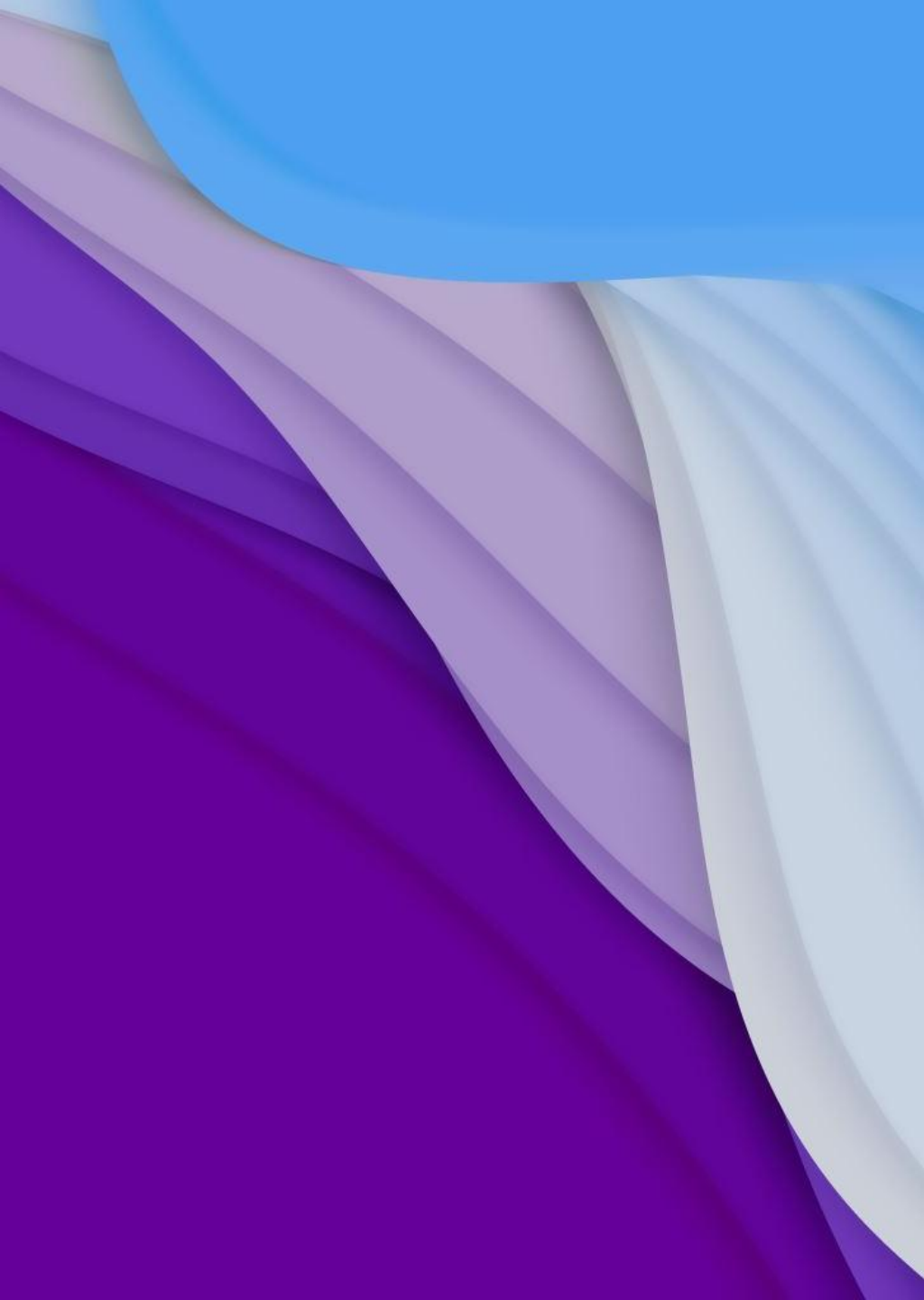




THE GRIEVING PROCESS AS SEEN THROUGH THE EYES OF THE “BROKEN HEART SYNDROME”

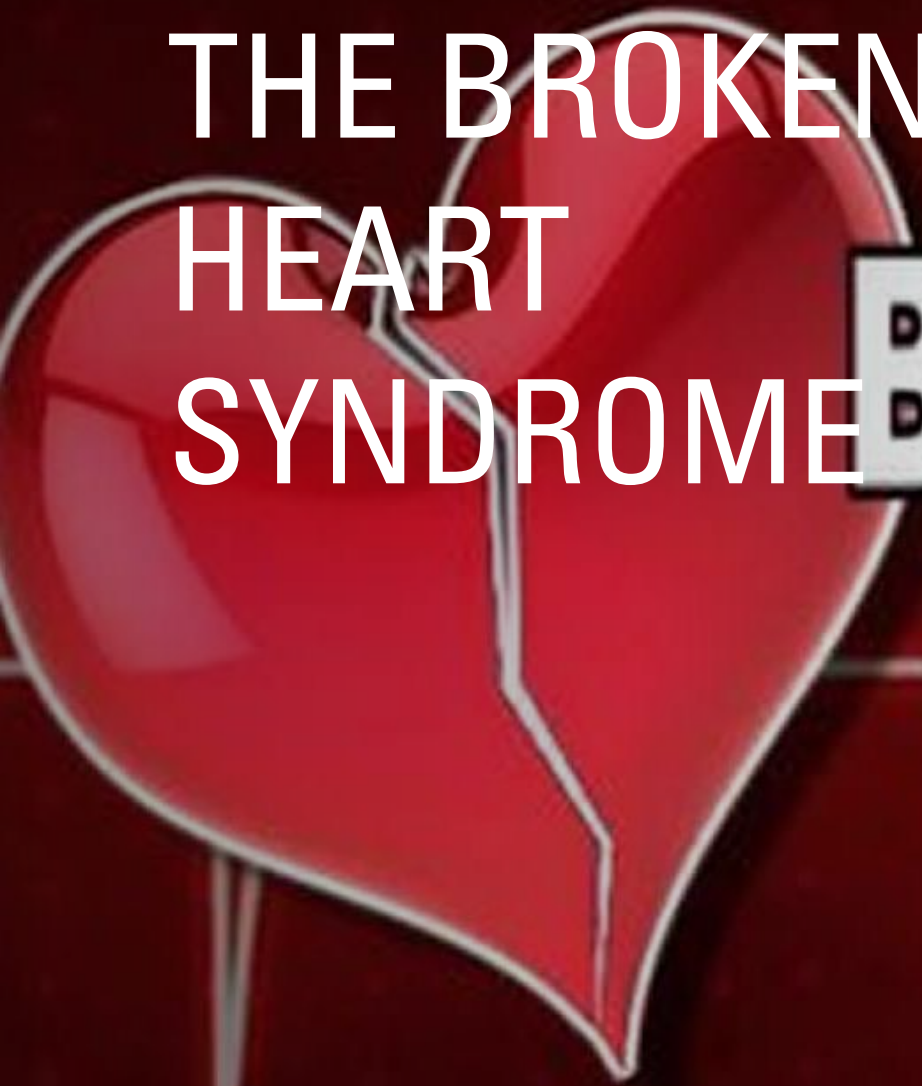
Dr. Charles Bransford, MD



WHAT DO YA
THINK? EDGER

THE BROKEN
HEART
SYNDROME

**Broken Heart
SYNDROME**



99 Ways to Die



And How to
Avoid Them

Ashely Alker, MD

SCIENCE AND THE BROKEN HEART

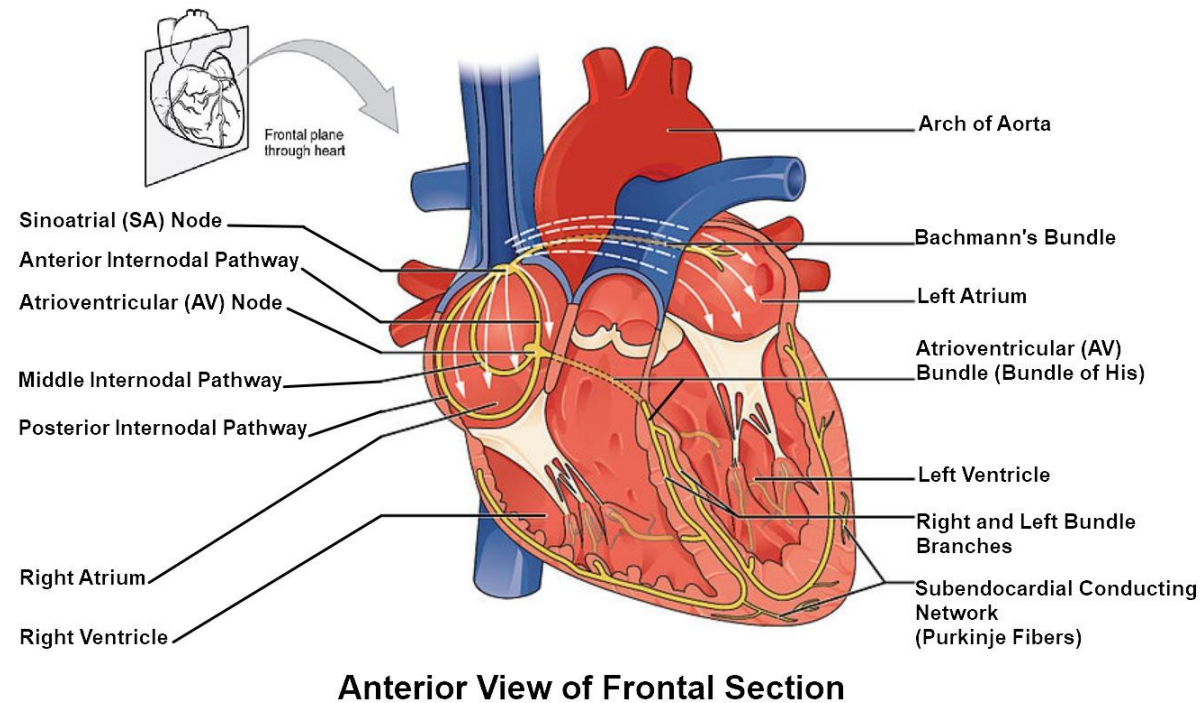
- Age of onset
- Mortality rates
- Male/female preponderance
- Not necessarily old love
- Maybe quiet love
- Dactylography- study of human fingerprints



HEART AS PUMP, AS PERIPHERAL BRAIN, AS SEAT OF EMOTIONS

- Denervation-- Feelings before words
- Sympathetic
- Parasympathetic
- Transplant rejection/resentment
- Heart metaphors: Midnight drum, bank of feelings,
- Small town clock, locked drawer of grief, a mirror
- A hand -stitched quilt of old vows and new bruises
- A stone hearth that keeps warmth after the fire goes out

SYMPATHETIC NERVE INNERVATION OF HEART



THE TEETER-TOOTER BETWEEN LOVE AND LOSS



- One side love, the other loss

PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS OF A BROKEN HEART



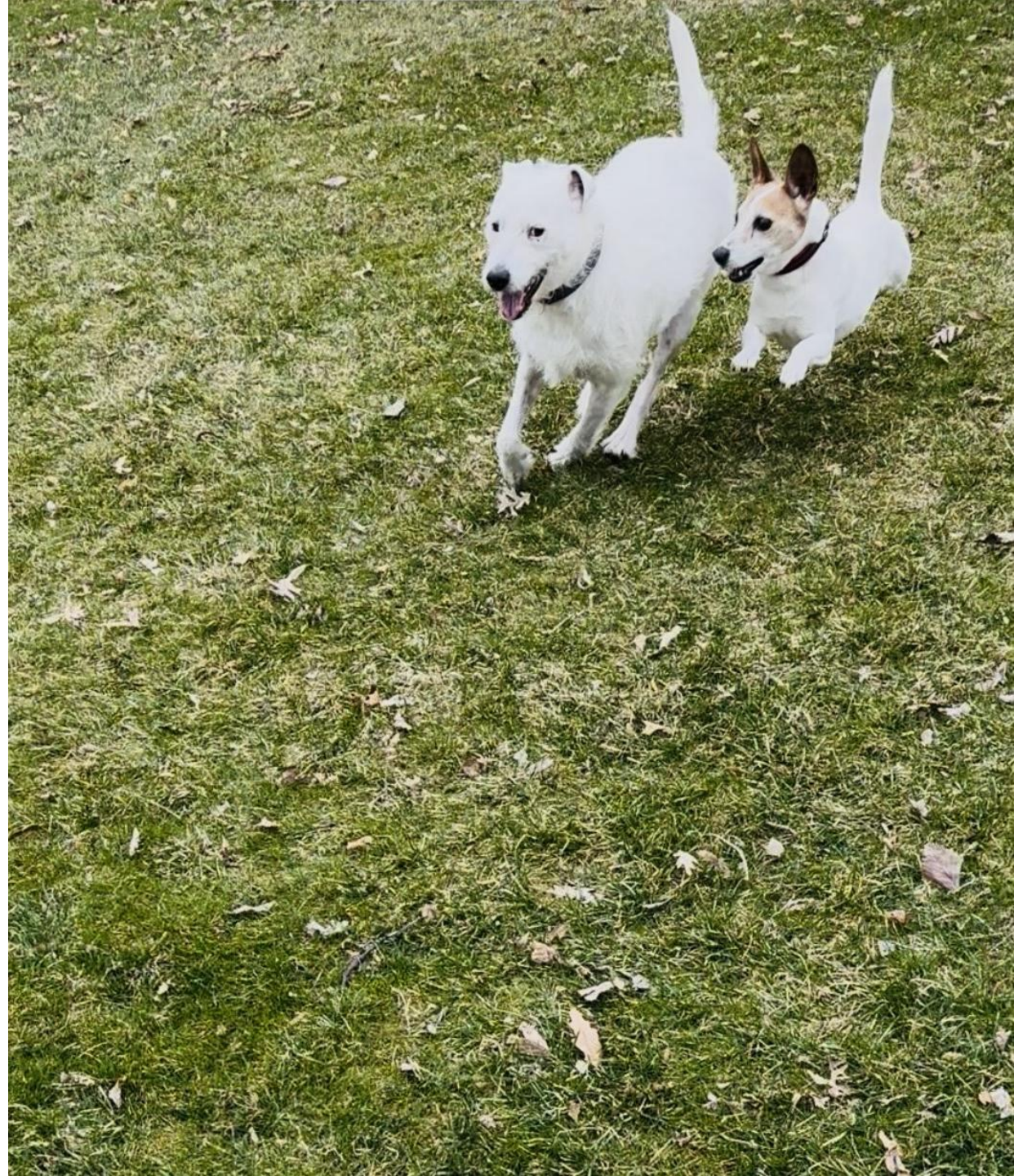
TOTAL BODY GRIEF



PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS OF GRIEF



QUIET LOVE



BODY-MIND- SPIRIT IN GRIEF

The interaction of three
bubbles---

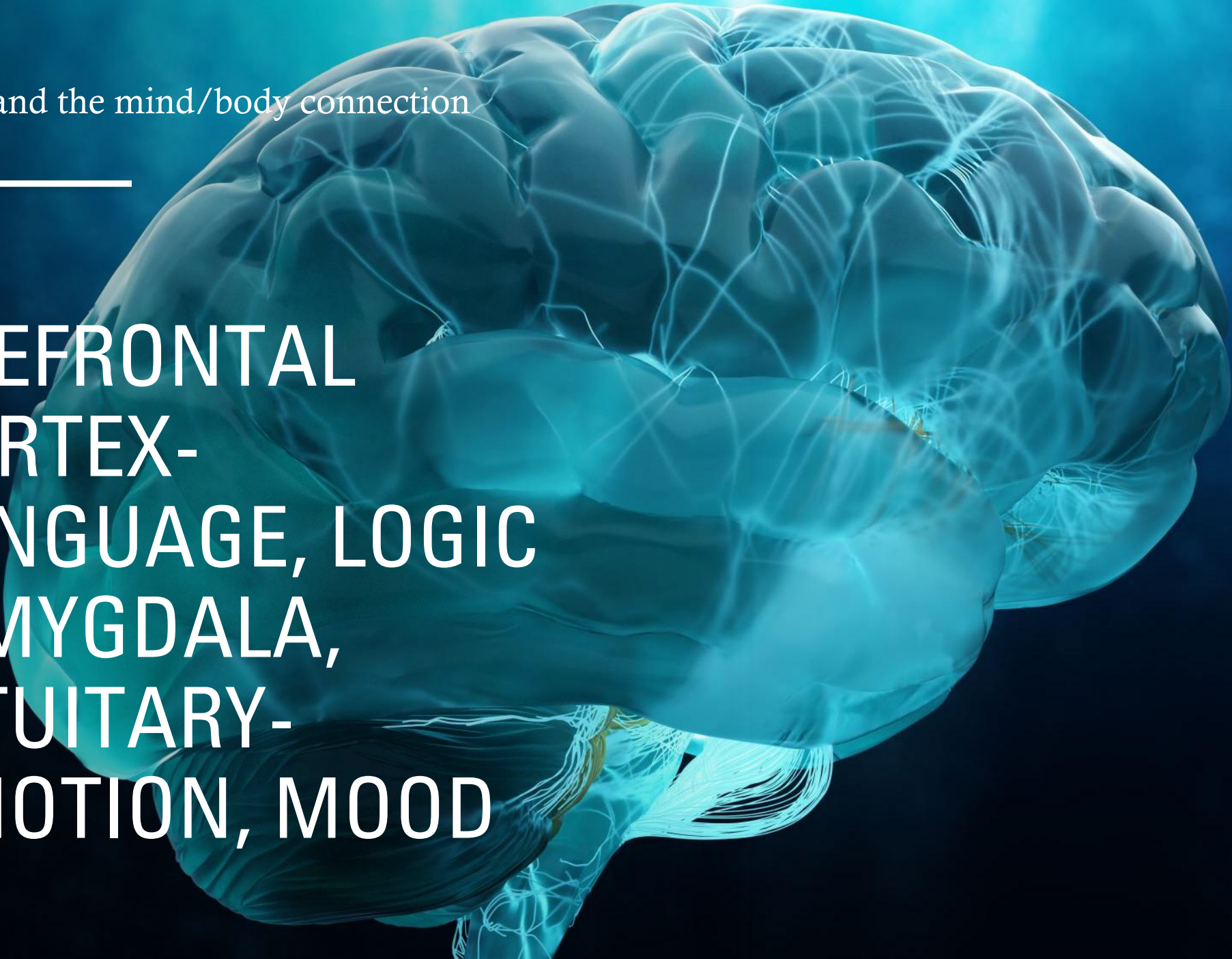


INSTABILITY LEADS TO CHANGE



Grief and the mind/body connection

PREFRONTAL
CORTEX-
LANGUAGE, LOGIC
AMYGDALA,
PITUITARY-
EMOTION, MOOD



SOUL SURVIVAL-
THE THICKENED
SHELL VS THE
POROUS



A FRAGILE SOUL

- Humpty-dumpty, sitting, just waiting to fall
 - My shell, cracked but not broken, yolk dripping
 - You can't place a band-aid, they just wont stick
 - Egg shells are not like skin, elastic, transformative alive
 - Shells are thin and rigid. Sharp when they are broken
-

HOW LONG MUST I BALANCE, UNSTEADILY, WOBBLY



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- Everyone handling me with care
- With kind, carefully chosen words
- Fearful the wrong might initiate a tsunami of sorrow
- Engulfing us both, better to say nothing

OH GENTLE SHELL THAT SURROUNDS MY SOUL

- If you break my center will simply pour out
- Dripping over everything
- I dream of being soft boiled, or even better, poached
- Gently moving forward as an Amoeba, or Casper the friendly ghost





SILENTLY, INVISIBLE, SECRETLY FITTING IN A FOREIGN AGENT OR SPY

- Maybe a hermit crab, stealing someone else's shell
 - My yoke is so yellow (the color of fear or worse cowardice)
 - Stained by the vicissitudes of life
 - Broken hearts, shattered dreams, stolen health, law-less-ness
-

I ONCE CRACKED AN EGG ONLY TO FIND NOTHING INSIDE

- Completely empty, sucked dry
- The moving van had come,
only a few packages remained
- I swear I could hear my echo
- As a resounding train whistle
transforming the countryside





THE PEAK-END EFFECT

- Memory is not a videotape recording, but rather a complicated system that tries to summarize the experience into a smaller bit, that can later be amplified and have details added back in
- Part of the 'summary' takes the peak emotional effect of the story (positive or negative) and ties it to the end of the story as a way to summarize what happened. Ends matter'
- We want the funeral to help make a positive ending to the loss
- Retirement parties



STANDING IN THE MIDDLE OF THE TEETER-TOOTER

- Part of grief work is being able to move beyond the peak-end effect of memory
- In divorce, we often remember the episode that finally triggered the divorce, and then the signing of the papers
- Grief work helps us remember all the events in-between that were a big part of the relationship
- In baseball we remember the end result- forgetting the great plays