



Flipping Your Lid!

Created by Sally Gibson - Portland, OR

Ideas from Positive Discipline (Lynn Lott & Jane Nelson) and

Dan Siegel's "Brain in the Palm of Your Hand"

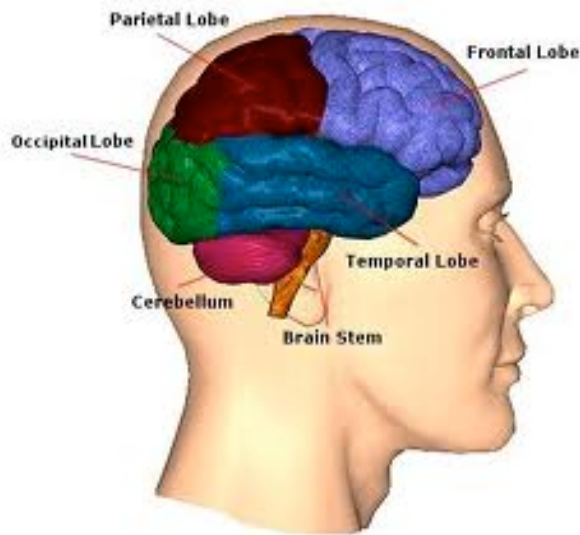
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by Flora McCormick, Parenting Coach and Professional Counselor

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This is story is about our brains, how we think and what happens when we “flip our lid.”



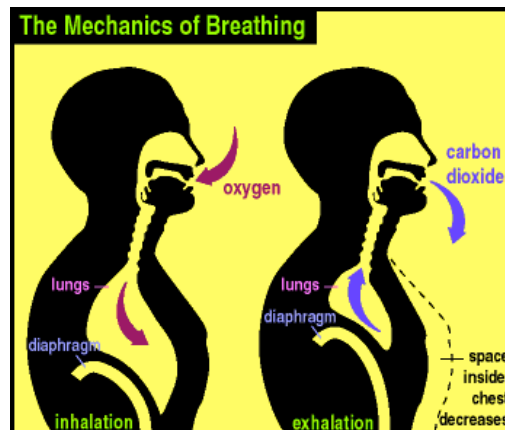
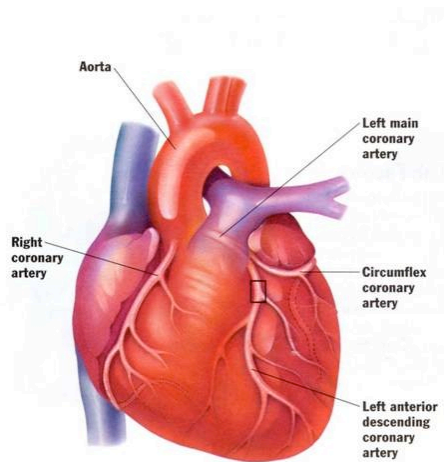
“Flipping my lid” means to have lost control. When a person flips their lid, it means that they are no longer thinking and acting clearly.



Pretend this hand is a brain. Imagine that the palm of the hand to the wrist is the part of the brain called the “primitive brain.”



The primitive brain controls the body’s automatic functions. These are the bodily functions we don’t have to think about, they happen automatically. Heart beat and breathing are two examples of what the primitive brain controls.



Now the thumb will cross over the palm to represent the “mid brain.”



This is the part of the body that controls our “fight or flight” response. Fight or flight is a response that we have to a danger or a threat. When faced with a threat we can either stay and fight.... Or run away!!



This part of the brain also stores our old memories.

Sometimes those memories make us feel scared or sad because of what happened in our past, even if what is happening right now is not the same.



Now the fingers cover the thumb...this represents the cortex.



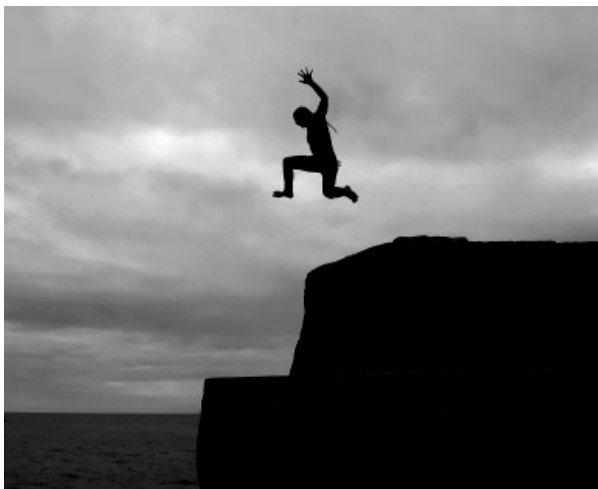
The front, where the fingers are, is the only place where thinking and problem solving happens!

This is also the only place in the brain where self-control happens.

Self Control: When an idea pops into my head.... and I *stop and think* and decide if it's a good thing to



Self-Control: When you look before you leap.



Guess what happens when you get upset.

That's right...You flip your lid!



What's exposed?

Our fight or flight response!

And our old memories.



Now imagine two people who have flipped their lids...



Is this the time to solve the problem they are having?

No!

Will these two people help the situation right now?

No!

Will these two people work together to find a good solution right now?

No!

We need to wait and calm down so we can think clearly.



This hand represents a “brain” with its lid almost flipped.



If my Dad/Mom/Teacher sees me acting like I’m about to flip my lid, he/she can show me this sign.

- If I feel like I am about to flip my lid I can show my Dad/Mom/Teacher the sign as well!

It is a reminder to me that it might help to go to a special place and cool down.



Once I've taken some time and calmed down in my special place, then I can come back and talk about what happened and work on solving the problem.

Wait! "What special place?" you ask.

That's right. We haven't made a special place for these "flip your lid" moments, yet.

Let's work together to think of a space or classroom where I am able to relax, frustrated or feel I am about to flip. I can use this space whenever I



feel like I need a break.

I might also use this space when I get angry so that I don't do or

say things that I will later wish I



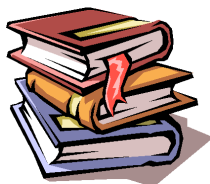
hadn't.

Some people like to have certain things in their space to help them to feel better. Some people like to have

books,

music,

pillows,



or stuffed animals.



I can also take slow, deep breaths to relax (like I am smelling soup and then cooling the soup when I exhale).

I can make a list of things that I think I might want in my special space.

Things I would like in my space:

1.	
2.	
3.	

I might also ask Dad/Mom/Teacher to come with me to my special space for comfort. They will not change their mind about the thing that made me upset, but they will be able to give me hugs and/or reassurance that they still love me.



OK. Now I'm ready. In my special place I can take some time and calm down until I'm ready to talk about what happened and work on solving the problem.

