



The story of your brain!

Your great, great, great x100 grandma & grandpa didn't have a tv, or **hot water**, or even a house... they lived in a cave!


Draw them waving to you from their cave!


There were no shops so they had to **find food**, **make their own clothes**, and there were **animals trying to eat them** too. (And **no doctors** if they got hurt or ill!)


Draw them finding fruit & berries on a cold day, wearing animal skin clothes, and a sabre tooth tiger is sneaking up on them!


So, part of their brain **helped** them to **run**, **fight** or **hide** when it was dangerous by making them **feel scared**, **angry** or **tired** – their **“cave brain”**!

Draw them:

 Running from a big animal


 Fighting a bear that attacked them

 Sleeping under a bearskin on a really cold day!


Their cave brain also **gave them worries** to help them spot danger (like hearing a stick break in the forest: **“It’s a tiger!!”**), and **kept repeating worries** (**“It’s out there, it’s really bad, it’s going to get you!!”** x100 )

Draw them:

 Running away from a little noise, like a stick breaking

 Awake in their cave at night worrying

Their cave brain helped them a lot, but worrying filled up their **worry pot** in their brain, and they felt **even worse**...

It was a hard and scary life because **it was easy to die**, and **lots of people did** 

So how did they feel **better**...?

Draw them looking at us, saying / thinking “what should we do?”

1. They found that **sleep emptied their worry pot** and they felt better in the morning, so they tried to have a good sleep every day!

Draw them:

- Waking up and looking happy after a good sleep!

2. They found that **doing helpful & happy things made brainshine** in their brains, which made them feel **relaxed, confident & happy...**

Draw them:

- Making a helpful/happy plan
- Getting food / making something
- Working together & having fun with friends too!

...they actually felt **gooooooooood!!** 😊

With a **little smiley sun in their heads to show the brainshine!**



They found that **remembering & planning helpful & happy things made brainshine** too, so they focused on them and felt even better! :D

3. Now their **cave brain was relaxed and asleep**



because it knew **they had better plans than run / fight / hide...**

Draw them:

- Using tools
- Making houses
- Making other things later

...and you reading this, with a little sun shining in **your super brain!** :D



They were feeling **happy** & having lots of **helpful ideas together...** and their brains grew a new part on top called the **super brain!!** :D

It **gave them more good ideas**, which helped them to **make tools** to **get more food, make houses** and **boats...**

It helped all your grandmas and grandpas **make clothes**, and **machines**, to **mine and craft**, and to invent **everything** else until today!

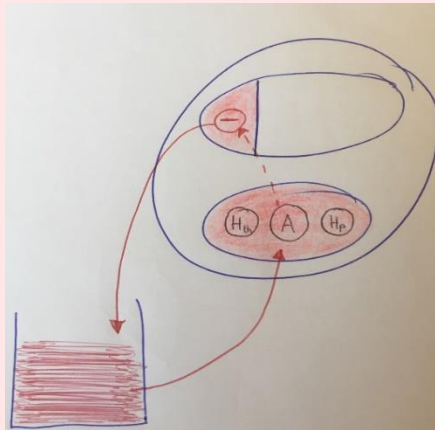
Things got better and better when they focused on **helpful and happy things**, and **you have this super brain too!** :D

We've kept our **cave brain**, because it **helps with sudden danger** – *cave brain is where worries & bad thoughts come from!*

When we worry about things our **cave brain thinks we need help with danger**, and it **makes us feel more worried, angry or tired**, and **gives us more negative thoughts** like it did in cave days – because it's **trying to help us!** 😊

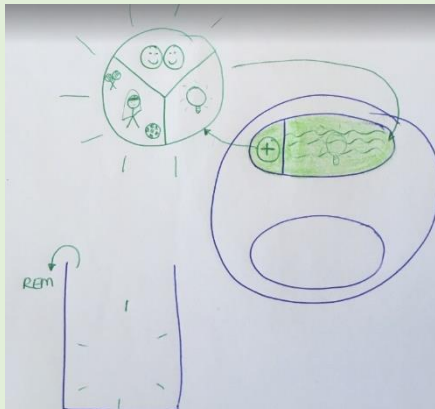
So, here's the deal:

If you **worry** about something & **don't try to make it better**, you **fill your worry pot** and get **more worries & bad feelings** from your **cave brain** 😞



Draw you in a cave looking 😞

If you **do helpful and happy things**, you make **brainshine**, and feel **relaxed, confident and happy fast!** ☀️



Draw super you - doing your best at lots of things and having fun with others! 😊

You also get your **super brain helping you**, giving you **good ideas and getting smarter**, and **you get better at things too!**



Brainshine + super brain = SUPER YOU!

Parent notes:

- The “cave brain” = “the limbic system”, the part of your brain that unconsciously scans for threats and responds with negative thoughts, feelings and behaviours as “survival mechanisms” to keep you away from danger. The Amygdala is the leader of this part - like the head of security which calls for backup when a threat is perceived – and backup is a negative fight / flight / freeze response, and all the negative feelings, thoughts, behaviours and chemicals that go with it (adrenaline, cortisol etc).
- The “super brain” = the “main cortex”; the front bit is the conscious part of your brain, which you use to aware of things and make decisions (“pre-frontal cortex”), and the rest is a vast supercomputer which processes information and matches patterns to help you build solutions (it does this in the background while you are awake or even asleep!), and by focusing on the positive things we train it to *really* help us!
- “REM” sleep (REM = Rapid Eye Movement) is where we process emotional memories of the day by playing them out as dreams, to discharge all the fight / flight / freeze templates we launched but didn’t actually use (e.g. we didn’t run away from / hit that person earlier!). The build-up of all these templates and unspent, agitated energy through the day is “filling the stress bucket”, and REM sleep playing them all out safely in your dreams is “emptying the stress bucket”.
- **Brainshine = Serotonin**, a substance which is produced in our brain to keep our mood steady and positive as an evolutionary reward for doing positive things, and it makes us feel calm, confident & in control – happy!

A lack of it is linked to depression, anxiety, anger and runaway thought patterns, and most happy pills these days are SSRIs – selective **serotonin** reuptake inhibitors – which make more of it available in the brain. This is teaching children how we can make more Serotonin at any time!

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/ssri-antidepressants/>