

## The Hand Brain



“If you put your thumb in the middle of your palm and then curl your fingers over the top, you’ll have a pretty handy model of the brain. (My kids can’t stand that pun, either.) The face of the person is in front of the knuckles, the back of the head toward the back of your hand. Your wrist represents the spinal cord, rising from your backbone, upon which the brain sits. If you lift up your fingers and raise your thumb, you’ll see the inner brainstem represented in your palm. Place your thumb back down and you’ll see the approximate location of the limbic area (ideally we’d have two thumbs, left and right, to make this a symmetric model). Now curl your fingers back over the top, and your cortex is in place.” (*Minding the Brain* by Daniel Siegel, M.D. ; an excerpt from Dr. Daniel Siegel’s book: [Mindsight: The New Science of Personal Transformation.](#))

- The **brainstem** is in charge of everything we don’t **think** about- breathing, digestion, heart beating etc- everything our brain/body does to keep us alive without us having to consciously **THINK** about it
- The next part of our brain to grow is our **fear center- this part of our brain (the thumb)** houses our flight or fight mechanism- great for our survival! We first need *felt-safety*- or to grow up in a safe environment- if we have safety our brain can grow the attachment neurons that allow us to attach to safe people. The next part to grow is the regulation neurons of the brain- these help us regulate our emotions and feel calm in our body.
- The last part of our brain to grow is our **thinking brain- (the fingers)** this is the part of the brain that is charge of logic, consequences, reasoning, and control- all of the conscious thinking that we do comes from this part of the brain.

### “Flipping One’s Lid”

