

THE FOUNDATIONS OF WELL-BEING

The Mindfulness Pillar

***The Lizard, the Mouse,
and the Monkey***

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TOPICS

A framework for developing the inner strengths that will help you the most

Summary of brain evolution

Our three core needs, managed through three brain systems

How to develop an increasingly unconditional sense of peace, contentment, and love

2

BIOLOGICAL EVOLUTION

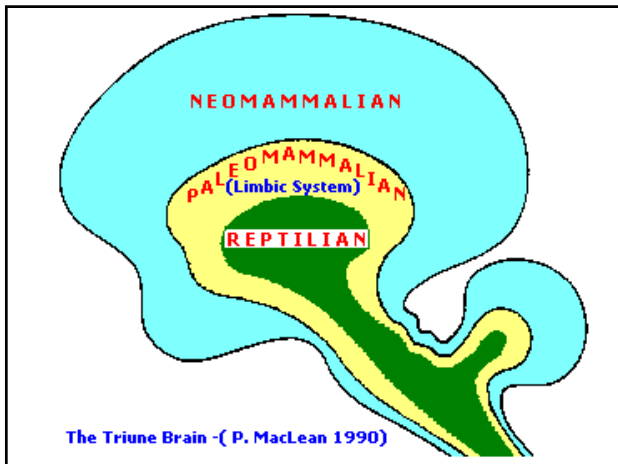
- 4+ billion years of earth
- 3.5 billion years of life
- 650 million years of multi-celled organisms
- 600 million years of nervous system
- 200 million years of mammals
- 60 million years of primates
- 6 million years ago: ancestor with chimpanzees
- 2.5 million years of tool-manufacturing
- 150,000 years of *homo sapiens*

3

WHAT A LONG STRANGE TRIP IT'S BEEN.

THE NERVOUS SYSTEM HAS BEEN
EVOLVING FOR ABOUT 6,000,000
HUMAN LIFESPANS.

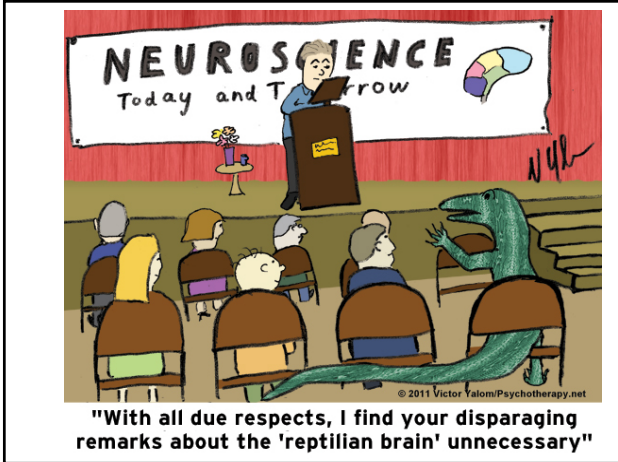
4



THREE STAGES OF BRAIN EVOLUTION

- **Reptilian**
Brainstem, cerebellum, hypothalamus, basal ganglia
Reflexive, rapid responses
- **Mammalian**
Amygdala, hippocampus, cingulate, early cortex
Sustained pursuit, memory, emotion, social behavior
- **Primate, especially human**
Massive cerebral cortex
Conceptualizing, language, empathy, cooperation,
shame, compassion, love

6



OUR THREE FUNDAMENTAL NEEDS

Safety

Satisfaction

Connection

8

NEEDS MANAGED BY THREE SYSTEMS

Safety – Avoiding harms

Satisfaction – Approaching rewards

Connection – Attaching to others

9

THREE MOTIVATIONAL, REGULATORY SYSTEMS

- **Avoid Harms:**
Predators, natural hazards, aggression, pain
Primary need, tends to trump all others
- **Approach Rewards:**
Food, shelter, mating, pleasure
- **Attach to Others:**
Bonding, altruism, jealousy, loyalty, friendship
Taps older Avoiding, Approaching systems
Each system draws on the other two for its ends.¹⁰

PET THE LIZARD



11

FEED THE MOUSE



12

HUG THE MONKEY



WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO MEET OUR CORE NEEDS?

14

TYPES OF RESOURCE EXPERIENCES

Avoiding Harms

- Feeling basically alright right now
- Feeling protected, strong, safe, at peace
- The sense that awareness itself is untroubled

15

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Approaching Rewards

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- Feeling pleased, glad, grateful, successful, satisfied

16

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Attaching to Others

- Feeling basically connected
- Feeling included, seen, liked, appreciated, loved
- Feeling compassionate, kind, generous, loving

17

**WHAT ARE THE RESULTS
OF TAKING IN THESE
RESOURCE EXPERIENCES?**

18

PEACE

CONTENTMENT

LOVE

19

**PRACTICE OF PEACE, CONTENTMENT,
LOVE**

Noticing you're alright right now. Protected.
Strong. Letting go of guarding, fear, resisting.
Relaxed. Safe. Tranquil. Peace.

Noticing the fullness of this moment. Gratitude.
Gladness. Accomplishments. Letting go of
frustration, grasping. Satisfied. Contentment.

Noticing already related. Cared about. Friendly,
compassionate. Letting go of hurts, inadequacy,
heartache, clinging. Connected. Love.

20

*Love every leaf. Love the
animals, love the plants,
love everything.*

Fyoder Dostoyevsky

21
