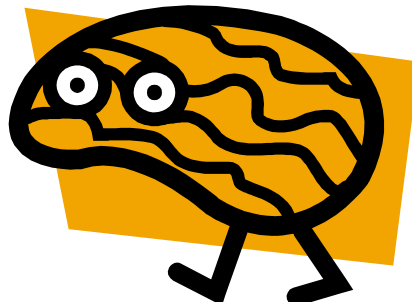


# Workplace Safety

## A Different Perspective



# The Reverse Storm

- Great flood of 2008 had a huge impact on the Saint John River Valley area residents.
- Emotionally, the impact on a group traditionally known as “heros”, was equally significant....

**NB Power Line Technicians!**

**WHY?**

# Why relate safety to state of mind?



## ■ Consider:

### □ Distractions:

- Emotional factors (sad, angry, too happy, upset, afraid)
- Too many things to do, too many demands on our time
- Family concerns
- Health concerns, sleepiness

Affects our ability to focus.

# Ever have your state of mind carry over from home to work?

Like ????



What happens if you have a bad start to your day?

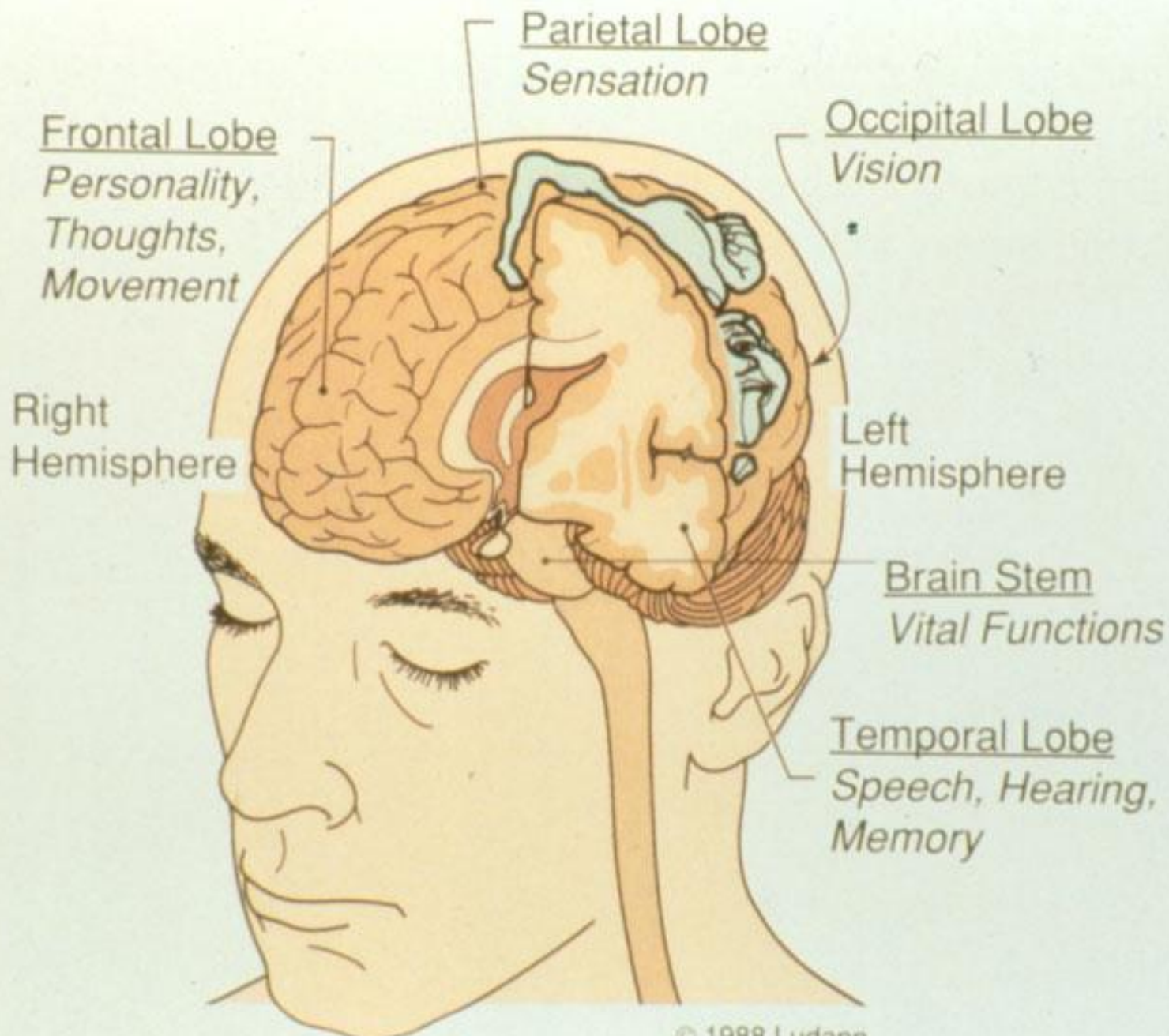
Kids not having home work done?

*Significant other maybe too significant for the moment?*

Vehicle acting up?

- Have you ever had to focus on one thing in the midst of many? Which one do you choose? How do you choose?

## Cue Competition

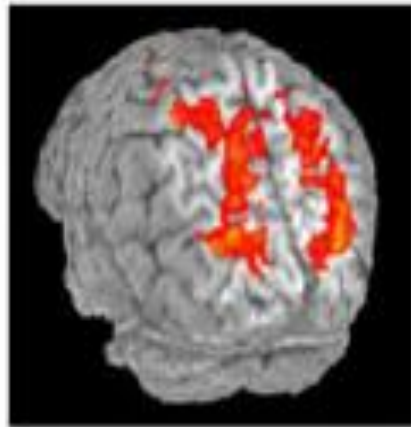


How about driving  
and using a cell  
phone?

Do you?

# Driving and using a cell phone, is it a distraction?

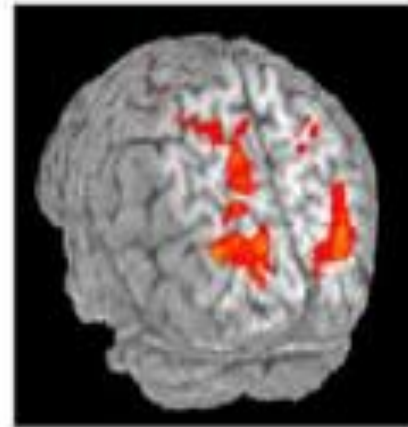
Driving Alone



L

R

Driving with  
Sentence Listening



**CELL PHONE USE DIMINISHES BRAIN ACTIVITY NEEDED FOR DRIVING**

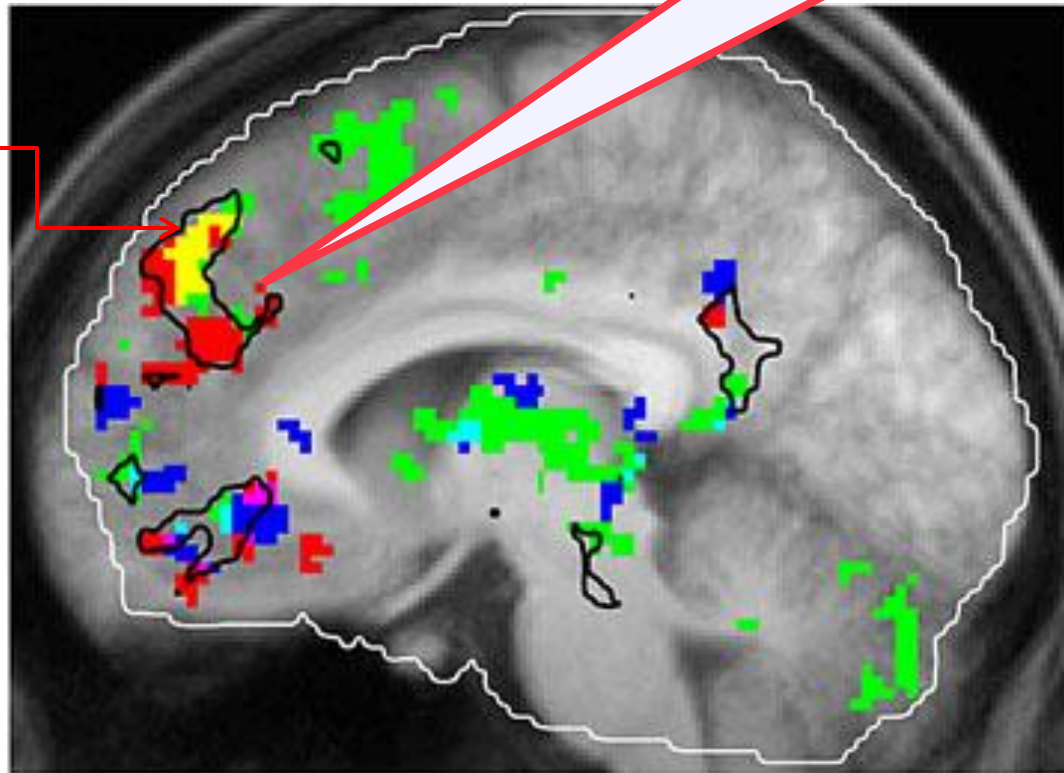
# Music, memory, emotions

- Green – familiar music
- Red – memories
- Blue- enjoyable music
- Yellow ; combined music and memory of it

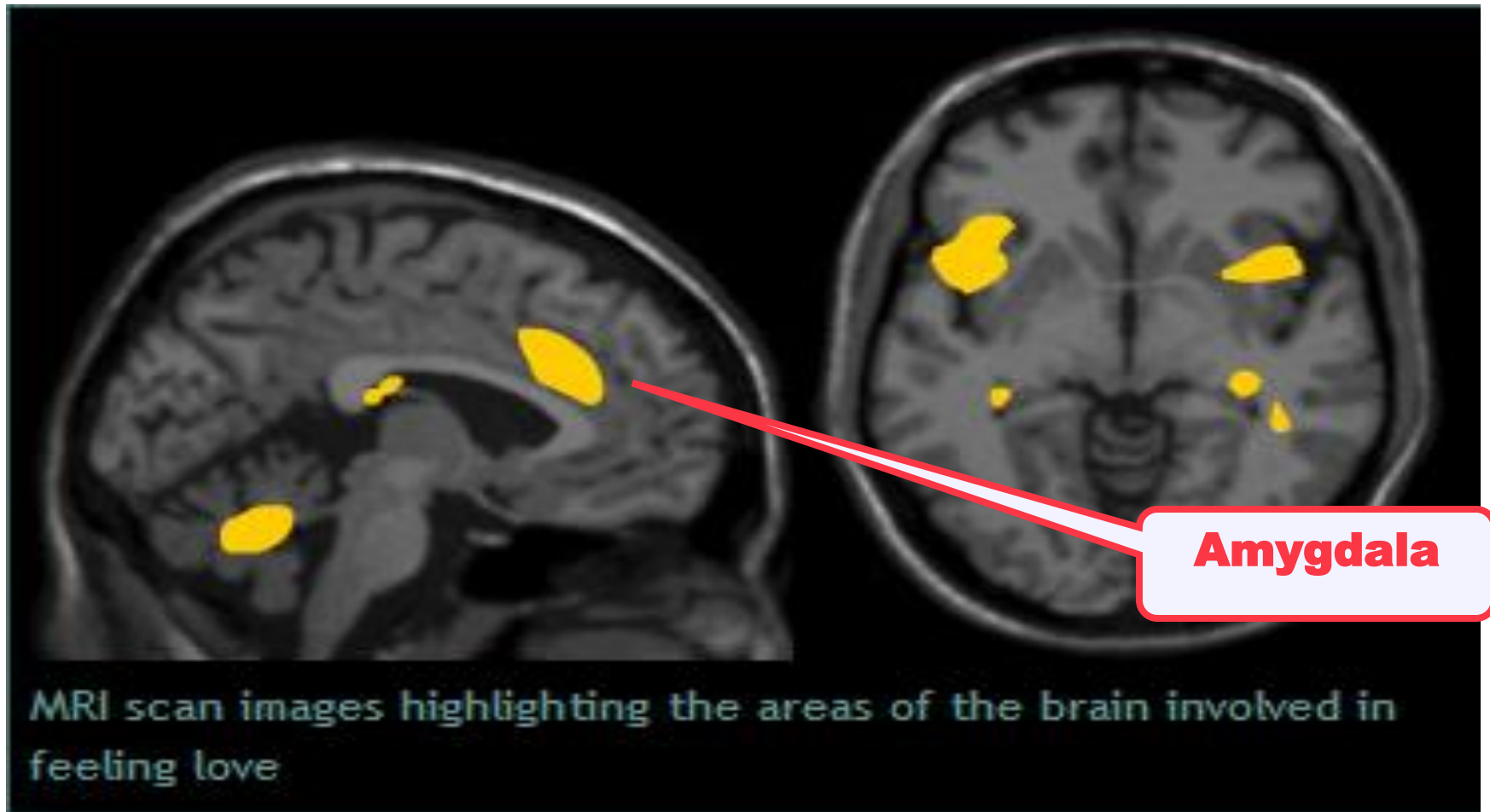
**Happier the emotion, greater combined brain activation occurs.**

Working  
Memory area

**Good and  
Bad...**



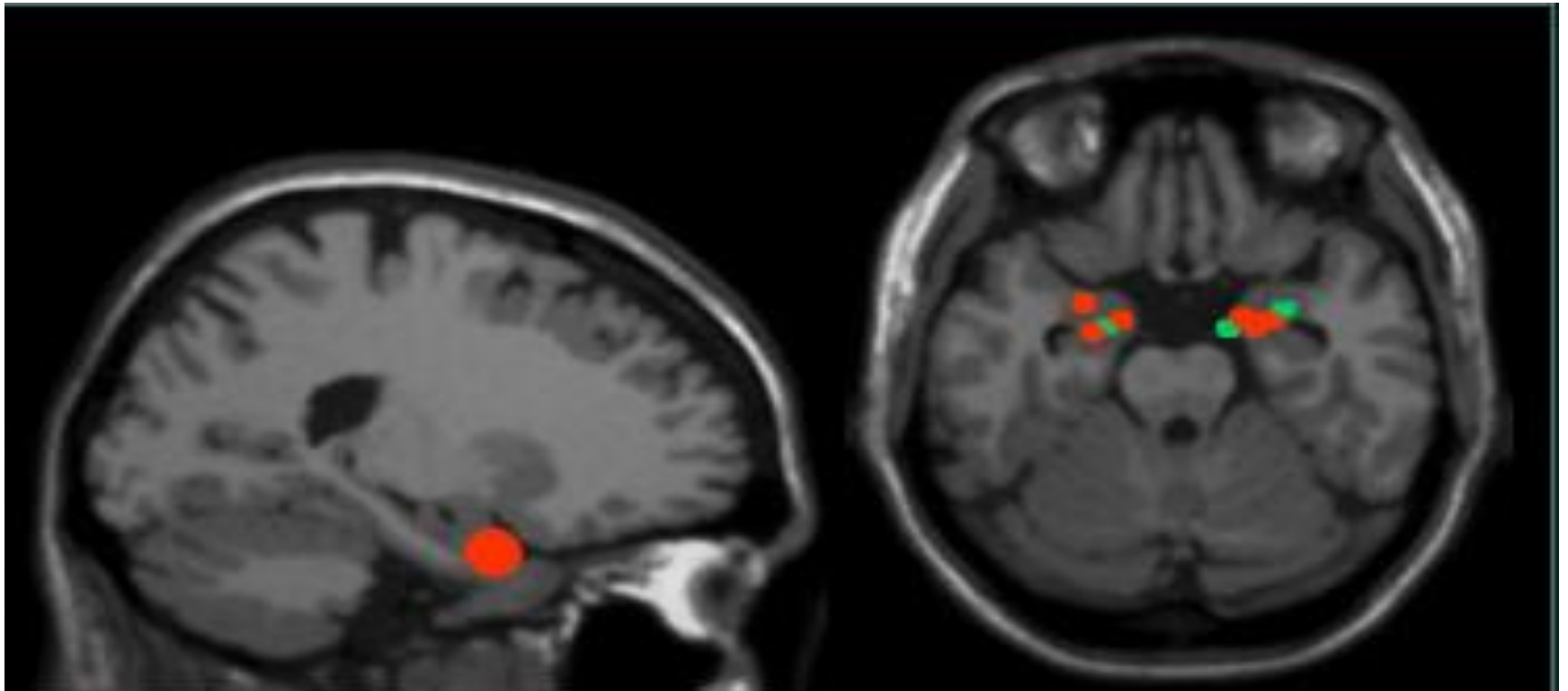
Love...involves emotion, which enhances memories...



# Fear rules!

Ever been afraid? So afraid you couldn't  
speak?

Same area of brain in love is responsible for fear...it also causes adrenaline secretion.  
How's your blood pressure?



MRI scan images highlighting the areas of the brain involved when feeling afraid

# Brain Matter Aside, are you still paying attention?

## 3 States to consider...

We are victim to not giving our “state of attention” the required cognitive resources it needs to respond properly to environmental stimuli.

**1. Occurrent Task Inattention:** brief lapse of attention – but we know it! It’s that dual attention thing! Or momentarily tuning out, happens in familiar settings, resp. for near-misses.

**2. Zoning out:** We go through the motions but are not fully aware, the light turns green, we go with the flow but not consciously. And...we read but don’t register the words.

**3. Complete mind-wandering:** the light turns green and we need a honk from behind to startle us into reality.

# What needs to be done

Relevant strategies to be developed for vulnerable groups such as operators and lineworkers.

- ❑ Exercise breaks
- ❑ Proper food breaks
- ❑ Deliberate breaks in routine
- ❑ Lighting and environment stimuli modified
- ❑ Elevator music free zone
- ❑ Checks and balances in procedures
- ❑ Communication – lots
- ❑ What else?

# We're paying attention....

- Now, how do you promote emotional safety?
- On the job, we need to provide all types of safety barriers ...

# Promoting Emotional Safety *Health Behaviors* via Wellness Initiatives



- Exercise – reduces the cortisol (cortisol can shrink the brain), increases blood flow, reduces risk of developing dementia and Alzheimer's.
- Affection & Socializing- Family and friends
- Nutrition – feed your brain – balanced diet plus fish
- Change ...boring is bad, mind matters like mixing it up!
- Positive outlook
- Sleep

# Promoting Emotional Safety Behaviors via Traditional Health & Safety Management Processes

- Health Behaviors
- Tailboard Conferencing: ask “Everyone OK?”.
- Observation programs
- Investigations
- Loss control meetings/toolbox talks
- JHSC
- What else?
- Communicate.....

# Back to the Reverse Storm...

- It was all about managing emotions:
  - Communication
  - Communication
  - Communication

# This is our story finale...

Emotions are fragile, emotional safety needs to be carefully managed...

Our guys got to go back to the customers and redeem themselves...

**The lights went back on!**

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- Note:
  - Brain images and content on attention are copywrite material and references for them can be provided. Email [sparker@nbpower.com](mailto:sparker@nbpower.com) for the reference information.
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