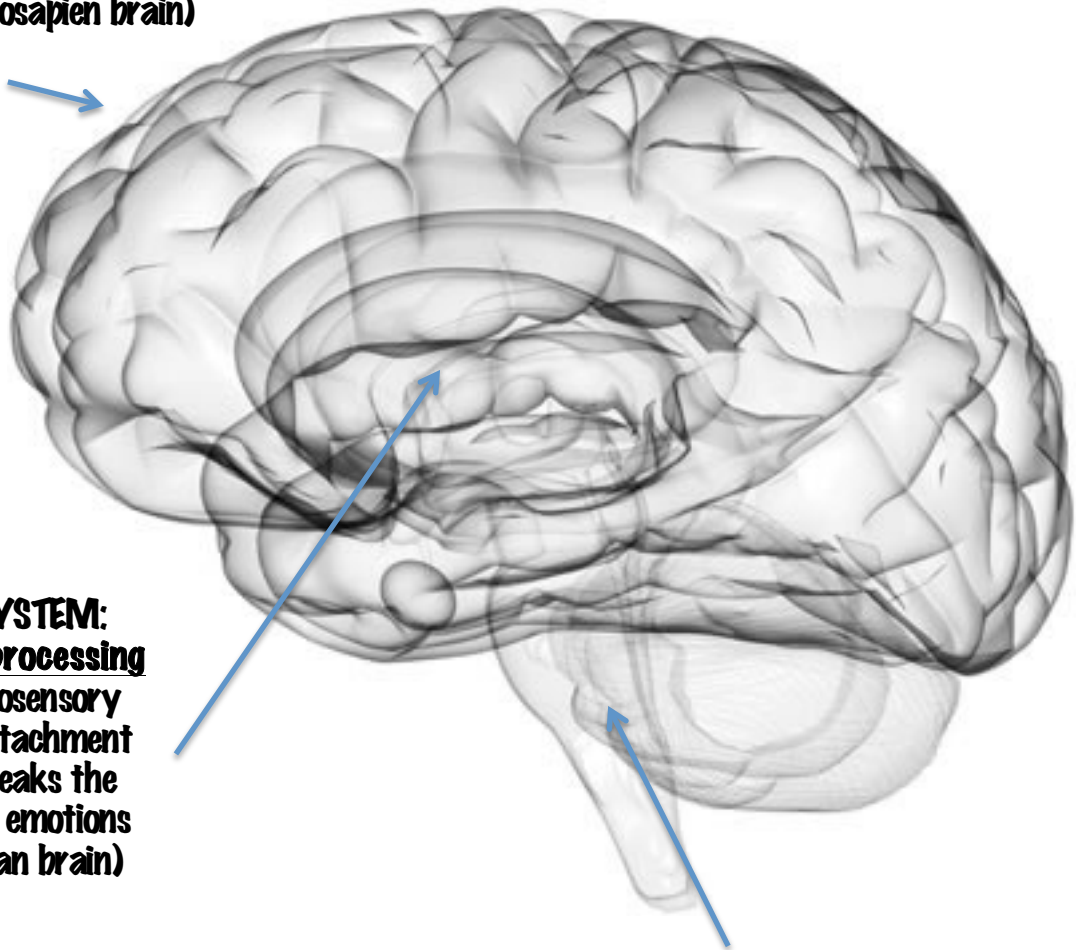
**FRONTAL CORTEX:** cognitive processing & executive functions, regulatory ability, language, analytical reasoning, information processing, meaning making, decisions (homosapien brain)



**LIMBIC SYSTEM:** emotional processing and somatosensory memory, attachment system, speaks the language of emotions (Mammalian brain)

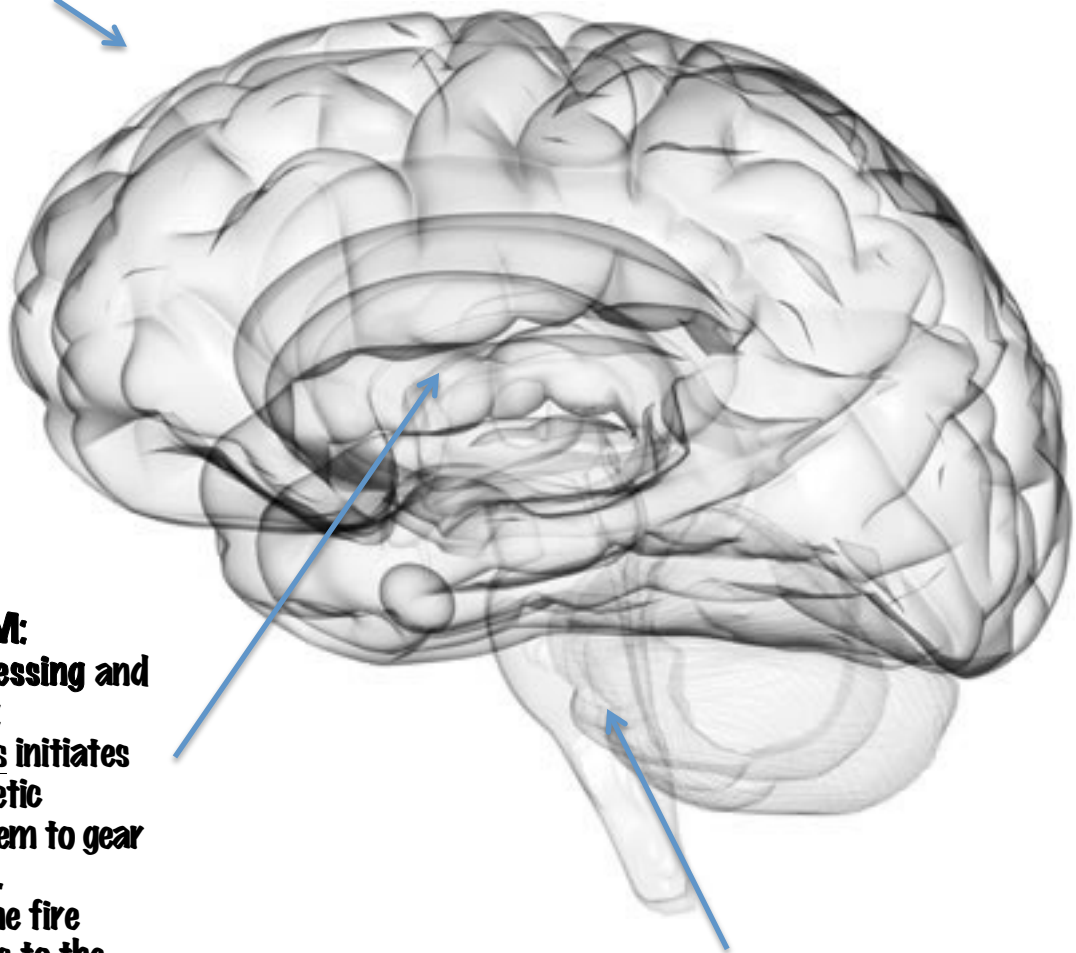


**BRAIN STEM:** sensorimotor processing, autonomic activation, instinctive responses, uses the language of impulse and sensation Processes of the body, physiological sequences, defensive responses (Reptilian brain)



# WHAT HAPPENS TO THE BRAIN DURING TRAUMA?

**FRONTAL CORTEX:**  
cognitive processing,  
meaning making & decisions  
shut down or decrease  
activity to give way to more  
instinctual responses



**LIMBIC SYSTEM:**  
emotional processing and  
sensory memory:

1. Hypothalamus initiates the Sympathetic Nervous System to gear up to respond
2. Amygdala “the fire alarm” signals to the Sympathetic Nervous System to respond
3. Hippocampus is inhibited & doesn't organise memory into something that is autobiographical

**BRAIN STEM:** sensorimotor processing, instinctive responses, & body impulses react to the threat with fight, flight, freeze, dorsal vagal shut down. We have no ‘logical’, thinking choice in how we will react to the threat. Because this part of the brain tries to protect us from traumatic threats, it is this part of the brain that must be focused on within counselling, to re-trace our steps and ‘re-set’ the brain to how it was before the traumatic experience. That is why we focus on the body in sensorimotor counselling.