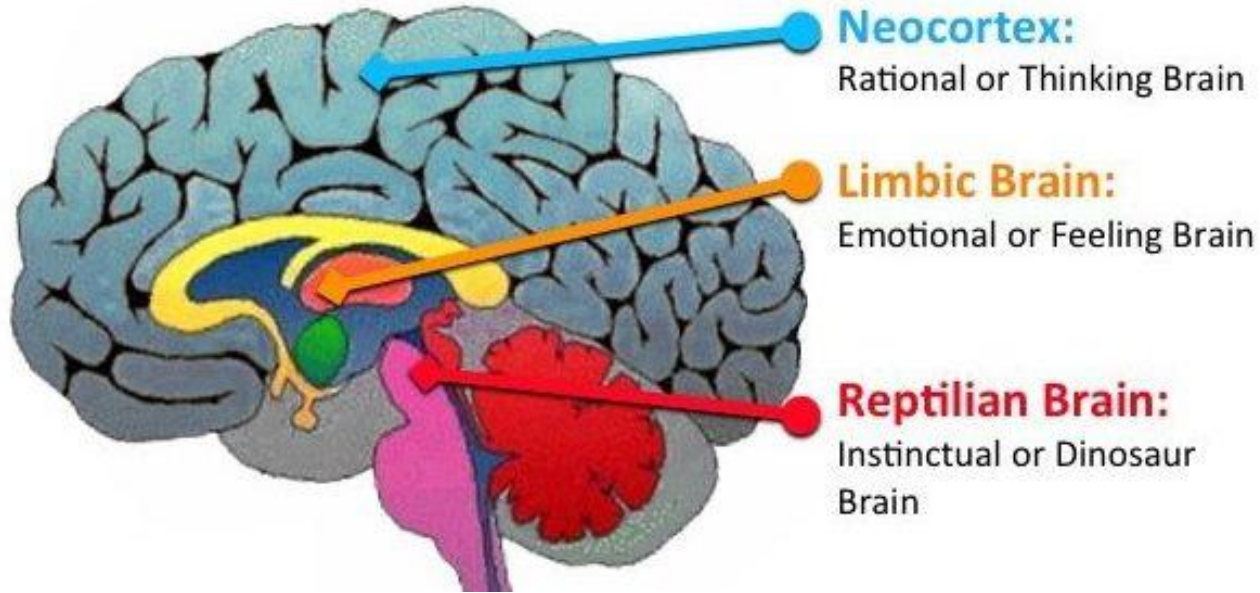


Being Civil

Scott M. Johnston



On Civility: Some Learning about Brain Development

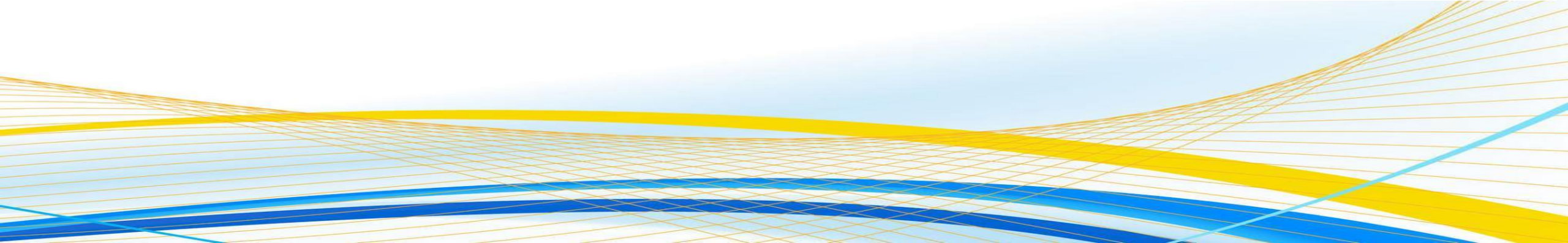
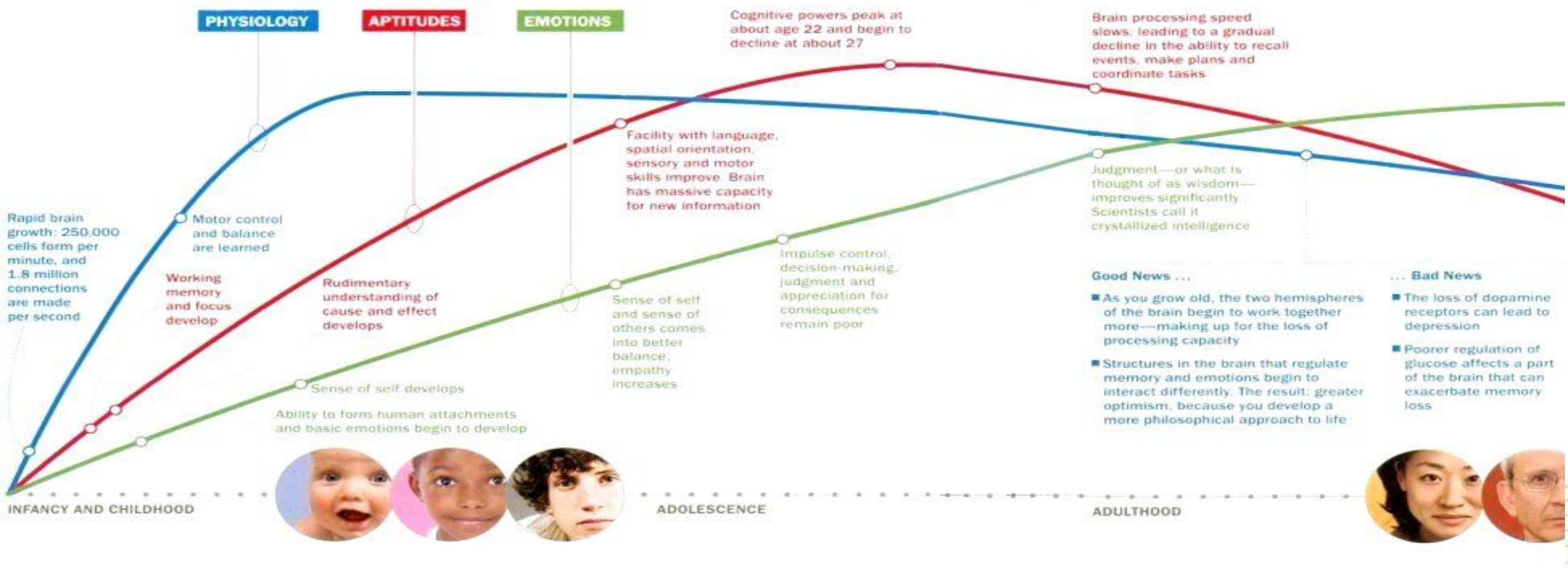


The Connection: The amygdala and frontal cortex are connected through neural pathways that allow for communication between the emotion-driven responses of the amygdala and the regulatory functions of the frontal cortex. During adolescence, this network is not yet fully mature, which can lead to a gap between emotional responses and the ability to regulate them effectively. In other words, adolescents might feel emotions intensely due to an active amygdala but may not yet have the full capacity to control those emotions due to the still-developing frontal cortex.


Amygdala: This is the region of the brain often associated with emotional processes, including the perception of and reactions to emotions such as fear and pleasure. **During adolescence, the amygdala is already well-developed**, which means teenagers are acutely sensitive to emotional stimuli. This can lead to the intense emotional experiences often associated with this period of development.

Frontal Cortex: Specifically, the prefrontal cortex (PFC) is the brain area involved in executive functions, such as decision-making, problem-solving, planning, and inhibiting inappropriate behaviors. Unlike the amygdala, the PFC **continues to mature well into the mid-20s**. This ongoing development means that the **regulatory controls over emotions and impulses are still maturing during adolescence**.

On Civility: Emotional Development



On Civility: Cognitive Functions

- Executive Skills
 - Language Skills
 - Emotion Regulation
 - Cognitive Flexibility
 - Social Skills
- 

On Civility

- **Executive Skills**
- **Language Skills**
- **Emotion Regulation**
- **Cognitive Flexibility**
- **Social Skills**

Shifting one's cognitive (thinking) set – from one mind-set to another. These skills include planning, attention, problem-solving, and self-monitoring. Development begins in infancy as babies learn to pay attention and remember faces. Toddlers start to develop impulse control and the ability to follow simple plans. Between ages 3-5, children can understand multi-step instructions and start to manage their attention more deliberately. During school years, these skills expand as children learn to organize tasks and manage time. Working memory expands. Executive functions continue to mature into young adulthood, with significant development occurring in the prefrontal cortex **until the mid-20s.**

On Civility

- Executive Skills
- Language Skills
- Emotion Regulation
- Cognitive Flexibility
- Social Skills

Categorizing and expressing emotions, identifying and articulating one's needs, describing and solving problems... (IDK)

Babbling starts as early as 6 months, and by the first year, most infants understand basic words and can say a few. Vocabulary grows rapidly from ages 1-3, and grammar develops as sentences become more complex.

School-age children learn to use language in different contexts, understand metaphors, and grasp more abstract concepts (pragmatics, expression). Language skills typically continue to refine into adolescence, where nuances, idioms, and advanced structures become better understood.

On Social Media

Words make up only 7% of effective communication.

Body language makes up 55% and voice tone and modulation makes up 38%.

Texting is missing out on 93% of effective communication. It's no surprise that texting is causing a lot of miscommunication. Face to face communication is always the best because it creates a social connection, which you can't create by only texting.

The words "I am sad" or "I love you" have much more of an impact face to face and you are more likely to experience a genuine social connection to meet your emotional needs. ~ Wade Sorochan



On Civility

- Executive Skills
- Language Skills
- **Emotion Regulation**
- Cognitive Flexibility
- Social Skills

Capacity to deal with challenges without getting frustrated. Frustration is really a collision of two or more emotions – *ie. Angry and Scared*

In the first year, infants rely on caregivers to soothe them, but by age 2, they begin to develop their own strategies for emotional regulation. This progresses with age, as children learn to identify emotions and develop more strategies for managing them (*ie. modulation - adjusting emotional response*).

Adolescence can be a turbulent time for emotional regulation due to hormonal changes, but by the end of this period, most young adults have a more sophisticated understanding of their emotions and can employ complex strategies for regulation.

On Civility

- Executive Skills
- Language Skills
- Emotion Regulation
- **Cognitive Flexibility**
- Social Skills

Moving from Black and White to shades of gray.
(Kohlberg's Stages of Moral Development)

Early signs of cognitive flexibility are seen in toddlers as they begin to understand that objects can be categorized in multiple ways. This continues to develop as children start school and are able to adapt to different rules and environments.

Adolescents often struggle with cognitive flexibility but improve as they grow, learning to consider different perspectives and solutions (adaptability).

This skill is refined through the early 20s, aiding in problem-solving and adapting to life's complexities.

Kohlberg's Moral Stages

Level and Age	Stage	What determines right and wrong?
Preconventional: Up to the Age of 9	Punishment & Obedience	Right and wrong defined by what they get punished for. If you get told off for stealing then obviously stealing is wrong.
	Instrumental - Relativist	Similar, but right and wrong is now determined by what we are rewarded for, and by doing what others want. Any concern for others is motivated by selfishness.
Conventional: Most adolescents and adults	Interpersonal concordance	Being good is whatever pleases others. The child adopts a conformist attitude to morality. Right and wrong are determined by the majority
	Law and order	Being good now means doing your duty to society. To this end we obey laws without question and show a respect for authority. Most adults do not progress past this stage.
Postconventional: 1 0 to 15% of the over 20s.	Social contract	Right and wrong now determined by personal values, although these can be over-ridden by democratically agreed laws. When laws infringe our own sense of justice we can choose to ignore them.
	Universal ethical principle	We now live in accordance with deeply held moral principles which are seen as more important than the laws of the land.



On Civility

- Executive Skills
- Language Skills
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- **Social Skills**

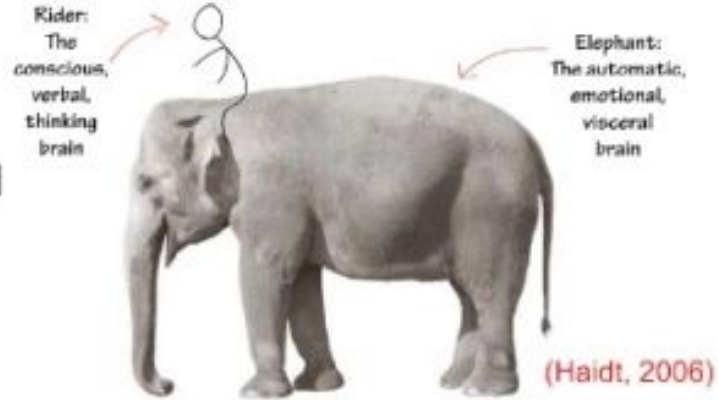
Dealing with others in complex situations.

Initially, social skills are about bonding with parents and responding to familiar faces. From ages 2-3, play becomes a crucial part of social development, with children learning to take turns and share.

Throughout school years, peer relationships become central, and children learn complex social skills like cooperation and conflict resolution. Adolescence is **marked by a search for identity** and independence, often **refining social skills through peer interaction**. In early adulthood, social networks may narrow but deepen, with a focus on long-term partnerships and professional relationships.

One brain, two minds

- Elephant = impulsive mind
- Rider = Rational mind
- Path = the environment



Willpower is the strength of the rider



Sometimes the rider falls off the elephant...

On Civility: Conflict and Mean Behavior

Also...
Self-Defense
Is
Not
Offense

Assault

265 (1) A person commits an assault when

- (a) without the consent of another person, he applies force intentionally to that other person, directly or indirectly;
- (b) he attempts or threatens, by an act or a gesture, to apply force to another person, if he has, or causes that other person to believe on reasonable grounds that he has, present ability to effect his purpose; or
- (c) while openly wearing or carrying a weapon or an imitation thereof, he accosts or impedes another person or begs.

Application

The law on assault in the *Criminal Code*

The *Criminal Code* says that assaulting someone or threatening to assault someone is a crime. Slapping, punching, pinching, kicking, restraining, or even touching are all examples of actions that may be considered assault.

However, not every action involving contact or the threat of contact between two people is assault. There are some exceptions. People may give their consent to contact. So, for example, hockey players may body check each other and boxers may punch each other without it being a crime. This is because they have given their consent to physical contact within the rules of the sport.

(c) the exercise of authority,

Accused's belief as to consent

(4) Where an accused alleges that he believed that the complainant consented to the conduct that is the subject-matter of the charge, a judge, if satisfied that there is sufficient evidence and that, if believed by the jury, the evidence would constitute a defence, shall instruct the jury, when reviewing all the evidence relating to the determination of the honesty of the accused's belief, to consider the presence or absence of reasonable grounds for that belief.

R.S., c. C-34, s. 244; 1974-75-76, c. 93, s. 21; 1980-81-82-83, c. 125, s. 19.


On Civility: Conflict and Mean Behavior

So when are we going to talk about bullying?

- 1. CONFLICT**
 - 2. MEAN BEHAVIOUR (RANDOM TARGET)**
 - 3. REPEATED, TARGETED, MEAN BEHAVIOUR**
- 


On Civility: Conflict and Mean Behavior

Being “mean” can be a form of social currency:

1. Social Status: leveraging hierarchy.
 2. Group Identity: Reinforcing group bonds at others' expense
 3. Control and Manipulation: Asserting control over others' interactions
 4. Attention Seeking: To become the focus of others' attention
 5. Insecurity Defense: To mask insecurities
 6. Modeling and Social Learning: IF meanness is deemed to be rewarded
 7. Lack of Empathy Development: May not understand the impact
 8. Testing Boundaries: Engaging in “risk” activities.
- 

On Civility: Conflict and Mean Behavior

Promote CIVIL behaviour:

1. School Climate
 2. No tolerance for MEAN behaviour
 3. Social Emotional Learning
 4. Empower Bystanders: TELL!
 5. Promote inclusivity and diversity
 6. Repair relationships
 7. Model behaviours we want to see (easier to teach than to “unteach”)
 8. Regular dialogue and professional development.
 9. Consequences - not punishment.
- 

Dynamics in Action

Parent understanding of development in progress.

