

# Peacemaker Tools Weekly Newsletter

## Issue 5: The Amazing Brain



When you understand what's happening in your brain, it can lead to a new level of self-awareness. Knowing how the brain works and how it reacts in certain situations is an important first step in training the brain to respond differently to situations.



### Regulate

When we regulate, we are able to think, listen, and identify our needs and feelings.

### Let's Practice

**One Finger Breathing:** Place one hand on your belly, and the pointer finger of your other hand on your nose. Inhale slowly. Move your finger from your nose to your lips and slowly exhale. Repeat. [www.teachpeace.link/1fingerbreathing](http://www.teachpeace.link/1fingerbreathing)



### Relate

When we relate, we connect with others as we share our perspectives and experiences.



### Let's Practice

Share with those around you when you have uncomfortable feelings, what helps you find calm?



### Reason

When we reason we reflect, learn, gain understanding, and develop strategies for problem solving.

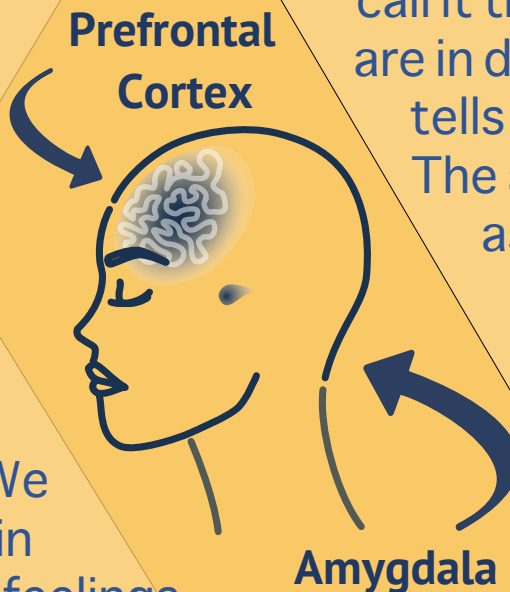
### Let's Learn

**Amygdala:** This is the part of the brain that keeps us safe. Some people call it the "guard dog." If we are in danger, the amygdala tells our body to act fast. The amygdala also works as a blocker. When we feel uncomfortable, like angry, information is blocked from other parts of our brain.



### Prefrontal Cortex:

The prefrontal cortex is the thinking part of the brain. Some people call it the "wise owl." This is the part of our brain that helps us make good choices, learn new things, and do our best thinking. We access this part of the brain when we feel comfortable feelings.



# The Brain Hand Model



## “Flip Your Lid”

Represented by expanding all of your fingers except your thumb. The amygdala can help keep us safe when we feel uncomfortable, threatened or in danger by acting fast. Sometimes the amygdala signals danger when there is none. When this happens, we can't think clearly because information stops going to our prefrontal cortex to make good choices. Instead our actions are decided by the amygdala and we flip our lid.



**Amygdala**  
Tuck your thumb into your palm. This is your amygdala

**Prefrontal Cortex**  
Wrap your fingers around your thumb so your amygdala is calm and comfortable.

**View Video Here!**

[www.teachpeace.link/brain](http://www.teachpeace.link/brain)

How can we calm our amygdala so we can get back into our prefrontal cortex?

## You could try:

- Spend time in nature
- Talk to someone
- Try deep breaths
- Time with pets
- Drink water
- Exercise

Explore more resources, activities and ideas at our site [peacemakerresources.org](http://peacemakerresources.org)

## How to Make a Mind Jar

Watch our Instructional video!

[www.teachpeace.link/mindjar](http://www.teachpeace.link/mindjar)

Find a small bottle or jar and add some liquid glue then fill it about  $\frac{3}{4}$  full with warm water.

Pretend the water in the jar is like your mind. Put a pinch of glitter in the jar for each kind of thought you have; happy thoughts, angry thoughts, fearful thoughts, other thoughts. When you're ready, put the lid on tight and shake it up. You will see all the glitter spinning and rushing around – kind of like your thoughts in your brain!



Set the jar down, sit in front of the jar, and breathe in and out slowly. Notice how the glitter settles down to the bottom, just like your thoughts can settle down, too.

Use your Mind Jar whenever you need to calm your brain and body.

