

Using Mind-Body Bridging to Prevent Caregiver Burnout



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THERE ARE ONLY
TWO TIMES
I FEEL STRESS:



DAY AND NIGHT.

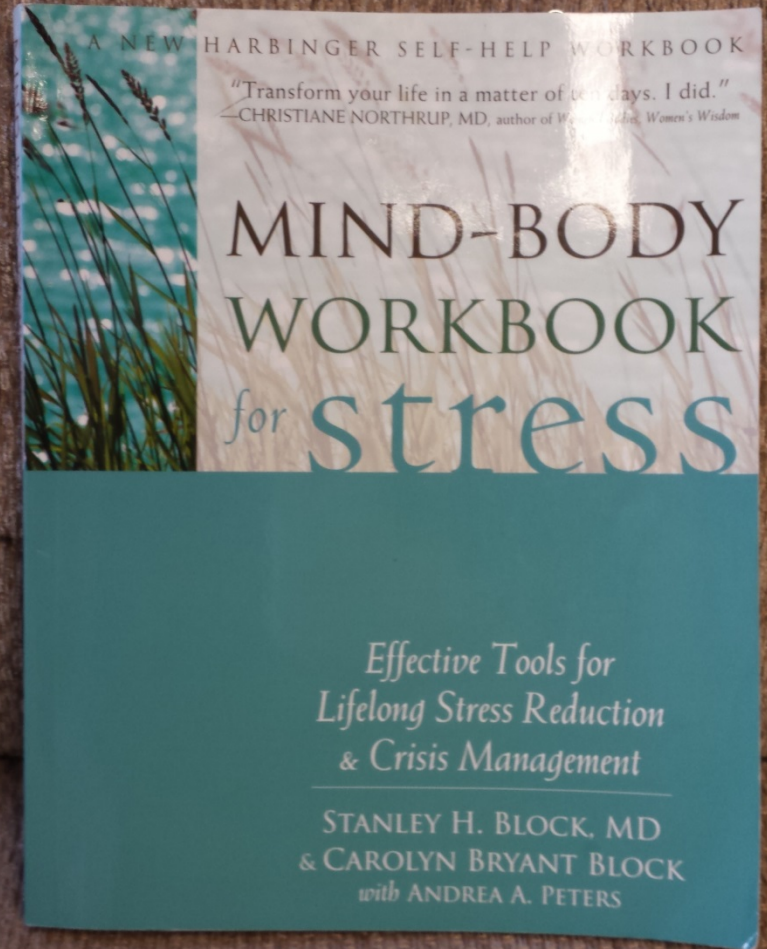
Objectives

Participants will be able to:

- 1) Describe the brain's role in the experience of stress for caregivers and clients
- 2) Identify how the mind/body connection can alert caregivers and clients of stress
- 3) Name the 3 major tools of Mind-Body Bridging that caregivers and clients can use for managing stress
- 4) Apply Mind-Body Bridging to reduce stress

Mind-Body Workbook for Stress

by Dr. Stanley Block



Mind-Body Bridging Mapping



TITLE

Think of something unpleasant that has occurred in the past week.

If the memory of that event were a short story, what would the descriptive title be?

Write that title in the oval. **This is for your eyes only.**

Mind-Body Bridging

Mapping

I do not have
enough
money for my
bills this
month.

Mind-Body Bridging

1st Map

Scatter your thoughts and feelings anywhere outside of the oval.

I have too many bills

I do not have
enough
money for my
bills this
month.

What if we lose our house?

I'll never be able to retire.

My spouse spends too much money.

Feelings: Angry, scared, sad, guilty

Mind-Body Bridging

Mapping

I have too many bills

What if we lose our house?

I do not have
enough
money for my
bills this
month.

I'll never be able to retire.

My spouse spends too much money.

Feelings: Angry, scared, sad, guilty

Adjectives to describe the tone of what I wrote: Negative, scattered

Words to describe body tension: tight chest, rapid breathing

Mind-Body Bridging

- ▣ Adjectives to describe the tone of what I wrote:
- ▣ Words to describe body tension:

Mind-Body Bridging

- Mind-Body Connection
 - When the mind has scattered thoughts
 - The body tends to feel tension (warning lights)
 - We tend to not be functioning at our best
- What are your “*warning lights*”?

Mind-Body Bridging

2nd Map

In a minute, we will do a 2nd map.



Same "title"

Mind-Body Bridging

COMING TO YOUR SENSES

Observe senses, with no judgment

- Touch
- Sound

- Scent
- Sight
- Taste

- Breath
- Movement

Mind-Body Bridging

COMING TO YOUR SENSES

Observe senses, with no judgment

- Touch
- Sound

- Scent
- Sight
- Taste

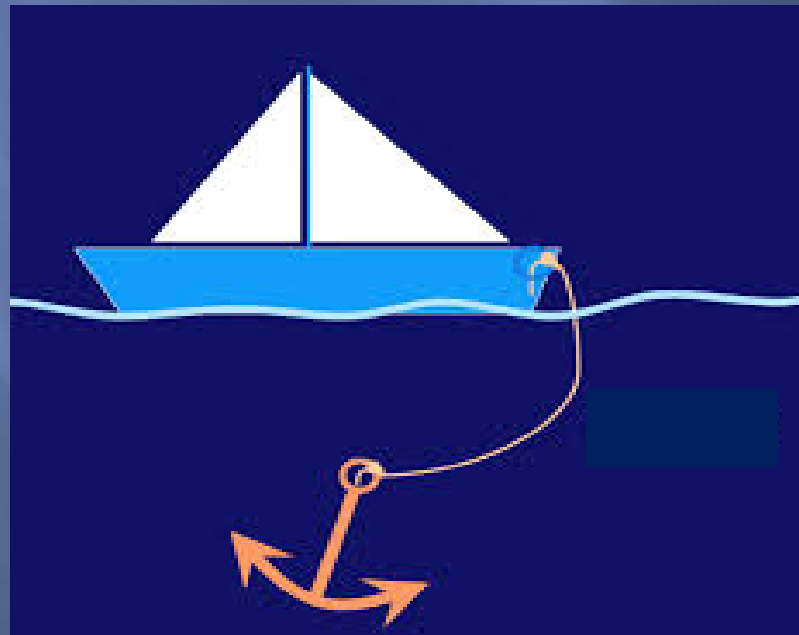
- Breath
- Movement

You may notice a “dance” between thoughts and senses

- Thoughts will arise
 - Label them as thoughts
 - No judgment
- Senses
 - Gently come back to heightening your awareness of the sense of the present moment
 - No judgment

COMING TO YOUR SENSES

ANCHORING THOUGHTS IN THE
PRESENT MOMENT



Mental “Gym”



- Focus on breath or sensation (curl)
- Thoughts wander (extend)
- Focus on breath or sensation (curl)
- More than one repetition is required to build the mental “muscle”



Mind-Body Bridging

2nd Map

Scatter your thoughts and feelings. But this time, keep using your “anchor”



Same “title”

Mind-Body Bridging

2nd Map



Same "title"

Adjectives to describe the tone of what I wrote: _____

Words to describe body tension: _____

Mind-Body Bridging

Compare the Two Maps

- Similarities or differences in the tone of what you wrote?
- Similarities or differences in the level of body tension while you wrote?
- Based on the 2nd map, how might your level of functioning change?

Mind-Body Bridging

Map 1

- When the mind has scattered thoughts
- The body tends to feel tension
- We tend to not be functioning at our best

in contrast

Map 2

- When the thoughts are not as scattered
- The body tends to feel less tension
- We tend to function better.

MIND-BODY BRIDGING

Did I specifically ask you to calm down or relax?

During the step called “coming to your senses” what do you remember me asking you to do?

Go back to the initial situation you were remembering.

If you had used the technique of “Coming to Your Senses” when that situation first happened, do you think your level of functioning might have been better?

Mind-Body Bridging

FOUNDATIONAL QUESTION IN MBB

Which version of the brain is driving the bus?

2 possible modes

WHICH VERSION OF THE BRAIN IS DRIVING THE BUS?



Overactive Identity-system
(Map 1)

(Default Mode Network)



Identity-system at rest
(Map 2)

(Executive Functioning)


MIND-BODY BRIDGING

IDENTITY-SYSTEM (I-System)

- Evolved for helpful reasons
- Helps us to identify with who we are as individuals
 - to identify with being a part of a family
 - a religion
 - a culture
 - a nation
- It helps us to create our individual identity

MIND-BODY BRIDGING

IDENTITY-SYSTEM (I-System)



How my world
should be?

Requirements vs Preferences

Requirement: If there is a lot of body tension when you think of NOT having that item
Preference: If there is little or no body tension when you think of not having that item..

WHICH VERSION OF THE BRAIN IS DRIVING THE BUS?



Overactive Identity-system
(Map 1)

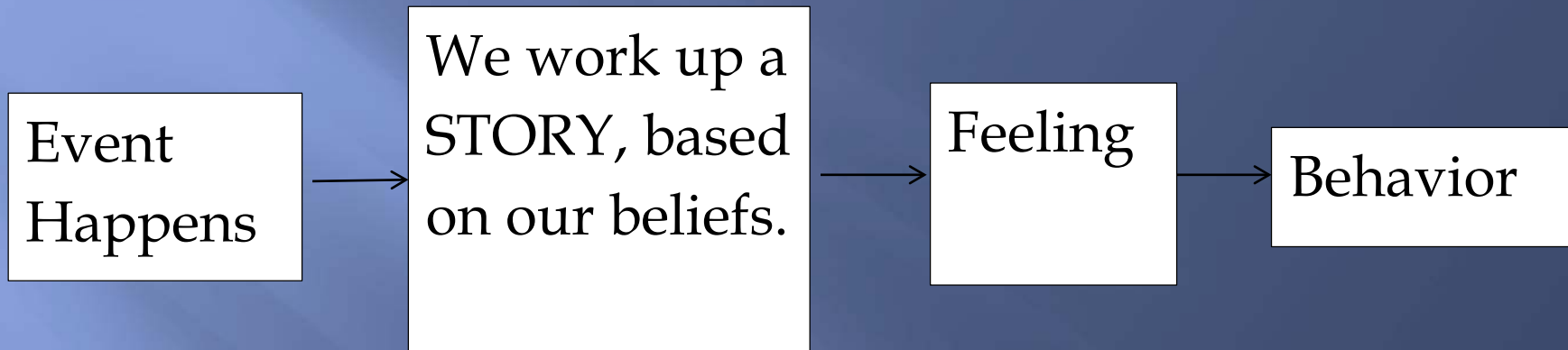
Tends to get triggered when REQUIREMENTS are not met



Identity-system at rest
(Map 2)

Coming to our senses calms the I-system.
Doing maps over time helps change
requirements to preferences.

PERCEPTIONS



It is not what happens to us that causes the most stress.
It is what we _____ about what happens to us that tends to cause the most stress.

What is an elephant? (Story of the blind men)

Identity System at Rest



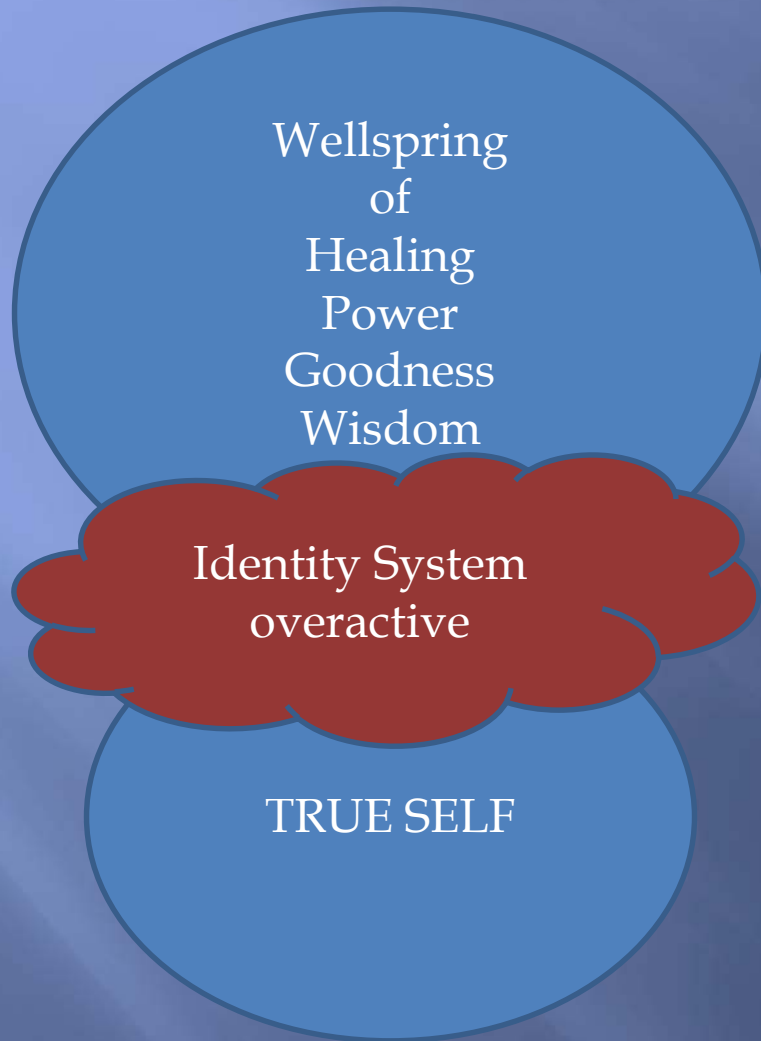
Natural functioning – when the Identity System is at rest we can perceive the connection to our own inner wellspring of health and well-being

Overactive Identity-System



When the Identity System is overactive, it becomes a commotion machine, blocking our perception of the connection to the WellSpring. We start functioning in a mode of just existing day-to-day with a busy head and tense body. This is a very limited way of seeing the world.

Mind-Body Bridging



Existing day-to-day

- busy head and tense body
- very limited way of seeing the world



Natural functioning

- connected to our own inner wellspring of health and well-being

MIND-BODY BRIDGING



Wellspring
of
Healing
Power
Goodness
Wisdom

Identity System

TRUE SELF

MIND-BODY BRIDGING



Wellspring
of
Healing
Power
Goodness
Wisdom

Identity System
overactive

TRUE SELF

Why is it called Mind-Body Bridging?

Bridging from a dysfunctional mind-body state to a calmer, more functional mind-body state



Overactive Identity System
(Map 1)

A "Requirement" was not met



Identity-System at Rest
(Map 2)

Coming to Our Senses calmed the I-Sys

Mind-Body Bridging

IDENTITY-SYSTEM (I-System)

When the I-system is overactive

- it becomes a commotion machine
- the source of all human angst
- falsely identify with thoughts/feelings that separate us from others
- limits our awareness of our connection with others
- creates anxiety
- disrupts the harmony and balance of the mind-body connection

Mind-Body Bridging

- Goal: Rest the I-system
- NOT a goal: Getting rid of the I-system

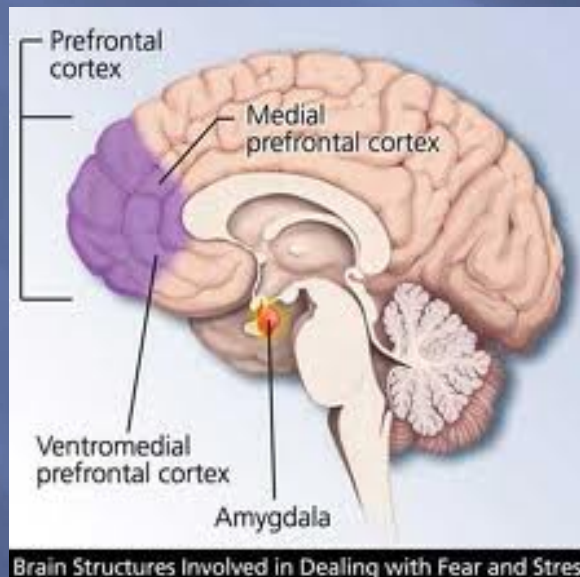
Without the I-system:

- humans would lack self-interest
- no direction/no drive

Anatomy of a Brain

The brain functions today the same as in pre-historic times

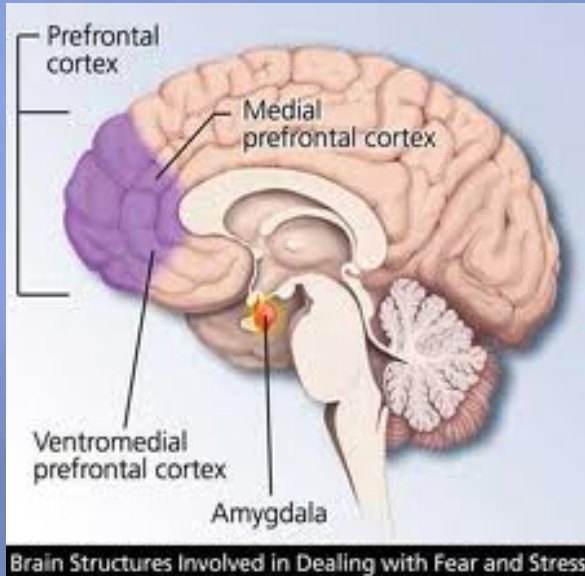
- Prefrontal Cortex – Thinker Driver
- Limbic System (with Amygdala) – Emotional Driver



Anatomy of a Brain

When is the Emotional Driver in charge?

- Feeling of fear, danger
 - Chased by lions/tigers/bears
 - Taking a test, arguing with loved ones, etc?



What happens?

- You sense danger
- Adrenaline rush
- Body agitated
- No time to think
- Amygdala hijack
- FIGHT/FLIGHT/FREEZE
- No access to rational thought

Anatomy of a Brain

one brain – two minds

Who Is Driving the Bus?



Deb's words: Emotional Driver

Neuroscience: Default Mode Network

Dr. Block's: Overactive I-system
(Map 1)



Thinker Driver

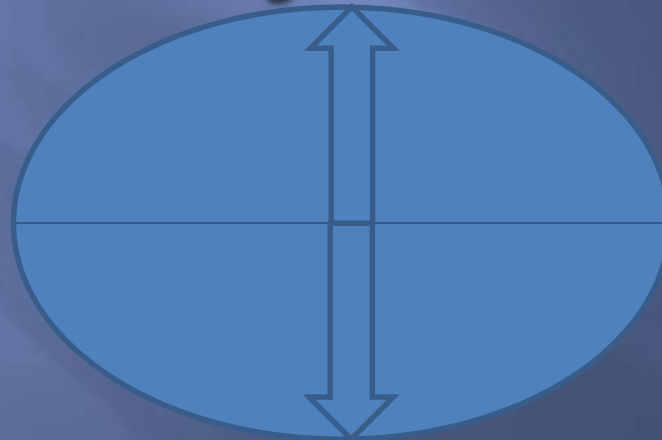
Executive Functioning

I-system at rest
(Map 2)

USING YOUR BODY AS A COMPASS

Cluttered thoughts
Headache
Muscle Aches
Muscle Tension
Tightness

I-system



Natural Executive Functioning

Clear Headed

Calm

Flexible

Relaxed

How can we manage stress?

Key concepts

A foundational factor in stress management is to find what works for you to keep the **THINKER DRIVER (PFC)** **Executive Functioning** in the driver's seat.

(Be aware of physical signs of hijack)

MIND-BODY BRIDGING

We calmed the I-system and the
amygdala!

How Can You Calm the Amygdala?

The list is endless. . .



HOW CAN YOU CALM THE AMYGDALA?

3 Bridging Tools (nudge PFC to take over)

1. *Thought Labeling*
2. *Coming to Your Senses (touch, hearing, sight, breath)*
3. *Mapping*

Emotional/Mental Resilience



HOW CAN YOU CALM THE AMYGDALA?

3 Bridging Tools

1. Thought Labeling

Original thought:

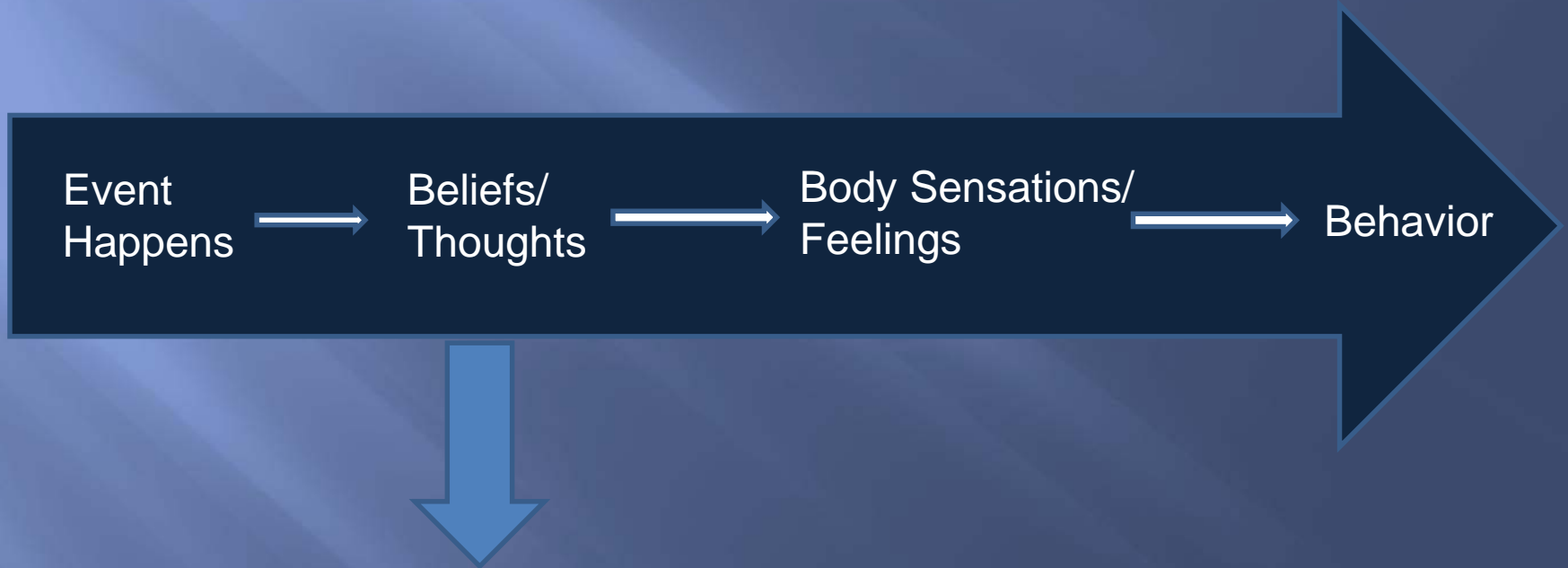
“That shouldn’t have happened.”

becomes

“I’m having the thought

that shouldn’t have happened.”

Emotional/Mental Resilience



Thought Labeling

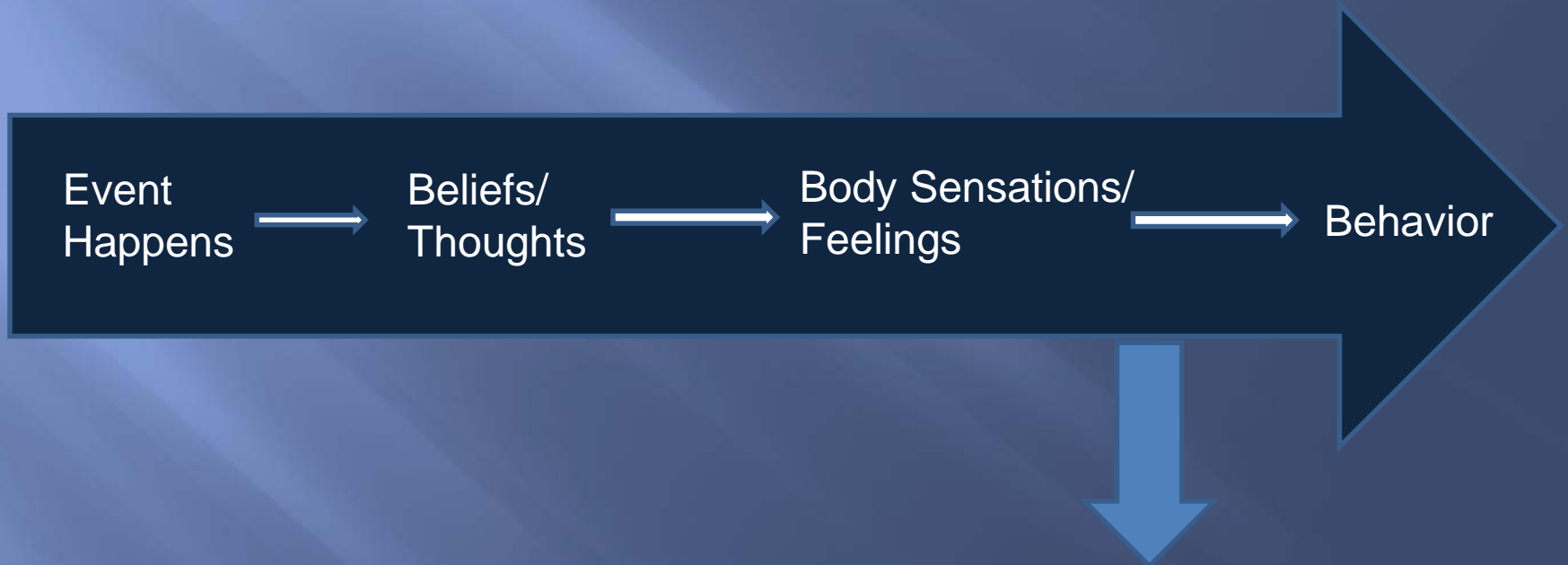
- Helps to keep the snowball from rolling down the hill into “stinking thinking”
- Helps turn requirements into preferences
- Nudges PFC into driver’s seat so it calms the I-system

HOW CAN YOU CALM THE AMYGDALA?

3 Bridging Tools

2. Coming to Your Senses (sensory awareness to calm the amygdala, by throwing out anchors to the present moment)

Emotional/Mental Resilience



Event
Happens



Beliefs/
Thoughts



Body Sensations/
Feelings



Behavior



Come to Your Senses

- Touch
- Sound
- Breath
- Sight

HOW CAN YOU CALM THE IDENTITY-SYSTEM?

3 Bridging Tools

3. Mapping

- First Map – draw the oval; scatter thoughts
- Come to your senses/thought label
- Second Map – draw the oval; scatter thoughts
- Notice the difference

Over time, doing multiple maps will help you to reveal your “requirements” and turn them into preferences. Fewer “forest fires” spring up. The I-system does not get hijacked as easily.

KEY CONCEPTS

Be aware of physical signs that are early warnings of hijack.

Pause

Use the tools that work for YOUR body to calm your I-system and your amygdala.

KEY CONCEPTS

Calm body leads to a calm mind.

Calm mind leads to a calm body.

Summary

- ▣ Discussed the FOUNDATIONAL question in MBB:
Which version of the brain is driving the bus?
Overactive I-system or I-system at rest

Summary

- ▣ **How can you tell which driver is in charge?**

Body tension or No body tension

- ▣ **3 Mind-Body Bridging Tools that will calm the I-System**

- Thought-labeling
- Coming to Your Senses
- Mapping

Research

<http://mindbodybridging.com/research>

Mind-Body Bridging for:

- Resiliency and Management of PTSD
- Insomnia
- Veterans subjected to physical and emotional trauma
- Quality of Life
- Domestic Violence Offender Treatment
- Sleep Management for US Veterans
- Sleep Management in Cancer Survivors