



# 9 FUNCTIONS OF THE MIDDLE PREFRONTAL CORTEX

Adapted from "The Mindful Brain"  
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Sustained focused attention with Unified Therapy activates and develops the nine Middle Prefrontal Cortex functions. How you focus your attention shapes the structure of the brain; it's the core of health.

## Body Regulation

- Body Regulation is achieved by the Autonomic (automatic) Nervous System. The system generally works without conscious control and regulates functions like heart rate, breathing, digestion, vascular tone, inflammation and immune response, etc. It gives us the ability to come back to base line, homeostasis, peace and ease after stressors.

## Attuned Communication

- Attuned Communication is the ability to feel another ones feelings. Feeling felt. Children need attunement to feel secure and to develop well. Through out our life we need attunement to feel close and connected.

## Emotional Balance/Affect Regulation

- Emotional Balance in this context is defined as being able to balance between rigidity and chaos/arousal. In other words, being able to keep from being overwhelmed or becoming inflexible in one's emotional response. The ability to feel fear, sadness and anger and change it to ease and peace. Also gives you the ability to stay clear and focus in the face of storms from both outside and inside of us.

## Response Flexibility

- Response Flexibility is the capacity to pause before action. Such a process requires the assessment of ongoing stimuli, the delay of reaction, selection from a variety of possible options and the initiation of action.

## Empathy (Mind Sight)

- Empathy is defined as conscious awareness and sensitivity to the mind of someone else. It is the putting of oneself in someone else's shoes. Having compassion and seeing others points of view.

## Insight or Self-Knowing Awareness

- Insight links the past, present and future. Insight means integrating cortical representation of autobiographical memory stores and limbic firing that gives emotional texture to the emerging themes of our present awareness, life story and image of the future.

## Fear Modulation/Fear Extinction

- Fear can be modulated from the middle PFC via neurons that enervate the amygdale, a limbic structure that registers threat and opportunity. These neurons can release calming neurotransmitters (GABA) and can be consciously reprogrammed.

## Intuition

- Intuition in this context means registering the input from neurons from the heart and gut. In other words, respecting one's gut feeling.

## Morality

- Morality in this context means the ability to think of the larger social good and enact those behaviors, even when alone.