

Understanding Trauma

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[PTSD & Trauma Recovery Tools](#)

The word **trauma** comes from the Greek for “wound.” In psychology, it’s the internal response to external events, not the event itself. (As Dr. Gabor Maté notes, the wound lives inside us.)

Types of trauma

01

Acute

From a single distressing event.

Examples: natural disaster, accident, assault, sudden loss, verbal/emotional abuse, terrorism/war, serious illness.

02

Chronic

From prolonged/repeated experiences.

Examples: ongoing domestic violence, bullying, neglect, long-term illness.

03

Complex

Multiple, often interpersonal events (frequently early in life).

Examples: childhood abuse, persistent domestic violence.

Impact on Brain & Body

Medial Prefrontal Cortex

Prefrontal Cortex

Emotion regulation & decision-making

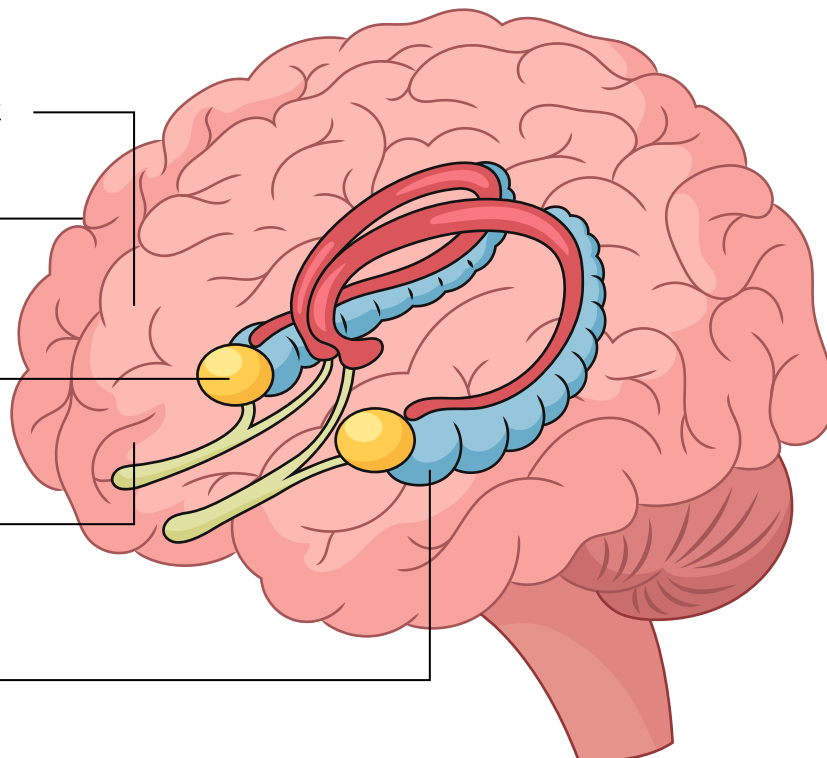
Amygdala

Fear/threat detection

Ventromedial Prefrontal Cortex

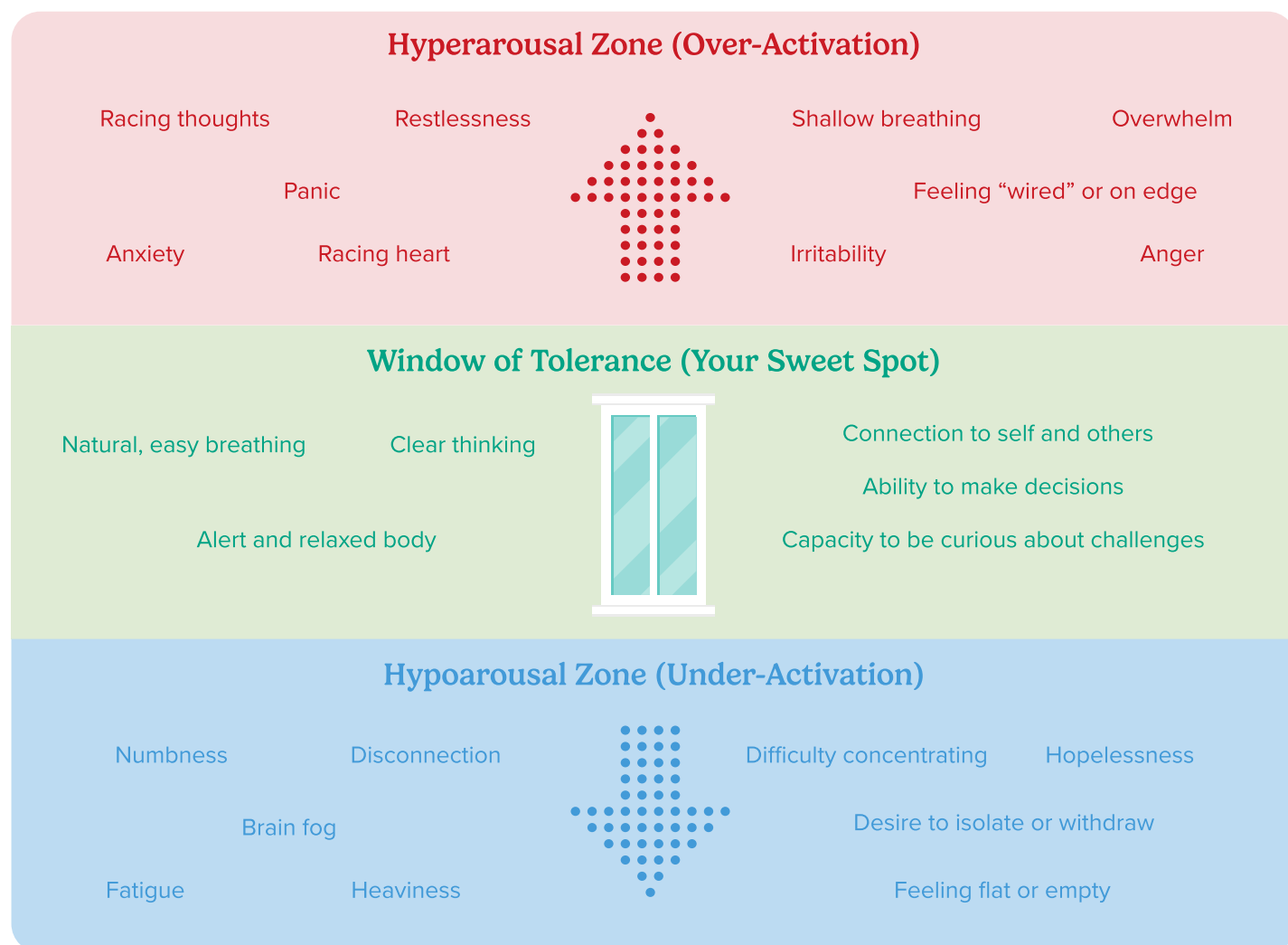
Hippocampus

Memory processing



The Window of Tolerance

The Window of Tolerance, a concept developed by Dr. Dan Siegel, MD, is a model used to understand how individuals process stress and trauma. It refers to the optimal zone of arousal where emotions can be effectively managed.



Coping and Healing

Identifying personal triggers is essential in managing trauma. Techniques that support healing include:

1. Journaling for self-awareness
2. Mindfulness and meditation
3. Deep breathing exercises
4. Physical activity, such as walking or exercise
5. Building a supportive social network
6. Professional therapy or counseling