

# Navigating the Emotional Rollercoaster of Teens and Tweens

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# Goals

- What are adolescent personalities?
- What are feelings?
- How are parents supposed to manage *intense* feelings?
- How do schools, parents, and peers recognize when intense feelings lead to impairment?
- How to refer for help when necessary

Ahhh.....



Oooohh...

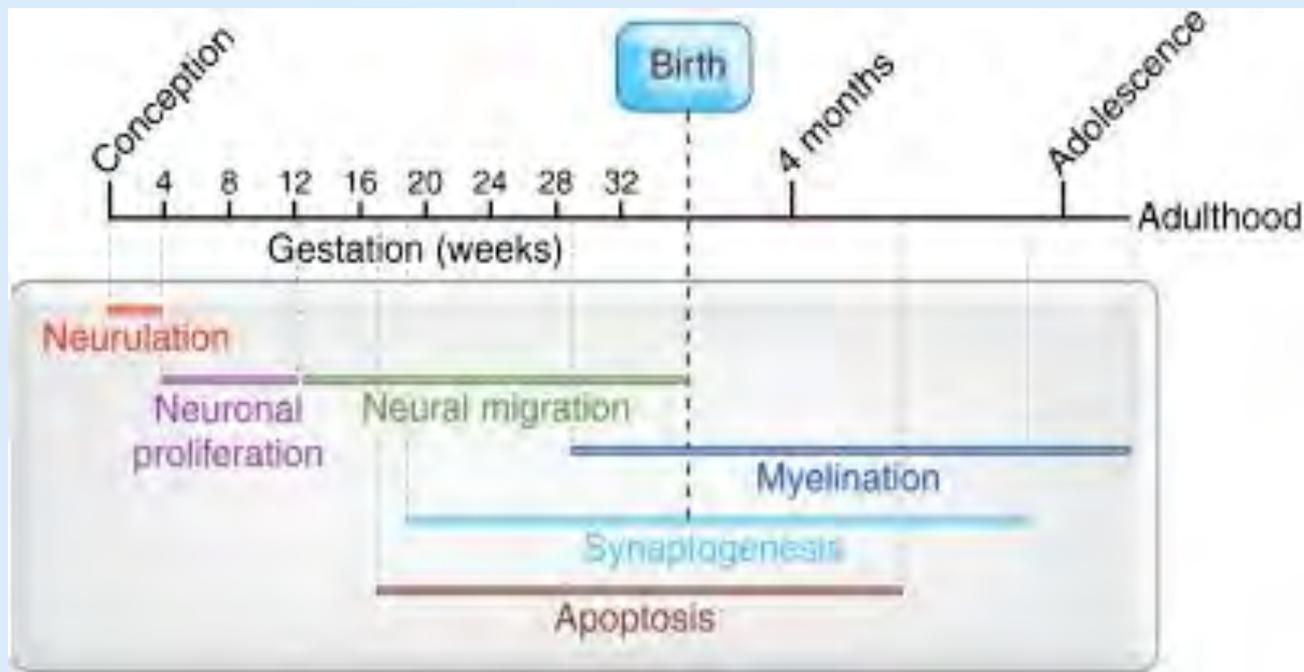




# Definition of Adolescence

- Adolescence is a transitional period from childhood to adult-hood, with an onset that includes pubertal maturation and an offset that is marked by independence from the parent. (Casey et al Neuron 2013)
- Typically divided into phases: early adolescence 12-15, middle adolescence 16-20, late adolescence 21-25

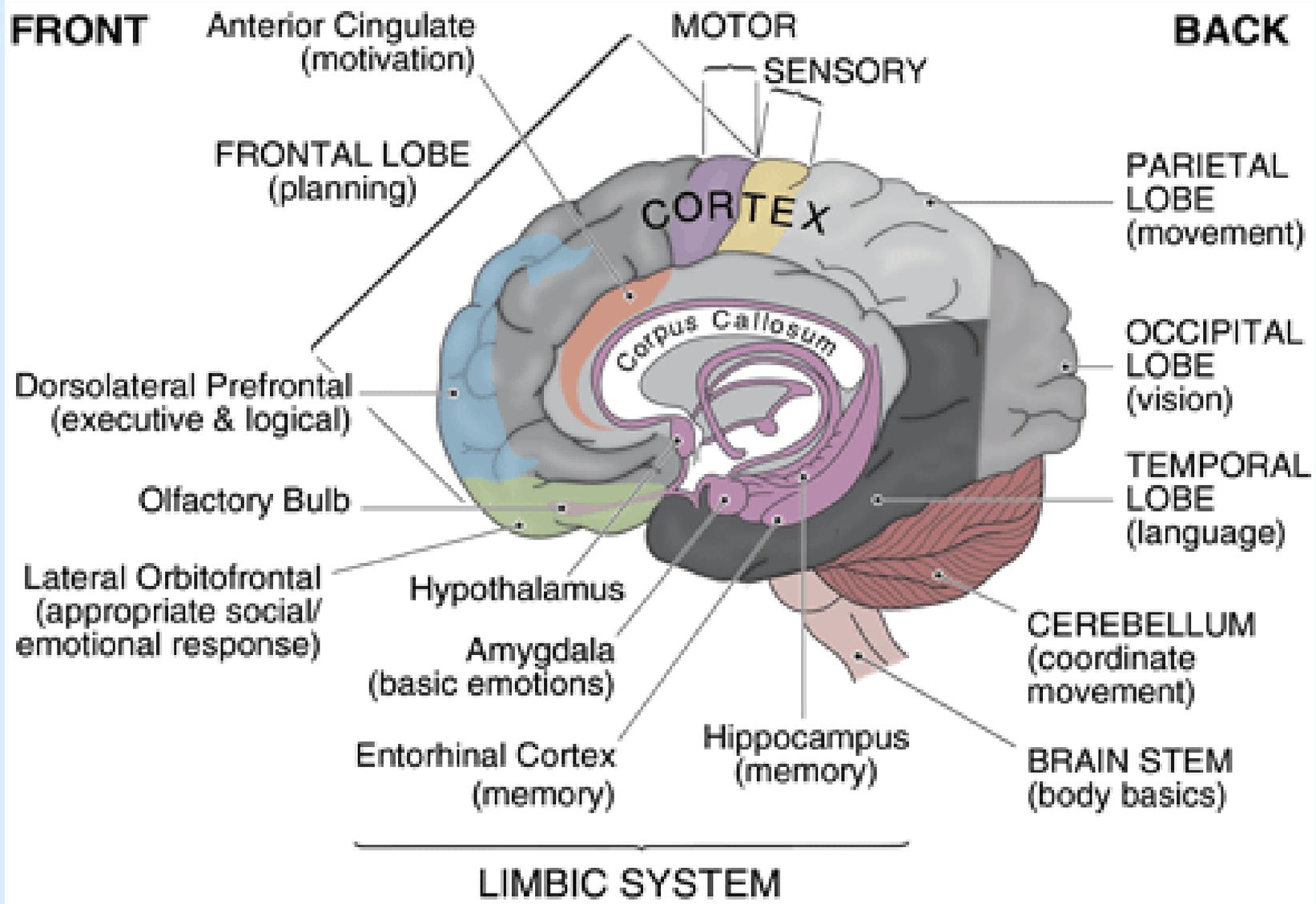
# Early Brain Development



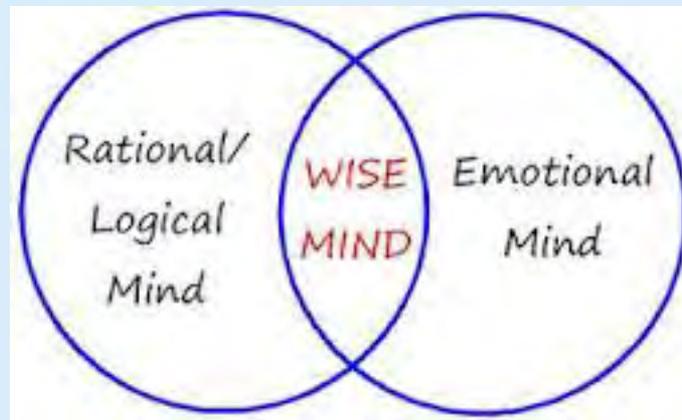


# Four Key Elements of Personality Development

- Temperament
- Attachment
- Cognition
- Culture



# Dialectical Behavioral Therapy





# Mindfulness

- “If you are using mindfulness to get happy, you are using the wrong skill.”

Marsha Linehan

Mindfulness is paying attention in a particular way in order to be more aware of both internal and external experiences.

# Validation

- Active listening
- Reflection
- Mindreading
- Normalizing
- History
- Radical genuineness



# The Ring of Fire





# Problem Solving

First thing to ask yourself is, “Is this my problem?” If it is not your problem, back off and let the person who’s problem it is work on problem solving.

Five things you can do when faced with a problem:

1. **Solve the problem** – If you can, do. Often, we are not able to solve a problem in the moment.
2. **Change the way you feel about the problem** – Check in with yourself and see if what you are feeling about the problem fits the situation and/or if the level of intensity of feeling is appropriate. If it is not, perhaps work on changing the feeling/intensity of the feeling first.
3. **Accept the problem** – This does not mean that we give up or give in; it simply means that we accept in the moment that we can’t effectively solve the problem or change the way we feel about the problem.
4. **Stay miserable** – No explanation necessary; we all know how to do this very well!
5. **Make the problem worse** – Act on problematic behaviors, drag others into the problem, reject help, etcetera. Also something we are quite good at!



Are your expectations:

reasonable and attainable and clearly communicated?

When setting expectations for your kids, make sure that the expectations are reasonable and attainable; that is, is your kid capable of meeting the expectation and in the time frame that you have set. When we set expectations that are unreasonable or unattainable, and the kid doesn't have the capacity/capability to meet that expectation, we set ourselves up for anger and resentment. Also, if we have an expectation we need to be specific in communicating this expectation to the kid. Do not assume that the kid knows our expectation. Be as behaviorally specific as possible. For instance, if you want your kid to clean his room, do it with him the first time, take a picture of how the room looks, make sure he has a clear picture of your expectation of a "clean room."

Make sure to distinguish between rules and expectations. Rules should be based on safety. Expectations should be based on family values. There should be clear and timely consequences for breaking rules. Meeting expectations should gain a kid rewards, which can either be giving them something (allowance, privileges) or taking away something aversive (nagging, extra chores). Remember, we want to reward positive behavior!

... seek support



# Conclusion: striving for the good enough environment

