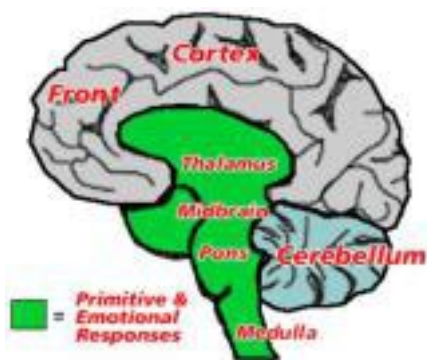


Stage	Characterised by....	Strategies
The Trigger Stage	<p>A precipitating event, such as a perceived personal attack, threat to self-esteem or property – something happens.</p> <p>Feelings such as fear, anxiety or frustration leading to changes in behaviour, which may be subtle at first.</p> <p>The beginnings of physiological arousal.</p>	<p>At this point, if child/young person wants to avoid getting to crisis stage, they can apply the gauge/relaxation method to bring them down, e.g. a discussion of what particular triggers are.</p> <p>Pre-planned self-talk, visualisation or relaxation strategy.</p> <p>Previous trigger-identification.</p> <p>Distraction (change task/activity or pre-planned alternative, e.g., favourite book).</p> <p>Relocation.</p> <p>Awareness of feelings about peer and adult physical proximity.</p>
The Escalation Stage	<p>The body preparing itself for fight or flight, e.g. tension in the muscles, rapid breathing.</p> <p>Reasoning and rational behaviour reduces.</p> <p>Energy level rises: pacing, talking more quickly/loudly.</p> <p>Ability to listen reducing.</p> <p>Becoming focused on a particular issue.</p> <p>Others' behaviour becoming over-interpreted and perceived as threatening.</p>	<p>Some of those strategies used at the trigger stage may still be helpful together with:</p> <p>Individually tailored and well-practised interventions which are aimed at physical calming.</p> <p>Moving to a pre-agreed place to calm down, i.e. remove from the immediate environment.</p> <p>Adult needs to avoid using language which will escalate things more quickly, such as “pull yourself together!”</p> <p>Action by the adult to reduce non-verbal signals which may be perceived as aggressive; adult should sit down, ‘soften’ eye contact, and speak more quietly.</p>
The Crisis Stage	<p>A high state of physiological arousal.</p> <p>Control over aggressive impulses lessens.</p> <p>Volatile behaviour, e.g. kicking, lashing out.</p> <p>Inability to make rational judgements.</p> <p>High egocentric frame of mind.</p> <p>Difficulty in responding to external stimuli.</p> <p>Confusion, combined with absolute focus.</p>	<p>The strategies open to use at this stage are few. The focus is on management of the situation.</p> <p>High rationality, low emotion.</p> <p>Assertive; aware of volume, tone, eye contact and proximity.</p> <p>Give plenty of space.</p> <p>Remove potentially dangerous things.</p> <p>Remove other children, if necessary.</p>

		Send for help.
The Plateau/ Recovery Stage	<p>The end of the immediate crisis.</p> <p>Slow subsiding of anger.</p> <p>The real possibility of re-escalation.</p> <p>Over sensitivity to triggers and others' behaviour.</p> <p>Vulnerability and confusion.</p> <p>Guilt feelings may be starting to emerge.</p>	<p>Awareness that the aroused state can last up to 90 minutes, do not try to rush this as it can easily be ignited in this period, with little/no build up.</p> <p>Need to protect from repeating/fresh triggers.</p> <p>Provide a space and time which feels safe.</p> <p>Calm tone and body language from adult.</p> <p>No inquests at this point.</p>
Post-Crisis/ Depression Stage	<p>The need to rest and recover.</p> <p>The beginnings of a return to rationality.</p> <p>The likelihood of unhappiness about what has happened.</p> <p>Guilt leading to negative feelings about self.</p> <p>Further threat to self-esteem.</p>	<p>Help the child to distinguish between feelings about self and feelings about behaviour.</p> <p>Look for ways to help child start to put things right.</p> <p>Discuss how things can be done differently next time.</p> <p>Encourage child to believe you want to help them make it better.</p>



The brain is divided into three areas: the reptilian brain, the limbic system and the neocortex.

The **reptilian brain** constitutes the most primitive brain region. It is responsible for the flight-or-fight response when there is a perceived threat to our survival and for many basic biological functions.

Emotions are concerned with the pull and push of the “here and now”.

Rationality, problem solving, is concerned with the *longer-term* view considering alternatives, *foreseeing* and evaluating the pros and cons of acting in a certain way.