

BREAKING THE CYCLE: FROM STRESS AND REACTIVITY TO CLARITY AND CONFIDENCE

© 2026 Bill Crawford, Ph.D.



**STRENGTH
IN
UNITY**



**SCR 2026
ANNUAL
CONFERENCE**



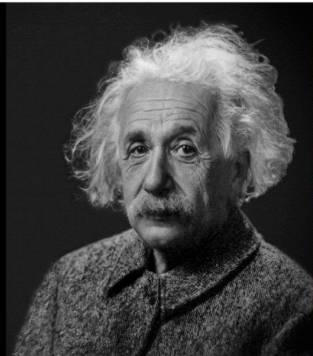
Real Life!

**Problem
Triggers?**

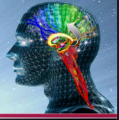
**Problem
Reactions?**

*"Problems cannot
be solved at the
same level of
awareness that
created them."*

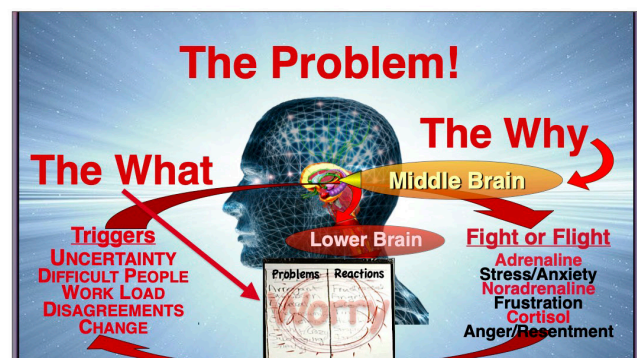
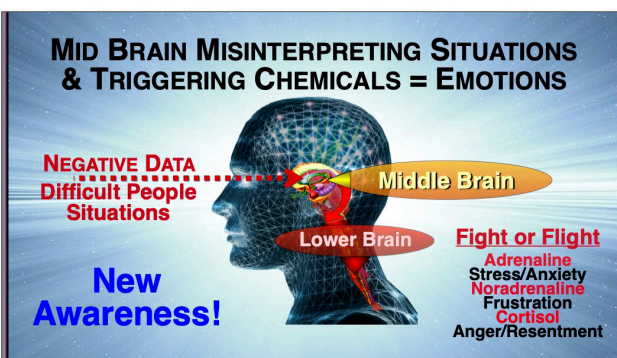
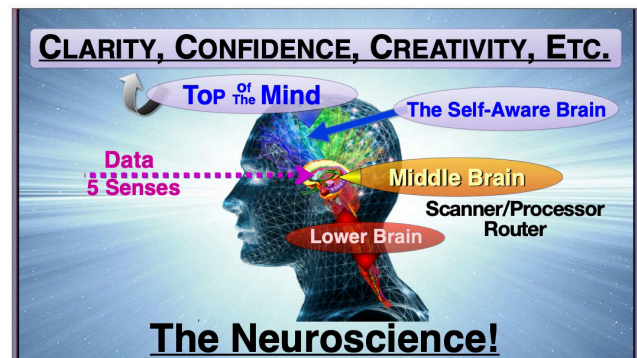
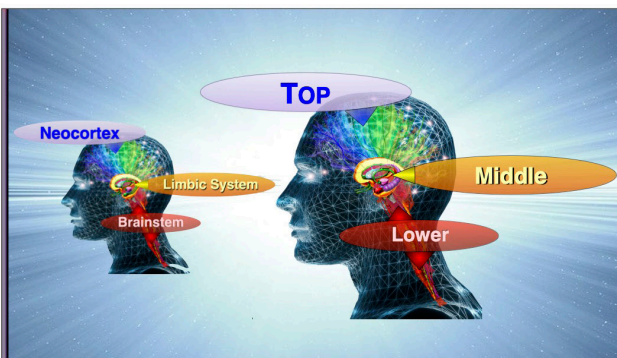
Albert Einstein

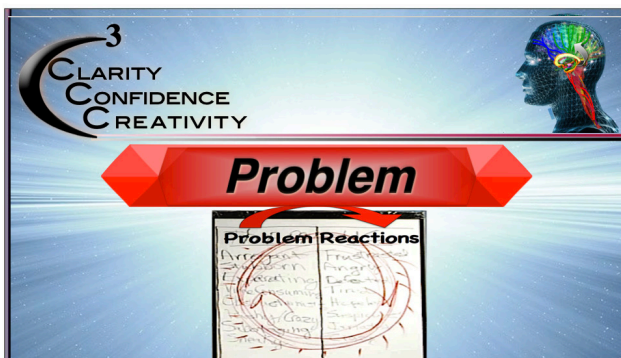
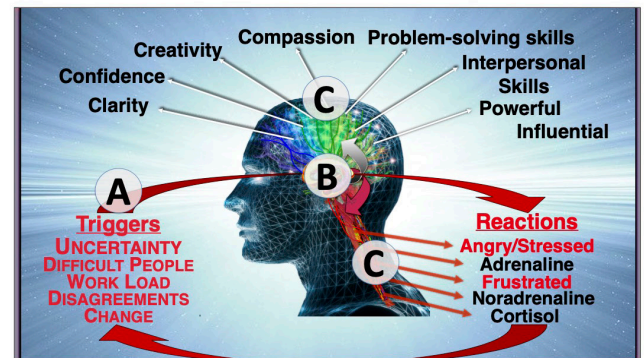
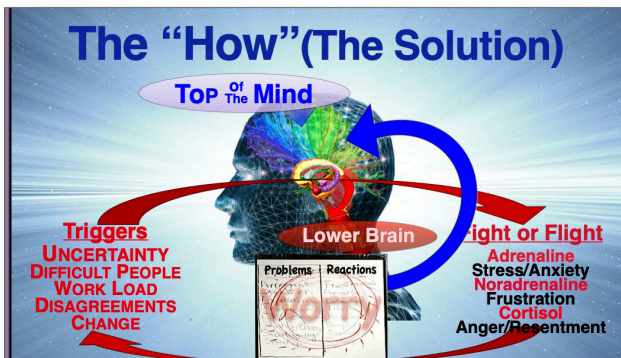


Four Essentials of Effective Decision Making & Influence

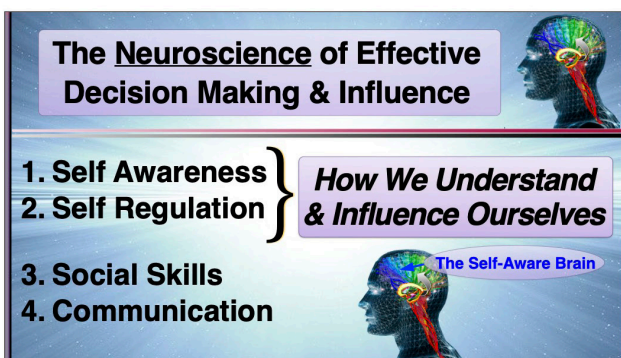


- | | | |
|-------------------------|---|--|
| 1. Self Awareness | } | <i>How We Understand
& Influence Ourselves</i> |
| 2. Self Regulation | | |
| 3. Social Skills | } | <i>How We Understand
& Influence Others</i> |
| 4. Communication Skills | | |





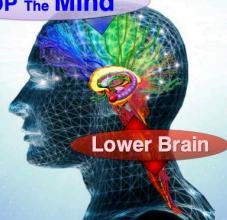
"Never tie your peace of mind to another person's state of mind!"





Solution!
Regain Control!

Top of The Mind



How?
Breathe – 5 by 5 or 4-4-4
Relax – On the exhale

Top of The Mind

Problem:
Doesn't Break
The Cycle!



Why?

Solution!
Harness the Power of Questions
The “Search Engine” For The Brain!

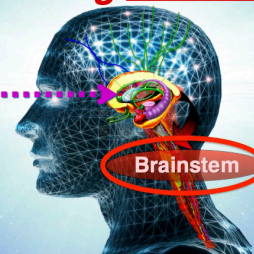
Top of The Mind

Questions!



Problem!
We Are Asking BS Questions!

Questions!



Breathe – 5 by 5 or 4-4-4
Relax – On the exhale
Ask– Top of The Mind Questions

Top of The Mind

Solution!



Top of The Mind Questions

- 1 Was this thought, emotion, or action chosen on purpose?
- 2 How's it working for me?
- 3 Is this the way I want to be defined?

***Are We Defining Who We Are?
Or... Are We Being Defined
By The Difficult People
And Situations We
Encounter?***

***When We Say
“ _____ Makes Me _____ ”
We are giving the difficult
people & situations in
our lives the power
to define us!***

Solution!

***We Define Ourselves
From the Purposeful, Powerful
Part of the Brain!***

Training Film!



The 4 Criteria

- 1 Purposeful - Chosen on Purpose**
- 2 Effective - Produces + Results**
- 3 Defines Me - The way I want to be Defined**
- 4 What I would recommend to someone I love/lead!**

***Breathe – 5 by 5 or 4-4-4
Relax – On the exhale
Ask– Top ^{of} The Mind Questions***

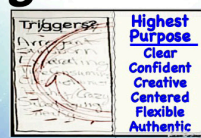
Top ^{of} The Mind



- Purposeful?
- Effective?
- Defines Me?
- Teach/Recommend?

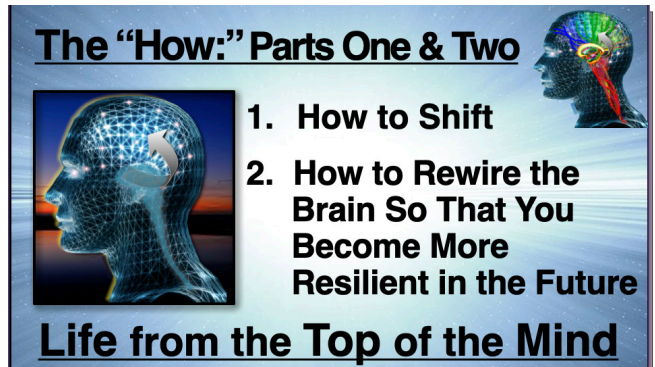
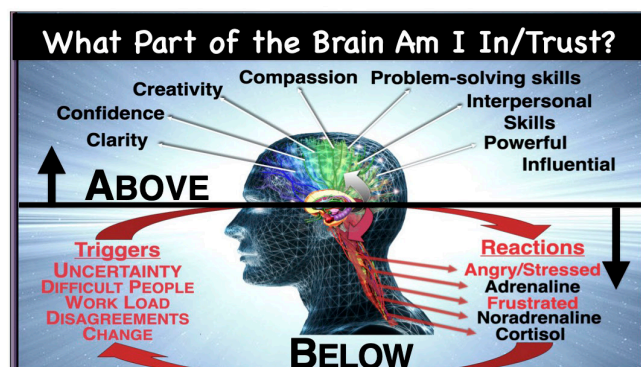
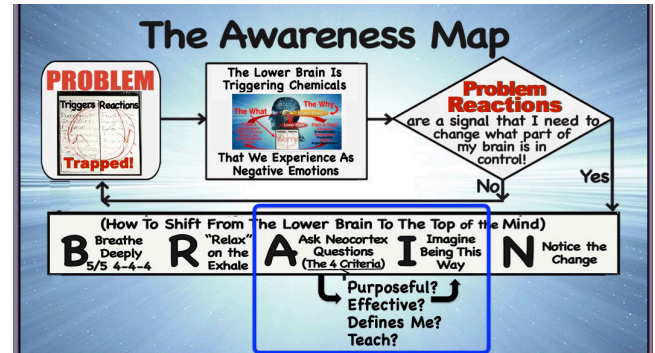
***Breathe – 5 by 5 or 4-4-4
Relax – On the exhale
Ask– Top ^{of} The Mind Questions
Imagine – Being this way***

Top ^{of} The Mind





Breathe – 5 by 5 or 4-4-4
Relax – On the exhale
Ask – Top of The Mind Questions
Imagine – Being this way
Notice – The Change
The BRAIN Model





Make it Important Enough to Practice

HIGHEST PURPOSE	PRACTICE FIELD	VALUABLE SIGNAL
CLEAR CONFIDENT EMPATHETIC CREATIVE CURIOUS WISE PATIENT PURPOSEFUL INFLUENTIAL AUTHENTIC RESILIENT	DIFFICULT PEOPLE UNCERTAINTY NEG. EMAIL/TXT BAD DRIVERS TRAFFIC/LATE MISTAKES LACK/RESOURCES POLITICS/GOV. KIDS/FAMILY	STRESSED FRUSTRATED ANGRY SELF-DOUBT ANNOYED SHUT DOWN OVERWHELMED DEPRESSED ANXIOUS WORRIED

“Stress is a signal that something needs to change. Suffering . . . is when we don’t make the change.”

Creating New Neural Pathways

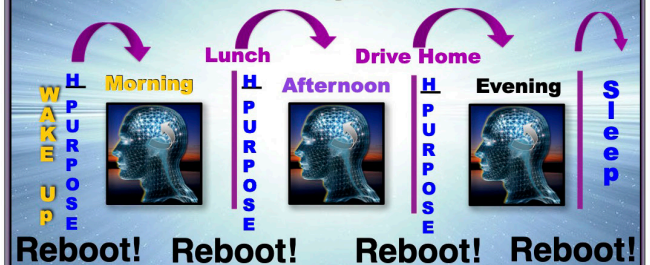
Life As A Practice Field

Where We Choose Responses In a Way That Meet The 4 Criteria

- Purposeful
- Effective
- Defines Me
- Teach



Divide the Day Into Thirds



The LTM System - Part II

(How To Rewire The Brain & Live In The Top of the Mind)

✓ Every thought, emotion, & action defines who we are!





I hope that you have enjoyed learning this new information on accessing your clarity, confidence, and creativity by influencing how your brain processes information. I encourage you to give some thought as to how this could also improve the decision-making and productivity in your organization if everyone was coming from the “Top of the Mind.”

If you would like more information on my presentations, unique fee policy (that I call “Integrity-Based Pricing”), and/or availability, feel free to contact me at the phone number or email address below. Or, simply scan the QR code which will take you to my website.



(DrBill@BillCrawfordPhD.com • 832-722-6147 • 1-888-530-8550 • BillCrawfordPhD.com)

References

- Allen, D. (2015). *Getting Things Done. The Art of Stress-Free Productivity*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Brown, Brene (2018). *Dare to Lead: Brave Work. Tough Conversations. Whole Hearts*. New York: Random House.
- Covey, S.R. (2015). *The 7 Habits of Highly Effective People: Powerful Lessons In Personal Change*. New York: Franklin-Covey.
- Ellis, A, and Harper, R. (1975). *A New Guide to Rational Living*. Hollywood, CA: Wilshire Books.
- Fields, R.D. (2015). *Why We Snap: Understanding the Rage Circuit In Your Brain*. New York: Dutton.
- Forbes, C.E. & Grafman, J. (2010). The Role of the Human Prefrontal Cortex in Social Cognition and Moral Judgement. *Annual Review of Neuroscience*, (33), 299-234.
- Goleman, Daniel. (1995). *Emotional Intelligence: Why It Can Matter More Than I.Q.* New York: Bantam Books.
- Grabiell, A.M. (2008). Habits, Rituals, and the Evaluative Brain. *Annual Review of Neuroscience*, (31), 359-387.
- Krangelbach, M.L. (2011). The Hedonic Brain: A Functional Neuroanatomy of Human Pleasure. In: Krangelbach, M.L. et al. *Pleasures of the Brain*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Krangelbach, M.L. et al. *Pleasures of the Brain*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- McKay, M., Davis, M. and Fanning, P. (2011). *Thoughts and Feelings: Taking Control of Your Moods and Your Life*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Press.
- Ornstein, Robert. (1995) *The Roots of the Self: Unraveling the Mystery of Who We Are*. New York: Harper Collins.
- Porges, Stephen W. (2017). *The Pocket Guide to The Polyvagal Theory: The Transformative Power of Feeling Safe*. New York: W.W. Norton and Company
- Pittman, C.M. and Karle, E.M. (2015). *Rewire Your Anxious Brain: How to Use the Neuroscience of Fear to End Anxiety, Panic, and Worry*. Oakland, CA: New Harbinger Press.
- Scott, Susan. (2017). *Fierce Conversations: Achieving Success at Work and In Life, One Conversation at Time*. Third Edition. New York: New American Library
- Seligman, Martin. (1998). *Learned Optimism*. New York: Pocket Books.
- Senge, P., Kleiner, A., Roberts, C., Ross, R. and Smith, B. (1994). *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization*. New York: Doubleday
- Van Der Kolk, M.D., Bessel. (2014). *The Body Keeps the Score: Brain, Mind, and Body in the Healing of Trauma*. New York: Penguin Books.
- Wehrenberg, M. (2008). *The 10 Best-ever Anxiety Management Techniques: Understanding How Your Brain Makes You Anxious and What You Can Do to Change It*. New York: Norton.