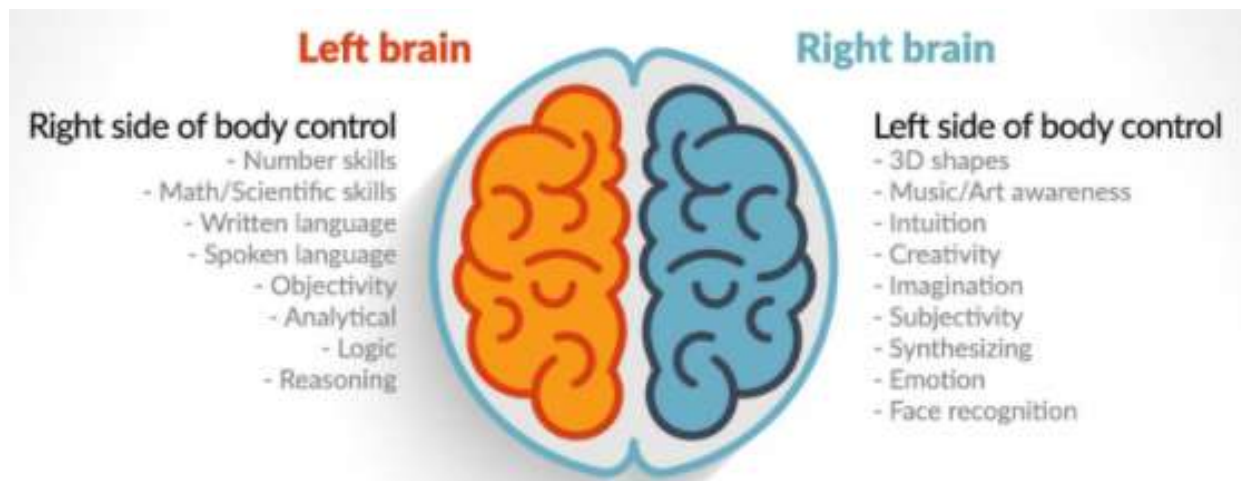




## INTEGRATING THE LEFT AND RIGHT BRAIN

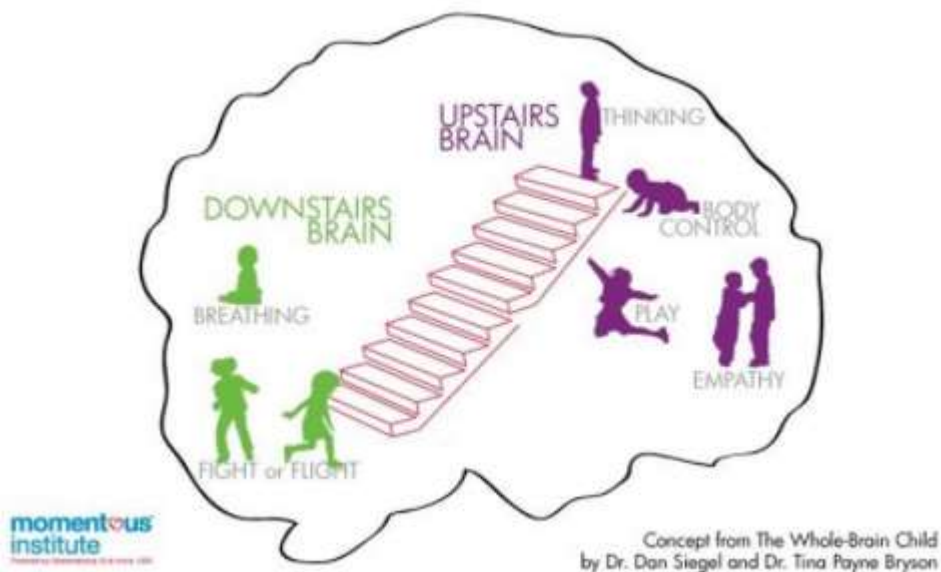
- **Left + right = clarity and understanding:** help your kids use both the logical left brain and the emotional right brain as a team
- **What you can do:**
  - Connect and redirect: when your child is upset, connect first emotionally, right brain to right brain. Then, once your child is more in control and receptive, bring in the left-brain lessons and discipline.
  - Name it to tame it: when big, right-brain emotions are raging out of control, help your kids tell the story about what's upsetting them, so their left brain can help make sense of their experience and they can feel more in control.





## INTEGRATING THE UPSTAIRS BRAIN AND THE DOWNSTAIRS BRAIN

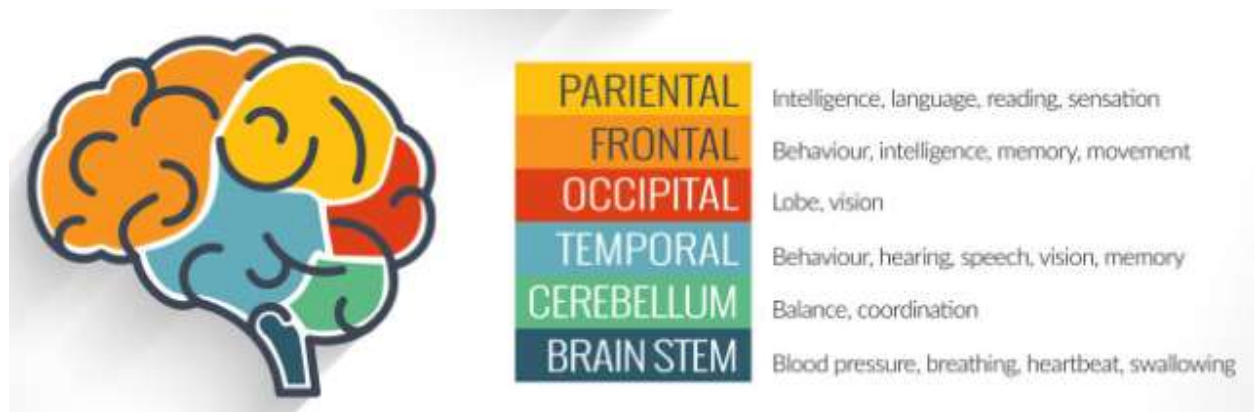
- **Develop the upstairs brain:** watch for ways to help build the sophisticated upstairs brain, which is “under construction” during childhood and adolescence and can be “hijacked” by the downstairs brain, especially in high-emotion situations.
- **What you can do:**
  - Engage, don't enrage: in high-stress situations, engage your child's upstairs brain, rather than triggering the downstairs brain. Don't immediately play the “Because I said so” card. Instead, ask questions, request alternatives, even negotiate.
  - Use it or lose it: provide lots of opportunities to exercise the upstairs brain. Play “What would you do?” games, and avoid rescuing kids from difficult decisions.
  - Move it or lose it: when a child has lost touch with his upstairs brain, help him regain balance by having him move his body.





## INTEGRATING MEMORY

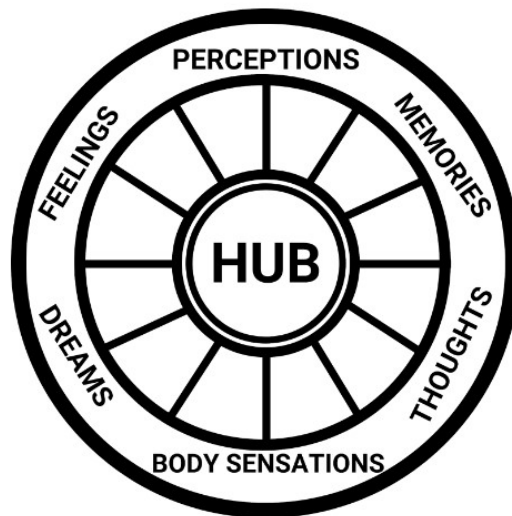
- **Make the implicit explicit:** help your kids make their implicit memories explicit, so that past experiences don't affect them in debilitating ways.
- **What you can do:**
  - Use the remote of the mind: when a child is reluctant to narrate a painful event, the internal remote let her pause, rewind, and fast-forward a story as she tells it, so she can maintain control over how much of it she views.
  - Remember to remember: help your kids exercise their memory by giving them lots of practice at recalling important events: in the car, at the dinner table, wherever.





## INTEGRATING THE MANY PARTS OF MYSELF

- **The wheel of awareness:** when your kids get stuck on one particular point on the rim of their wheel of awareness, help them choose where they focus their attention so they can gain more control over how they feel.
- **What you can do:**
  - Let the clouds of emotion roll by: remind kids that feelings come and go; they are temporary states, not enduring traits.
  - SIFT: help your children pay attention to the Sensations, Images, Feelings, and Thoughts within them.
  - Exercise mindfulness: mindfulness practices teach children to calm themselves and focus their attention where they want.

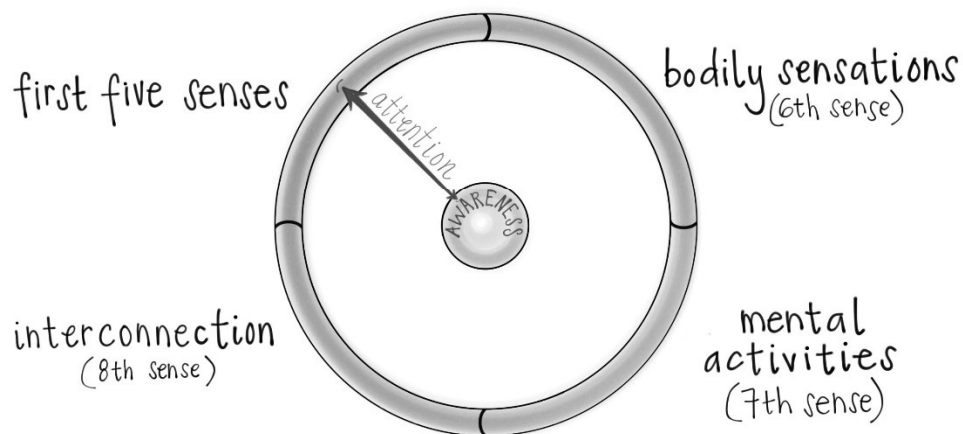




## INTEGRATING SELF AND OTHER

- **Wired for “we”:** watch for ways to capitalize on the brain’s built-in capacity for social interaction. Create positive mental models of relationships.
- **What you can do:**
  - Enjoy each other: build fun into the family, so that your kids enjoy positive and satisfying experiences with the people they’re with the most.
  - Connect through conflict: instead of an obstacle to avoid, view conflict as an opportunity to teach your kids essential relationship skills, like seeing other people’s perspectives, reading non-verbal cues, and making amends.

### WHEEL OF AWARENESS





## WHOLE-BRAIN AGES AND STAGES

### Infant/Toddler (0-3)

TYPE OF INTEGRATION	WHOLE-BRAIN STRATEGY	APPLICATIONS OF THE STRATEGY
Integrating the Left and Right Brain	<p><b>#1: Connect and redirect:</b> When your child is upset, connect first emotionally, right brain to right brain. Then, once she is more in control and receptive, bring in the left-brain lessons and discipline</p>	<p>Now is the time, as early as possible, to begin teaching your child about emotions. Mirror feelings and use nonverbals (like hugs and empathetic facial expressions) to show that you understand: <i>You're frustrated, aren't you?</i> Then, once you've connected, set the boundary: <i>Biting hurts, Please be gentle.</i> Finally, focus on an appropriate alternative or move on to something else: <i>Hey, there's your bear. I haven't seen him in a long time.</i></p>
	<p><b>#2: Name it to tame it:</b> When big, right-brain emotions are raging out of control, help your child tell the story about what's upsetting him. In doing so, he'll use his left brain to make sense of his experience and feel more in control.</p>	<p>Even at this young age, make it a habit to acknowledge and name feelings: <i>You look so sad. That really hurt, didn't it?</i> Then tell the story. With small children, you'll need to be the primary narrator. Use your words and even act out the fall or the bump, possibly using humor, and watch your child's fascination. It can be helpful to make a homemade book with pictures or photos to retell an upsetting story, or to prepare your child for a transition, like a new bedtime routine or starting preschool.</p>
Integrating the Upstairs and Downstairs	<p><b>#3: Engage, don't enrage:</b> In high-stress situations, engage your child's upstairs brain by asking her to consider and plan and</p>	<p>Nobody likes to be told no, and it's an especially ineffective strategy to use too often with toddlers. When possible, avoid outright power</p>



	<p>choose, rather than triggering her downstairs brain, which is less about thinking and more about reacting.</p>	<p>struggles with your little one. Save your no for when you really need it. The next time you hear yourself beginning to forbid her from hitting the mirror with the stick, stop. Instead, engage her upstairs brain: <i>Let's go outside. What could you do with that stick in the yard?</i></p>
	<p><b>#4: Use it or lose it:</b> Provide lots of opportunities to exercise the upstairs brain so it can be strong and integrated with the downstairs brain and the body.</p>	<p>As often as possible, find ways to let your child use her upstairs brain and make decisions herself. <i>Do you want to wear your blue or red shirt today? Would you like milk or water with dinner?</i> When you read together, ask brain-growing questions: <i>How do you think the kitty will get down from the tree? Why does the girl look sad?</i></p>
	<p><b>#5: Move it or lose it:</b> A powerful way to help a child regain upstairs-downstairs balance is to have him move his body.</p>	<p>When your child is upset, make sure to acknowledge his feelings. This should always be your first move. But then, as quickly as possible, get him moving. Roughhouse with him. Play follow the leader. Race him to his bedroom and back. Get him to move and you'll change his mood.</p>
<p>Integrating Memory</p>	<p><b>#6: Use the remote of the mind:</b> After an upsetting event, the internal remote lets a child pause, rewind, and fast-forward a story as she tells it, so she can maintain control over how much of it she views.</p>	<p>Children this small may not know about a remote, but they know the power of a story. Enjoy this time when your child wants to tell (and retell) stories. Rather than pausing and fast-forwarding, you may end up simply pressing play repeatedly as you tell the same story multiple times. Even if you feel annoyed at having to go over the account, again and again, remember that</p>



		<p>storytelling produces understanding, healing, and integration.</p>
	<p><b>#7: Remember to remember:</b>                  Help your kids exercise their memory by giving them lots of practice remembering.</p>	<p>At this age, ask simple questions, focusing on returning your child's attention to the details of her day. <i>We went to Carrie's house today, didn't we? And do you remember what we did there?</i> Questions like these are the building blocks for an integrated memory system.</p>
<p>Integrating the Many Parts of Myself</p>	<p><b>#8: Let the clouds of emotion roll by:</b>                  Remind kids that feelings come and go. Fear, frustration, and loneliness are temporary states, not enduring traits.</p>	<p>Lay the foundation for an awareness of the difference between "feel" and "am." When young children feel sad (or angry or afraid), they have a hard time understanding that they won't always feel that way. So help them say, "I <i>feel</i>/sad right now, but I know I'll be happy later." Be careful, though, that you don't dismiss the actual feelings. Acknowledge the present emotion and provide comfort, then help your child understand that he won't feel sad forever, that he will feel better soon.</p>
	<p><b>#9: SIFT:</b>                  Help your children notice and understand the sensations, images, feelings, and thoughts within them.</p>	<p>Help your child become aware of and talk about her internal world. Ask questions that guide her toward noticing bodily sensations (<i>Are you hungry?</i>), mental images (<i>What do you picture when you think about Grandma's house?</i>), feelings (<i>It's frustrating when the blocks fall, isn't it?</i>), and thoughts (<i>What do you think will happen when Jill comes over tomorrow?</i>).</p>





	<p><b>#10: Exercise mindsight:</b> Mindsight practices teach children to calm themselves and focus their attention where they want.</p>	<p>Even small children can learn to be still and take calm breaths, if only for a few seconds. Have your child lie on her back and place a toy boat on her stomach. Show her how to take slow, big breaths to make the boat go up and down. Keep this exercise very short since she's so young. Just let her experience the feeling of being still, quiet, and peaceful.</p>
<p>Integrating Self and Others</p>	<p><b>#11: Increase the family fun factor:</b> Build fun into the family, so that your kids enjoy positive and satisfying experiences with the people</p>	<p>Follow your child's lead and just play. Tickle him, laugh with him, love him. Stack things up, knock them down. Bang on pots and pans, go to the park, roll the ball. With every interaction in which you focus on and attune your child, you can create positive expectations in his mind about what it means to love and be in a relationship.</p>
	<p><b>#12: Connect through conflict:</b> Rather than an obstacle to avoid, view conflict as an opportunity to teach your kids essential relationship skills.</p>	<p>Talk with your child about sharing and taking turns, but don't expect too much from her. In the coming years, you will have many opportunities to teach social skills and discipline. Right now, if there's a conflict between her and another child, help her express how she feels and how the other child might feel, and help them problem solve if possible. Then redirect them both so they can transition into a different activity they can each enjoy.</p>



## Preschooler (3-6)

TYPE OF INTEGRATION	WHOLE-BRAIN STRATEGY	APPLICATIONS OF THE STRATEGY
Integrating the Left and Right Brain	<p><b>#1: Connect and redirect:</b> When your child is upset, connect first emotionally, right brain to right brain. Then, once she is more in control and receptive, bring in the left-brain lessons and discipline</p>	<p>First, lovingly hear what's upset your child. Hug her and repeat back to her what you've heard with nurturing nonverbal communication: <i>You're really disappointed that Molly can't come over?</i> Then, once you've connected, help direct her toward problem solving and more appropriate behavior: <i>I know you're upset, but you need to be gentle with Mommy. Do you have another idea for playing? Maybe we could see if Molly can come over tomorrow.</i></p>
	<p><b>#2: Name it to tame it:</b> When big, right-brain emotions are raging out of control, help your child tell the story about what's upsetting him. In doing so, he'll use his left brain to make sense of his experience and feel more in control.</p>	<p>Whether it's a "small-t" or "big-T" trauma, you can start the storytelling process almost right away (once you've connected right brain to right). At this age, he'll need you to take the lead: <i>You know what I saw? I saw you running, and when your foot hit that slippery spot, you fell. Is that what happened?</i> If he continues the story, great. But if needed, you can continue: <i>So then you started crying, and I ran over to you and ...</i> It can be helpful to make a homemade book with drawings or photos to retell an upsetting story, or to prepare your child for a transition, like a new bedtime routine or starting school.</p>
Integrating the Upstairs and Downstairs	<p><b>#3: Engage, don't enrage:</b></p>	<p>Setting clear boundaries is important, but we often say no more</p>



	<p>In high-stress situations, engage your child's upstairs brain by asking her to consider and plan and choose, rather than triggering her downstairs brain, which is less about thinking and more about reacting.</p>	<p>than we need to. When your child is upset, be creative. Instead of saying, <i>We don't act that way</i>, ask, <i>What's another way you could handle that?</i> Instead of <i>I don't like the way you're talking</i>, try, <i>Can you think of another way to say that, one that will be more polite?</i> Then praise her when she uses her upstairs brain to come up with alternatives. A great question to help avoid power struggle is, <i>Can you come up with an idea for how we can both get what we want?</i></p>
	<p><b>#4: Use it or lose it:</b> Provide lots of opportunities to exercise the upstairs brain so it can be strong and integrated with the downstairs brain and the body.</p>	<p>In addition to introducing your child to shapes and letters and numbers, play "What would you do?" games that present him with hypothetical dilemmas. <i>What would you do if you were at the park and found a toy that you really wanted, but you knew it belonged to someone else?</i> Read together and ask your child to predict how the story will end. Also, give him lots of opportunities to make decisions for himself, even (and especially) when it's difficult.</p>
	<p><b>#5: Move it or lose it:</b> A powerful way to help a child regain upstairs-downstairs balance is to have him move his body.</p>	<p>Kids this age love to move. So when your child is upset, and after you've acknowledged his feelings, give him reasons to move his body. Wrestle with him. Play "keep it up" with a balloon. Toss a ball back and forth while he's telling you why he's upset. Moving the body is a powerful way to change a mood.</p>



<p>Integrating Memory</p>	<p><b>#6: Use the remote of the mind:</b> After an upsetting event, the internal remote lets a child pause, rewind, and fast-forward a story as she tells it, so she can maintain control over how much of it she views.</p>	<p>Most likely, your preschooler loves telling stories. Encourage this. Tell stories about anything that happens: good, bad, and in between. And when a significant event occurs, be willing to narrate and re-narrate the story. Even if your child may not know much about remote controls, she may be able to “go back” and “pause” her story. She’ll be delighted to hear you tell, and help you tell and retell, the story of any big moment in her life. So be prepared to “press play” over and over again --- and know that when you do, you’re promoting healing and integration.</p>
	<p><b>#7: Remember to remember:</b> Help your kids exercise their memory by giving them lots of practice remembering.</p>	<p>Ask questions that exercise the memory: <i>What did Ms. Alvarez think of the robot you took in for sharing today? Remember when Uncle Chris took you to get a snow cone?</i> Play memory games that ask your child to match up pairs or find like items, maybe pictures of friends and family with specific stories or memories. Especially on important events, you want him to remember, take turns talking about the details that stood out for each of you.</p>
<p>Integrating the Many Parts of Myself</p>	<p><b>#8: Let the clouds of emotion roll by:</b> Remind kids that feelings come and go. Fear, frustration, and loneliness are temporary states, not enduring traits.</p>	<p>One reason big feelings can be so uncomfortable for small children is that they don’t view those emotions as temporary. So while you comfort your child when she’s upset, teach her that feelings come and go. Help her see that it’s good to</p>



		<p>acknowledge her emotions, but it's also good to realize that even though she's sad (or angry or scared) right now, she'll probably be happy again in a few minutes. You can even "lead the witness" and ask, <i>When do you think you'll feel better?</i></p>
	<p><b>#9: SIFT:</b>                  Help your children notice and understand the sensations, images, feelings, and thoughts within them.</p>	<p>Talk to your child about his inner world. Help him understand that he can notice and talk about what's going on in his mind and body. He probably won't be ready for the acronym SIFT yet, but you can help him ask questions that guide him toward noticing bodily sensations (<i>Are you hungry?</i>), mental images (<i>What do you picture when you think about Grandma's house?</i>), feelings (<i>It's frustrating when friends don't share, isn't it?</i>), and thoughts (<i>What do you think will happen at school tomorrow?</i>).</p>
	<p><b>#10: Exercise mindsight:</b>                  Mindsight practices teach children to calm themselves and focus their attention where they want.</p>	<p>At this age, kids can practice taking calm breaths, especially if you keep the exercises brief. Have your child lie on her back, and place a toy boat on her stomach. Show her how to take slow big breaths to make the boat go up and down. You can also tap into your child's vivid imagination at this age to give her practice focusing attention and shifting her emotional state:  <i>Imagine that you are resting on the warm sand at the beach and you are feeling calm and happy.</i></p>



Integrating Self and Others	<p><b>#11: Increase the family fun factor:</b> Build fun into the family, so that your kids enjoy positive and satisfying experiences with the people</p>	<p>You don't have to try too hard to have fun with your preschooler. Just being with you is a paradise for him. Spend time with him, play games, and laugh together. Facilitate fun with siblings and grandparents. Be silly and turn potential power struggles into playful and funny moments of joining. When you are intentional about having fun and creating enjoyable family rituals, you're making an investment in your relationship that will pay off for years to come.</p>
	<p><b>#12: Connect through conflict:</b> Rather than an obstacle to avoid, view conflict as an opportunity to teach your kids essential relationship skills.</p>	<p>Use conflict your preschooler faces --- with her siblings, with her classmates, even with you --- to teach her lessons about how to get along with others. Sharing, taking turns, and asking for and granting forgiveness are important concepts she's ready to learn. Model these for her, and take the time to kneel down and help her understand what it means to be in a relationship and how to be considerate and respectful of others, even during times of conflict.</p>

### Early School Age (6-9)

TYPE OF INTEGRATION	WHOLE-BRAIN STRATEGY	APPLICATIONS OF THE STRATEGY
Integrating the Left and Right Brain	<p><b>#1: Connect and redirect:</b> When your child is upset, connect first emotionally, right brain to right brain. Then, once she is more in</p>	<p>Listen first, then repeat how your child is feeling. At the same time, use your nonverbal communication to comfort. Hugs and physical touch, along with empathetic facial</p>



	<p>control and receptive, bring in the left-brain lessons and discipline</p>	<p>expressions, remain powerful tools for calming big emotions. Then redirect through problem-solving and, depending on the circumstance, discipline, and boundary setting.</p>
	<p><b>#2: Name it to tame it:</b> When big, right-brain emotions are raging out of control, help your child tell the story about what's upsetting him. In doing so, he'll use his left brain to make sense of his experience and feel more in control.</p>	<p>Whether it's a "small-t" or "big-T" trauma, you can start the storytelling process almost right away (once you've connected the right brain to the right brain). Whereas with younger kids you may need to do most of the storytelling and with older kids you can let them take the lead, with a school-age child you need to balance the two. Ask lots of questions: <i>Did you just not notice that the swing was coming toward you?</i> or <i>What did your teacher do when he said that to you? What happened after that?</i> It can be helpful to make a homemade book with drawings or photos to retell an upsetting story, or to prepare your child for something she is dreading, like a visit to the dentist or a move.</p>
<p><b>Integrating the Upstairs and Downstairs</b></p>	<p><b>#3: Engage, don't enrage:</b> In high-stress situations, engage your child's upstairs brain by asking her to consider and plan and choose, rather than triggering her downstairs brain, which is less about thinking and more about reacting.</p>	<p>As always, connect first. Avoid immediately playing the "Because I said so!" card. Your child's upstairs brain is blossoming right now, so let it do its job. Explain your reasons, invite questions, ask for alternative solutions, and even negotiate. You're the authority in the relationship, and there's no place for disrespect, but you can</p>



		<p>encourage your child to come up with different approaches to discipline or learning a lesson. When we expect and facilitate more sophisticated thinking, we're less likely to get a reactive, fighting response.</p>
	<p><b>#4: Use it or lose it:</b> Provide lots of opportunities to exercise the upstairs brain so it can be strong and integrated with the downstairs brain and the body.</p>	<p>Play "What would you do?" games and present your child with dilemmas: <i>If a bully was picking on someone at school and there were no adults around, what would you do?</i> Encourage empathy and self-understanding through reflective dialogues about how others feel, and about his own intentions, desires, and beliefs. Also, let your child struggle with difficult decisions and situations. Whenever you can do so responsibly, avoid solving and resist rescuing, even when he makes minor mistakes or not-so-great choices. After all, your goal here isn't perfection on every decision right now, but an optimally developed upstairs brain down the road.</p>
	<p><b>#5: Move it or lose it:</b> A powerful way to help a child regain upstairs-downstairs balance is to have him move his body.</p>	<p>Connect with your child when she's upset, then find ways to get her moving. Get on your bikes together. Play "keep it up" with a balloon or try some yoga poses. Depending on your particular child, you may need to be more direct about what you're doing. Don't feel that you need to "trick" her or hide your strategy. Be direct and explain to her the "move</p>





		it or loose it” concept, then use the lesson to teach her that we can actually control our moods to a significant extent.
Integrating Memory	<b>#6: Use the remote of the mind:</b> After an upsetting event, the internal remote lets a child pause, rewind, and fast-forward a story as she tells it, so she can maintain control over how much of it she views.	A child this age may shy away from retelling difficult stories or recalling painful memories. Help him understand the importance of looking at what’s happened to him. Be gentle and nurturing, and give him the power to pause the story at any point, and even to fast-forward past unpleasant details. But make sure that at some point, even if it’s later on, you rewind and tell the entire story, including even the painful parts.
	<b>#7: Remember to remember:</b> Help your kids exercise their memory by giving them lots of practice remembering.	In the car, at the dinner table, wherever, help your child talk about her experiences, so she can integrate her implicit and explicit memories. This is especially important when it comes to the most important moments of her life, like family experiences, important friendships, and rites of passage. Simply by asking questions and encouraging recollection, you can help her remember and understand important events from the past, which will help her better understand what’s happening to her in the present.
Integrating the Many Parts of Myself	<b>#8: Let the clouds of emotion roll by:</b> Remind kids that feelings come and go. Fear, frustration, and loneliness	Help your child pay attention to the words he uses when he talks about his feelings. There’s nothing wrong with saying, “I’m scared.” But help



	<p>are temporary states, not enduring traits.</p>	<p>him understand that another way to say it is, “I feel scared.” This minor shift in vocabulary can help him understand the subtle but important distinction between “feel” and “am.” He may feel afraid at the moment, but that experience is temporary, not permanent. To give him perspective, ask him how he expects to feel in five minutes, five hours, five days, five months, and five years.</p>
	<p><b>#9: SIFT:</b>                  Help your children notice and understand the sensations, images, feelings, and thoughts within them.</p>	<p>Introduce the wheel of awareness. Also, play the SIFT game in the car or at dinner and actually teach your child the acronym. Help her understand that we need to notice what’s going on within ourselves if we want to control the way we feel and act. Ask questions that guide her toward noticing bodily sensations (<i>Are you hungry?</i>), mental images (<i>What do you picture when you think about Grandma’s house?</i>), feelings (<i>It’s not fun to feel left out, is it?</i>), and thoughts (<i>What do you think will happen at school tomorrow?</i>).</p>
	<p><b>#10: Exercise mindsight:</b>                  Mindsight practices teach children to calm themselves and focus their attention where they want.</p>	<p>Children this age can understand and feel the benefits of getting calm and focusing the mind. Give them practice at being still and quiet, and let them enjoy the calm within. By guiding their mind through visualization and imagination, show them that they have the ability to focus their attention on thoughts</p>



		<p>and feelings that bring them happiness and peace. Show them that anytime they need to calm themselves, they can simply slow down and pay attention to their breathing.</p>
<p><b>Integrating Self and Others</b></p>	<p><b>#11: Increase the family fun factor:</b> Build fun into the family, so that your kids enjoy positive and satisfying experiences with the people</p>	<p>Do what you love doing together. Have a family movie night with popcorn. Play a board game. Ride bikes. Make up a story together. Sing and dance. Just spending time together being happy and silly, and will create a strong relational foundation for the future. Be intentional about having fun and creating enjoyable rituals and memories.</p>
	<p><b>#12: Connect through conflict:</b> Rather than an obstacle to avoid, view conflict as an opportunity to teach your kids essential relationship skills.</p>	<p>Your child is old enough now for more relational sophistication. Explicitly teach a skill, then practice it. Explain about seeing other people's perspectives, then pick out random people in a store or restaurant and try to guess what's important to them and where they are coming from. Teach about reading nonverbal cues, then play a game to see how many examples (frowning, shrugging, lifting eyebrows, etc.) you can come up with. Teach about going beyond apologizing when we've messed up then come up with a timely example where your child can put it into practice by writing a letter or replacing something important.</p>



## Later School Age (9-12)

TYPE OF INTEGRATION	WHOLE-BRAIN STRATEGY	APPLICATIONS OF THE STRATEGY
Integrating the Left and Right Brain	<p><b>#1: Connect and redirect:</b> When your child is upset, connect first emotionally, right brain to right brain. Then, once she is more in control and receptive, bring in the left-brain lessons and discipline</p>	<p>Listen first, then reflect back on how your child is feeling. Be careful not to condescend or talk down to her. Just echo what you hear. And use nonverbals. Even though your child is growing up, she still wants to be nurtured by you. Once she feels felt, it's time to redirect to planning and, if necessary, discipline. Show your child the respect of speaking clearly and directly. She's old enough to hear and understand a logical explanation of the situation and any resulting consequences.</p>
	<p><b>#2: Name it to tame it:</b> When big, right-brain emotions are raging out of control, help your child tell the story about what's upsetting him. In doing so, he'll use his left brain to make sense of his experience and feel more in control.</p>	<p>First, acknowledge feelings. This is no less true for a big kid than it is for a small one (or an adult). Just express, explicitly, what you observe: <i>I don't blame you for being upset. I would be too.</i> Then facilitate the storytelling. Ask questions and be present, but let him tell his own story, in his own time. Especially in painful moments, it's important that kids talk about what's happened to them. But we can't force them to do so. We can only be patient and present and allow them to talk when they're ready. If your child doesn't want to talk to you about it, suggest journaling, or help him find someone he will talk to.</p>
Integrating the Upstairs and Downstairs	<p><b>#3: Engage, don't enrage:</b></p>	<p>This is one of the worst ages to play the "Because I said so!" card.</p>



	<p>In high-stress situations, engage your child's upstairs brain by asking her to consider and plan and choose, rather than triggering her downstairs brain, which is less about thinking and more about reacting.</p>	<p>Instead, encourage your child's blossoming upstairs brain by appealing to it whenever you can. Maintain your authority in the relationship, but as much as possible, discuss alternatives and negotiate with her when it comes to rules and discipline. Be respectful and creative as you help her improve her higher-order thinking faculties by asking her to participate with you in making decisions and coming up with solutions.</p>
	<p><b>#4: Use it or lose it:</b> Provide lots of opportunities to exercise the upstairs brain so it can be strong and integrated with the downstairs brain and the body.</p>	<p>Hypothetical situations become more and more fun as a child's brain develops. Play "What would you do?" games and present your child with dilemmas. These games can be purchased, but you can come up with your own situations: <i>If your friend's mother had been drinking before she was supposed to drive you home, how would you handle it?</i> Encourage empathy and self-understanding through reflective dialogues about how others feel, and your child's own intentions, desires, and beliefs. Also, let him struggle with difficult decisions and situations, even when he makes minor mistakes or not-so-great choices. After all, your goal here isn't perfection on every decision right now, but an optimally developed upstairs brain down the road.</p>



	<p><b>#5: Move it or lose it:</b> A powerful way to help a child regain upstairs-downstairs balance is to have him move his body.</p>	<p>Be direct about how moving his body can help shift your child's mood. Especially when he's upset, explain how helpful it is to take a break and get up and move. Suggest a bike ride or a walk, or do something physically active with him, such as playing Ping-Pong. Even taking a break to stretch or play with a yo-yo can help.</p>
<p>Integrating Memory</p>	<p><b>#6: Use the remote of the mind:</b> After an upsetting event, the internal remote lets a child pause, rewind, and fast-forward a story as she tells it, so she can maintain control over how much of it she views.</p>	<p>As she approaches adolescence, your child may become more reluctant to talk with you about painful experiences. Explain the importance of implicit memory, and how the associations of a past experience can still affect her. Teach her that she can gain control over an experience by retelling the story. Be gentle and nurturing, and give her the power to pause the story at any point, and even to fast-forward past unpleasant details. But make sure that at some point, even if it's later on, you rewind and tell the entire story, including the painful parts.</p>
	<p><b>#7: Remember to remember:</b> Help your kids exercise their memory by giving them lots of practice remembering.</p>	<p>In the car and at the dinner table, in scrapbooks or journals, help your child think about her experiences so she can integrate her implicit and explicit memories. This is especially important when it comes to the most important moments of her life, like family experiences, important friendships, and rites of passage. Simply by asking questions and</p>



		<p>encouraging recollection, you can help her remember and understand important events from the past, which will help her better understand what is happening to her in the present.</p>
<p>Integrating the Many Parts of Myself</p>	<p><b>#8: Let the clouds of emotion roll by:</b> Remind kids that feelings come and go. Fear, frustration, and loneliness are temporary states, not enduring traits.</p>	<p>Your child is old enough to understand this point on a conscious level, but be sure to hear his feelings before you teach this information. Then, once you have validated his feelings, help him understand that they won't last forever. Highlight the subtle but important distinction between "I <i>feel</i> sad" and "I <i>am</i> sad." To give him perspective, ask him how he expects to feel in five minutes, five hours, five days, five months, and five years.</p>
	<p><b>#9: SIFT:</b> Help your children notice and understand the sensations, images, feelings, and thoughts within them.</p>	<p>Some kids this age may actually be interested in the concept of SIFTing to see what's going on inside themselves. Understanding these categories can give them some measure of control over their lives, which, as they move toward being teenagers, will increasingly feel more and more chaotic. Also, this is a great age to regularly use the wheel of awareness to help understand and respond to issues that arise.</p>
	<p><b>#10: Exercise mindsight:</b> Mindsight practices teach children to calm themselves and focus their attention where they want.</p>	<p>Explain to your child the significant benefits of getting calm and focusing the mind. Give her practice at being still and quiet, and let her</p>



		<p>enjoy the calm within. Show her that she has the ability to focus her attention on thoughts and feelings that bring her happiness and peace. Introduce her to some of the practices in this book, such as guided visualizations and focusing on her breath, or look at some of the infinite resources you'll find at the library or online.</p>
<p><b>Integrating Self and Others</b></p>	<p><b>#11: Increase the family fun factor:</b> Build fun into the family, so that your kids enjoy positive and satisfying experiences with the people</p>	<p>The cliché is that as kids move toward their teenage years, they less and less enjoy being with their parents. To some extent this is true. But the more meaningful and enjoyable experiences you give your child now, the more he'll want to be with you in the years to come. Kids this age still love silliness and play, so don't underestimate the power of a game of charades or an interactive board game when it comes to strengthening family relationships. Go camping. Cook together. Visit a theme park. Just find ways to appreciate being together, creating fun rituals you can enjoy for years to come.</p>
	<p><b>#12: Connect through conflict:</b> Rather than an obstacle to avoid, view conflict as an opportunity to teach your kids essential relationship skills.</p>	<p>All the relational and conflict resolution skills you've been trying to give your child since she was learning to talk --- seeing other people's perspectives, reading nonverbal cues, sharing, apologizing --- are the same lessons you're teaching as she moves toward adolescence. Keep talking about</p>





		<p>these skills explicitly, and practice them. Whether you're asking your child to see the world through someone else's eyes, or write a note of apology, teach her that conflict is something not to avoid but to resolve and that doing so often improves a relationship.</p>
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