

Reflective Mind and Reactive Brain/Body Model

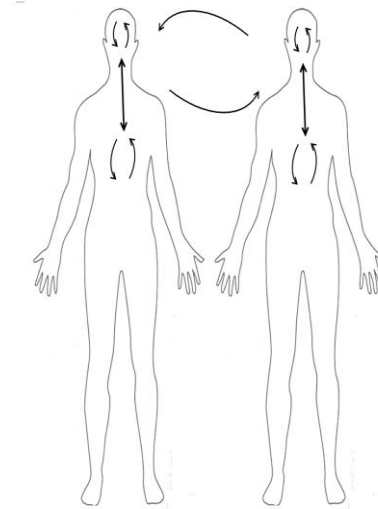
Module Goals

This module provides you with:

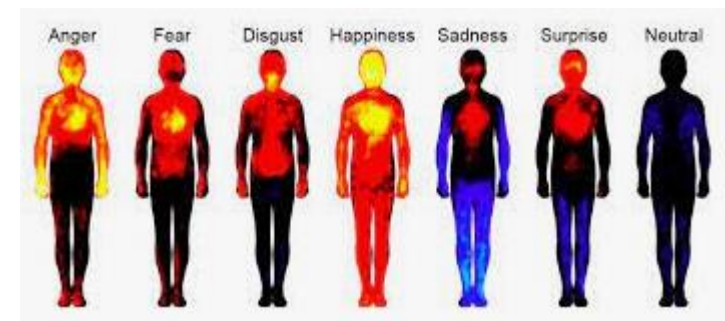
- Background on why the Reflective Mind and Reactive Brain/Body Model was developed.
- How it is being used.
- What outcomes are typically experienced through the use of the model.

Ultimately this module should provide enough information for you to determine if and how the model might be of use to you personally and/or your work with clients.

Other resources connected with this module are listed on the launch page on the website including a short document written by a client who found the model to be a useful resource in their work to overcome abuse.



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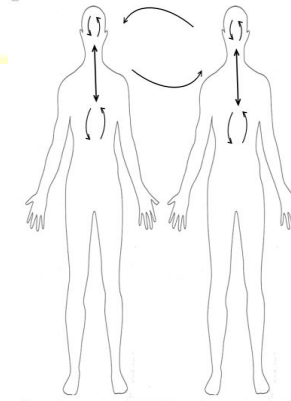
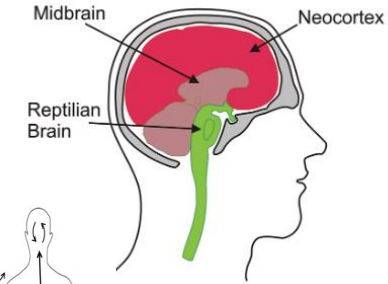
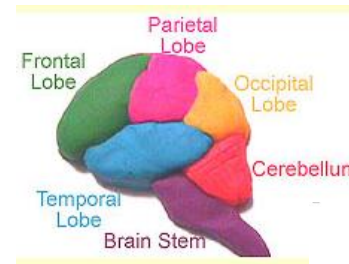
Reflective Mind and Reactive Brain/Body Model

Why was it developed?

Research has deepened our understanding of how the human neurological and physical systems work and interact. While some diagrams of the brain might infer specific areas have unique functions overall our capacity to experience the world within and external to us stems from immense complexity and interconnectedness.

The Reflective Mind and Reactive Brain/Body model was developed to enable our inner interactive complexity to be shared without jargon. Seeing ourselves as a collection of interacting internal systems reinforces our awareness of how we act on and react to the world outside of us.

This was achieved by resolving our whole system down to three fundamental capabilities: reactive brain, reactive body and our reflective mind.



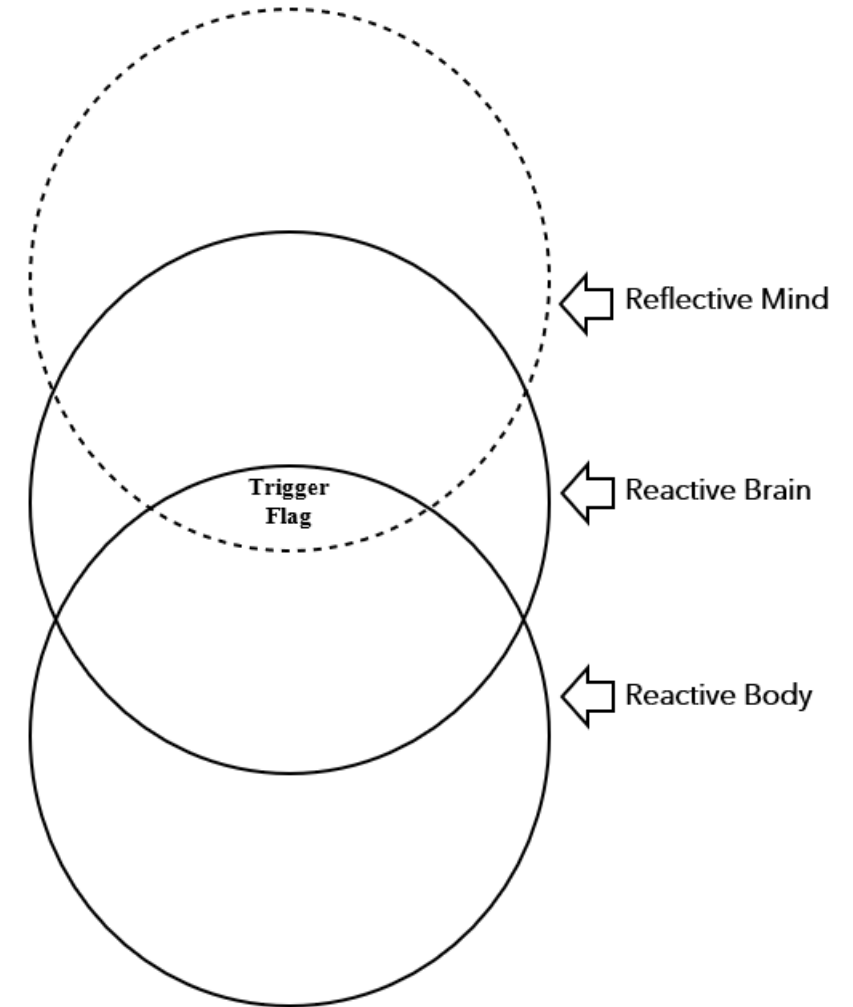
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The three capabilities and how they connect.

Our most fundamental interacting capabilities:

- A **Reactive Brain** capacity that generates a continuous stream of interacting emotions, thoughts and memories connected to what is going on within and external to us.
- A **Reactive Body** capacity that continuously interacts with and influences our reactive brain, generating sensations which in turn influence our emotions, thoughts and memories.
- A **Reflective Mind** capacity that questions, balances and influences what the Reactive Brain and Body generate on a continuous basis. This reflective capacity is volatile and diminishes rapidly when we trigger and our reactive capacity becomes dominant driving increasingly compulsive behaviours.

The model contributes to self awareness and behavioural choice by providing accessible concepts and terminology that we can use to categorise and notice our experience of ourselves.



Reflective Mind and Reactive Brain/Body Model

What does triggering mean in the context of this model?

A commuter just misses their regular train home and experiences mild irritation but calms quickly as a host of existing resources, such as telling themselves the next train will be along shortly, prevents their survival system from triggering and generating intense discomfort.

The experience of arguing is likely to be more intense for some couples. Conflict in the office can be very disturbing for some people. The aftermath of an accident, abuse and violence can be very destabilising generating PTSD in some people.

While this model is unlikely to be relevant or useful to the commuter, for the others it would enable them to generate new awareness of how aspects of their system change as they trigger.



Reflective Mind and Reactive Brain/Body Model

Triggering Summary

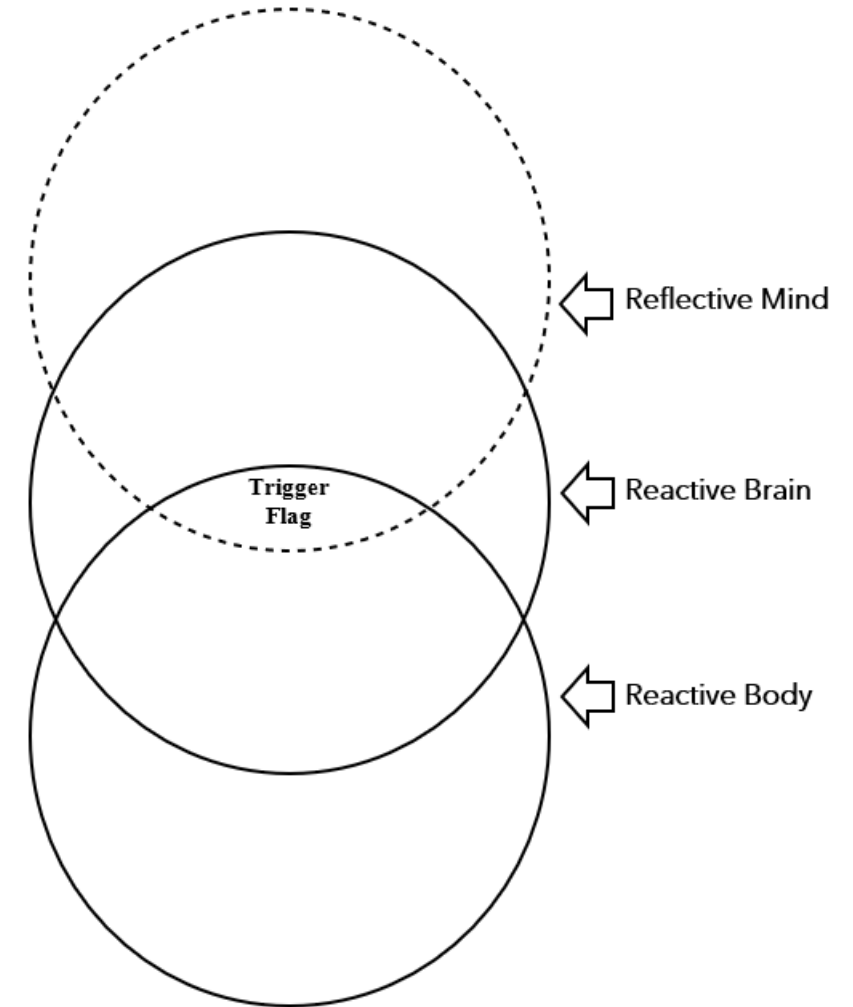
We are evolved to trigger in response to perceived threat to our lives. Today most of us are not subject to that type of danger but our survival orientated triggering system remains fully intact monitoring the intensity and reliability of our attachments.

Certain types of triggering cause our system to move into fight/flight and/or hide/freeze states.

Our Reflective Minds are a volatile part of our system.

When it is active our Reflective Mind enables us to notice our Reactive Brain and Body as an observer & driver enabling us to self calm and exert choice over what we say and do.

As we trigger into survival modes the influence of our Reflective Mind diminishes as our Reactive Brain/Body system increasingly dominates what we experience internally, say and do.



Reflective Mind and Reactive Brain/Body Model

Who uses this model and why?

Psychotherapists and Counsellors who want to increase client resilience during and after therapy by:

- Sharing knowledge and expertise that might improve their awareness of their whole system.
- Keeping complexity and jargon to a minimum to aid in the sharing of knowledge/expertise and ultimately power with clients.
- Sharing knowledge and expertise that does more than inform but also acts like a tool that clients can also use as a resource to reduce discomfort and recondition.

Members of the public who want direct access to knowledge and tools that raise their self awareness and contribute towards psychological resilience.



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How is used?

In individual therapy where a client might be disposed to and benefit from being more aware of the main components of their interacting neurological and physical system without having to engage in complex concepts or terminology.



In couple and family therapy where awareness of the interacting nature of our inner world can be used as a stepping stone to generate awareness of the interactive nature of relationships. This in turn opens up areas of conversation around existing and perhaps new resources that might increase the resilience of their reflective capacity.



In day to day home and work life when things go wrong and a capacity to notice and resist the Reactive Brain and Body's drive to dominate what is being said and done that could worsen an already difficult situation as we become increasingly triggered.



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Summary

This model describes a psychoeducation tool that:

- Is being integrated into all main stream approaches to psychotherapy and directly into individual's lives.
- Distils the human system into three capacities with minimal use of jargon or complex concepts.
- Offers a graphic way to depict how these capacities connect and interact.
- Highlights how we can be vulnerable to the power of the triggered Reactive Brain and Body to drive the compulsive nature of our internal and external worlds.
- Connects with and supports other tools such as the Rainbow Map and Legacy Behaviours to raise our self awareness and the creation of resources that improves psychological resilience.

