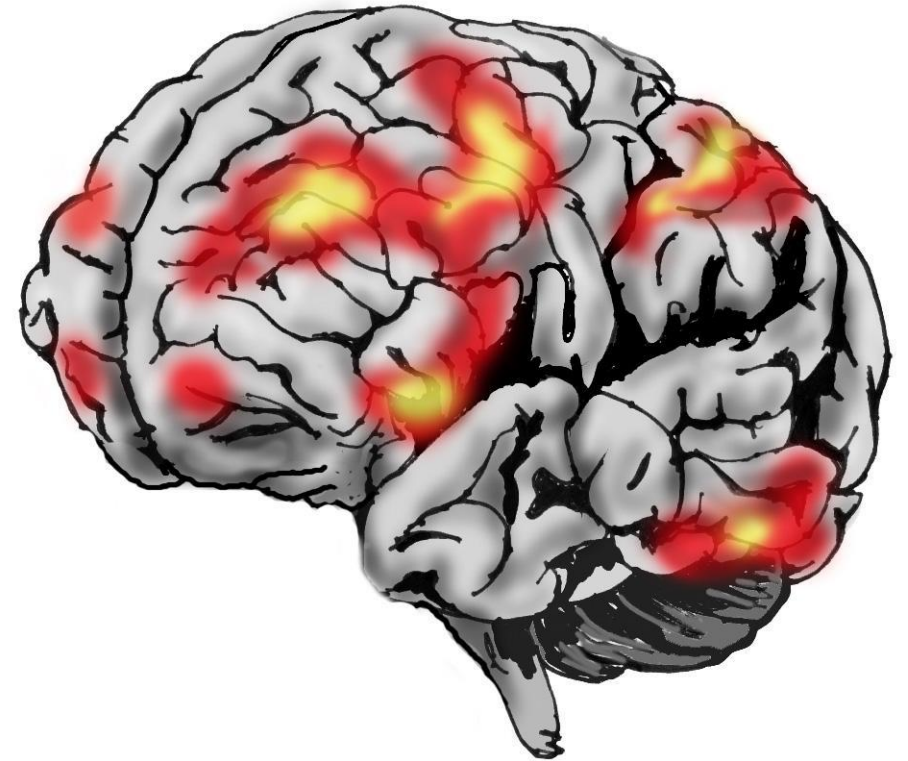


# Psychology and Pain

Not just “coping” and “managing”

But

“healing” and “recovering”



# Sean Smitham, Ph.D.

Clinical Psychologist

- 20+ years of experience

Currently at Spokane Vet Center

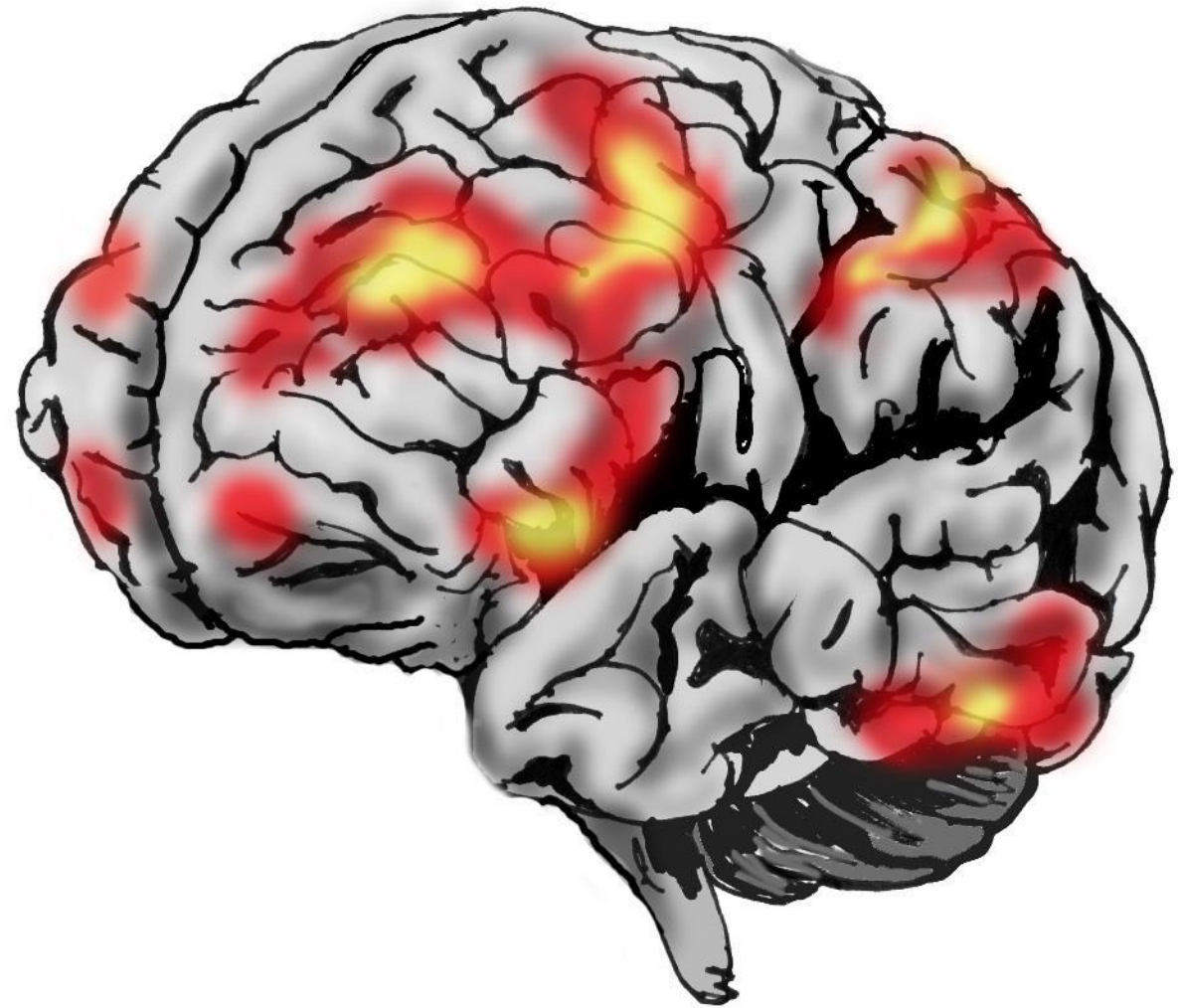
No conflicts of interest to report

Intro: [Willman Rubber Arm Experiment](#)

Pain Neuroscience  
Education (PNE)

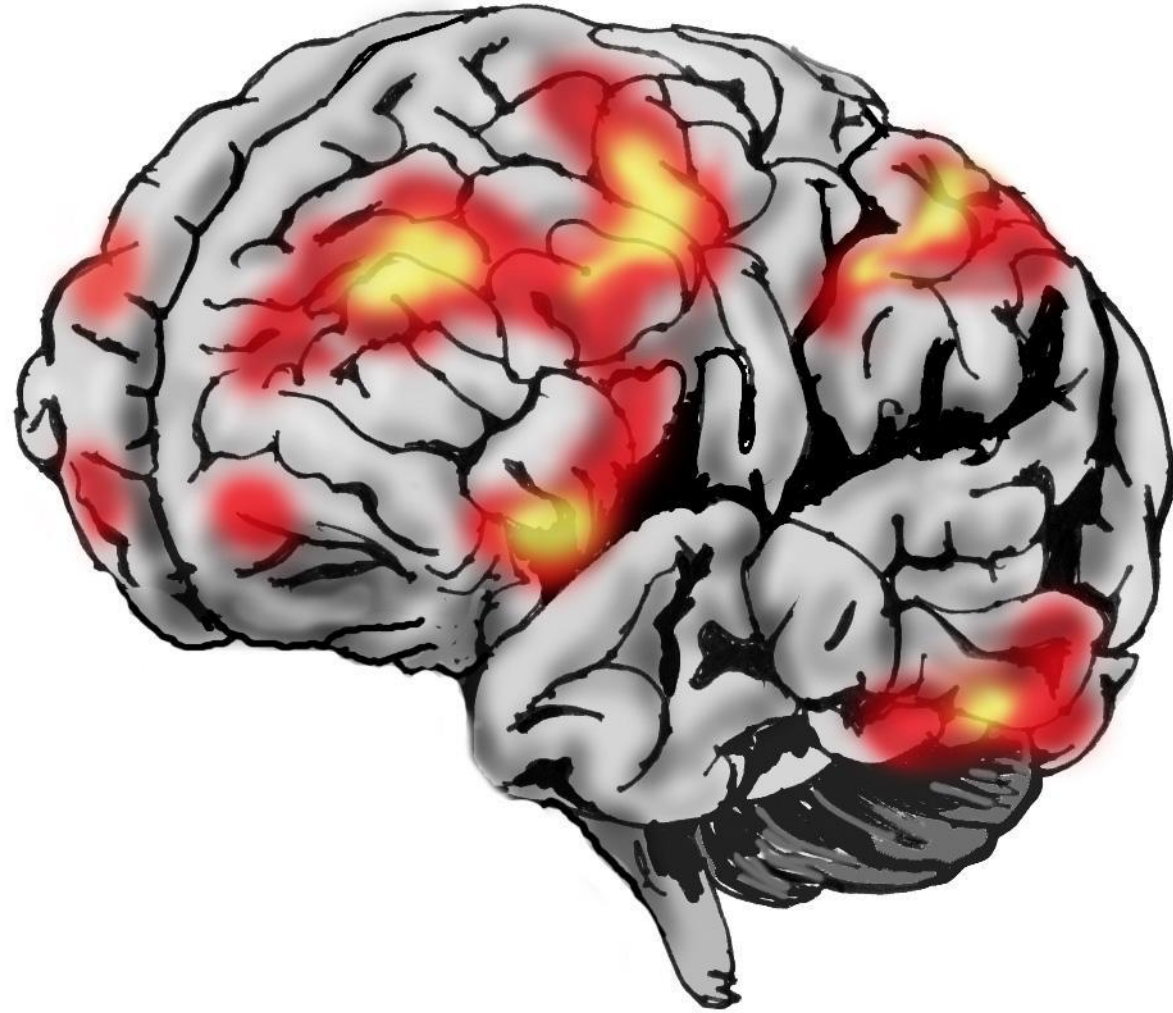
Pain Reprocessing  
Therapy (PRT)

Hypnosis



# But First....

- Pain is always real.
- Knowledge is power.



# Eye Blink Reflex

(Pain is about protection)



Iannetti, et al., 2014, 2015

Wallwork, et. al., 2016.  
Journal of Neurophysiology

Large

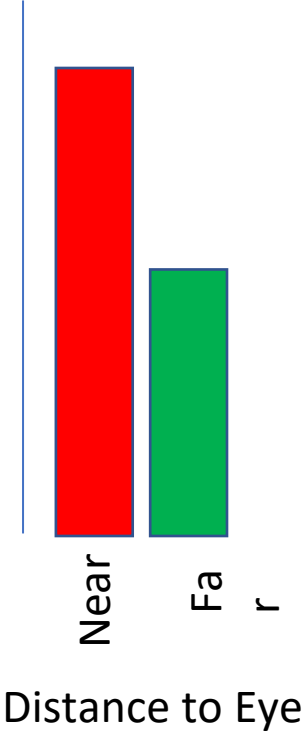
Size of Eye  
Blink  
Response

Small





Size of  
Eye  
Protection  
Reflex



Iannetti, et al., 2014, 2015

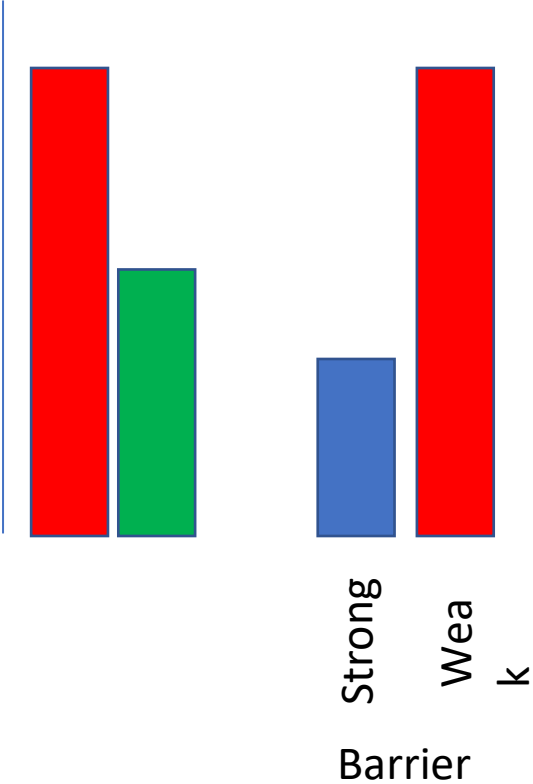
Wallwork, et. al., 2016.  
Journal of Neurophysiology



Size of  
Eye  
Protection  
Reflex

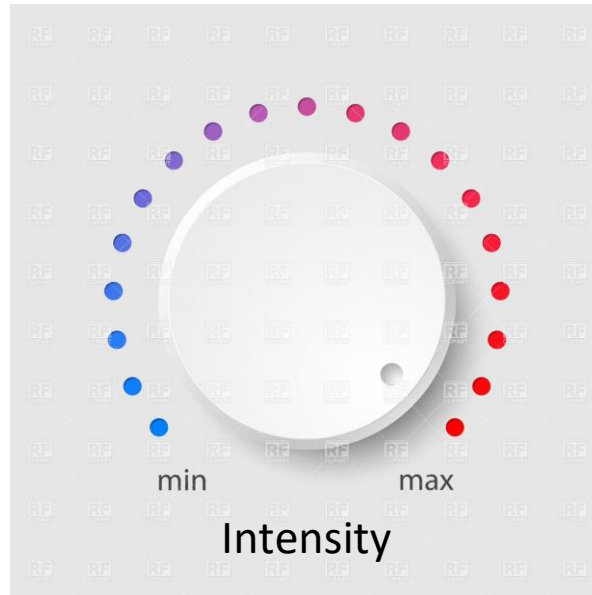
Iannetti, et al., 2014, 2015

Wallwork, et. al., 2016.  
Journal of Neurophysiology

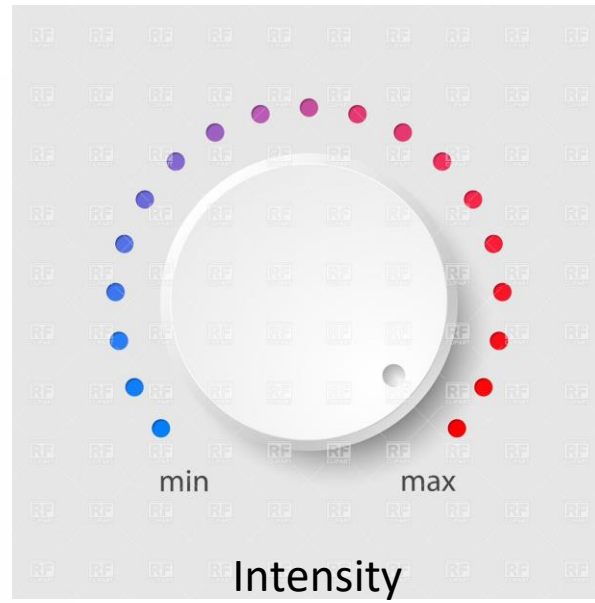


# Head Stimulator

(Expectation and authority increase pain)



Bayer, TL, et al. Pain.  
1991



Pain

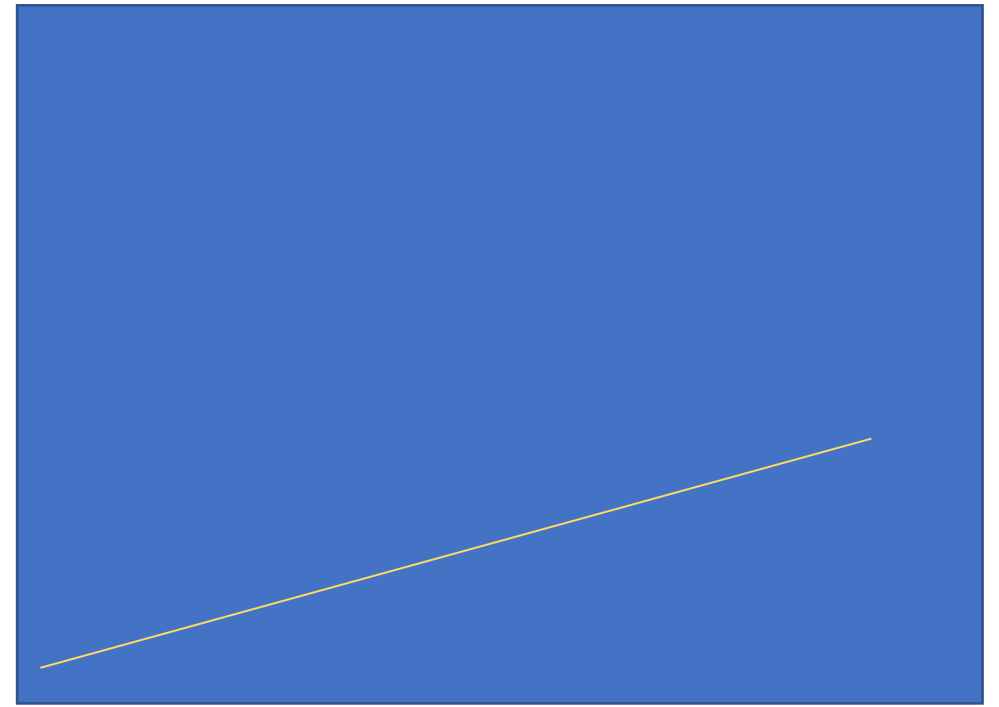
10

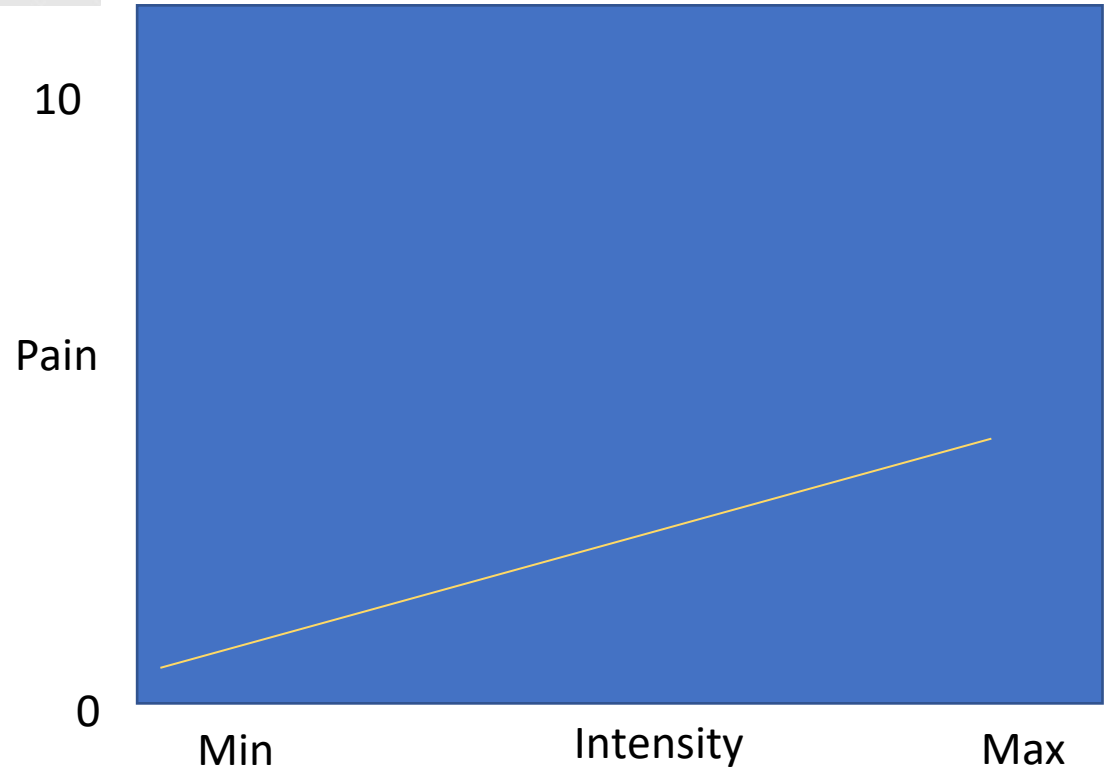
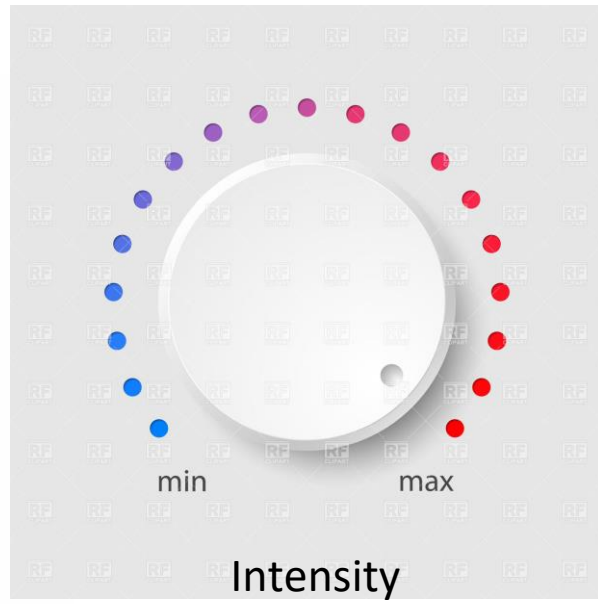
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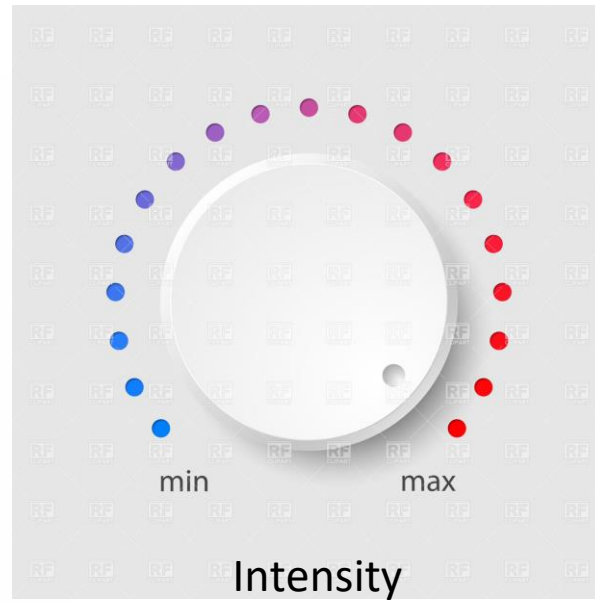
Min

Intensity

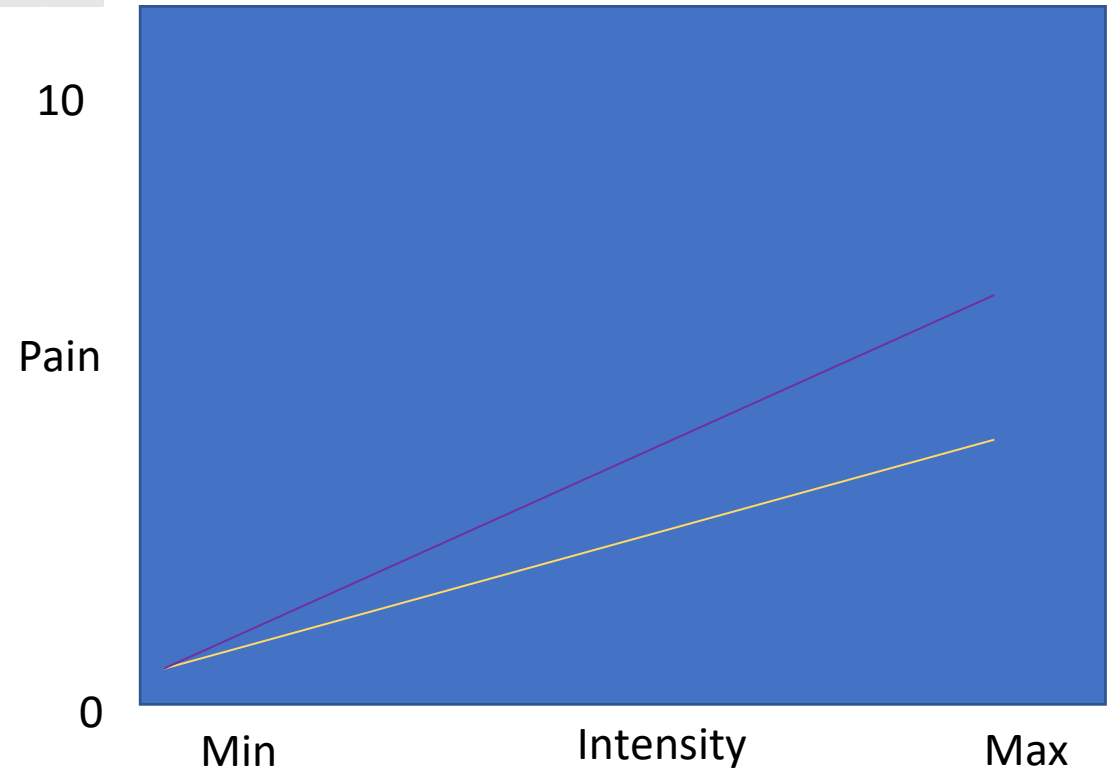
Max

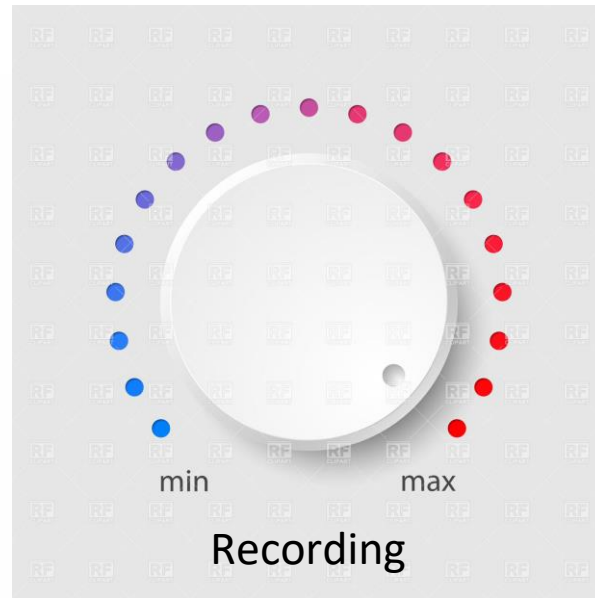






Pain increases more than before





Pain

10

0

Min

Intensity

Max





# Glip Glop

(Mental Research Institute, Palo Alto, CA circa 1966)



# Take Home Point #1

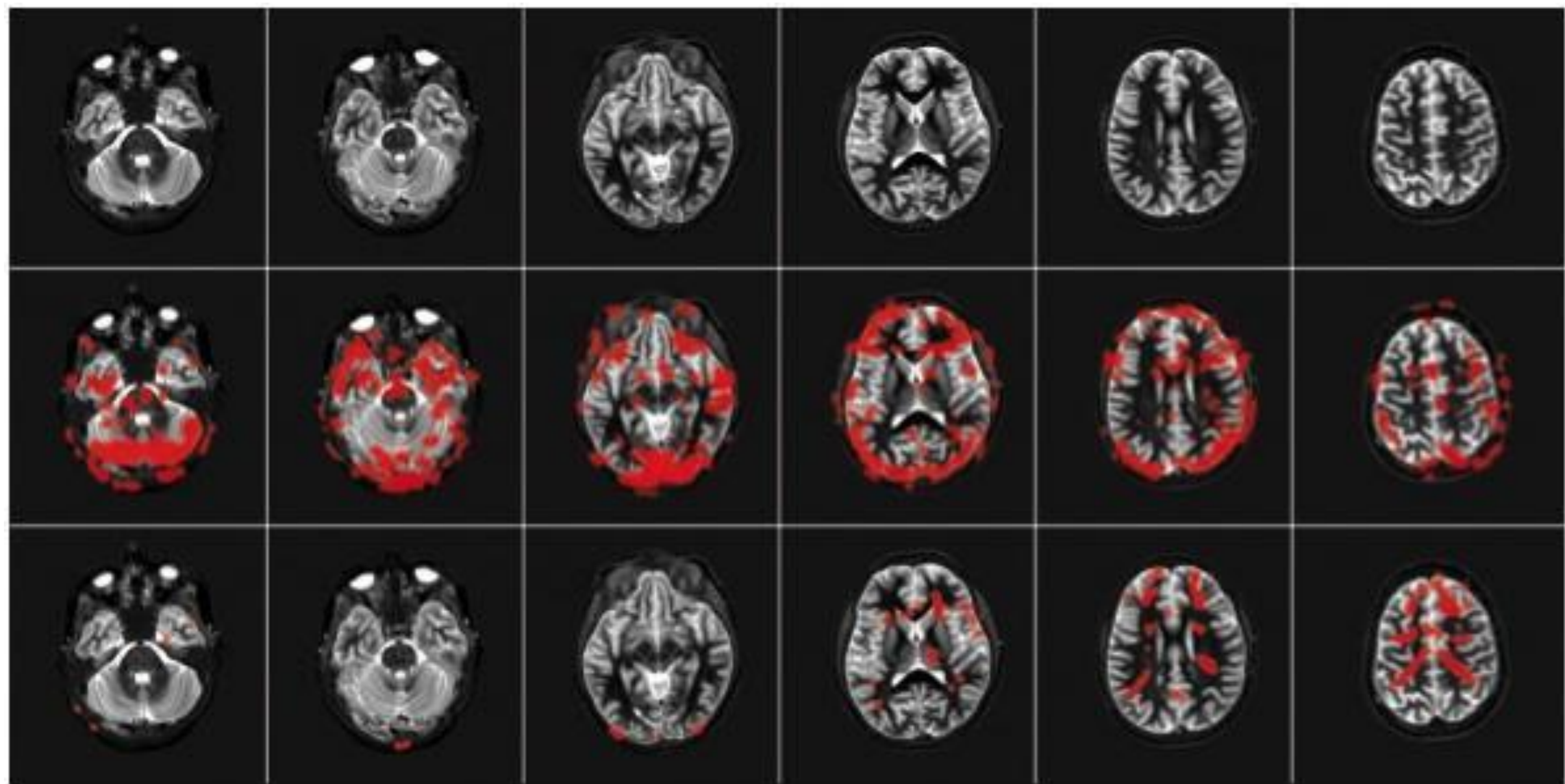
- Pain is about the protection of the individual
- Not just (or even primarily) about the state of the tissues.
- (e.g., Rubber arm, Brain stimulator, Wrist Zap)

# Take Home Point #2

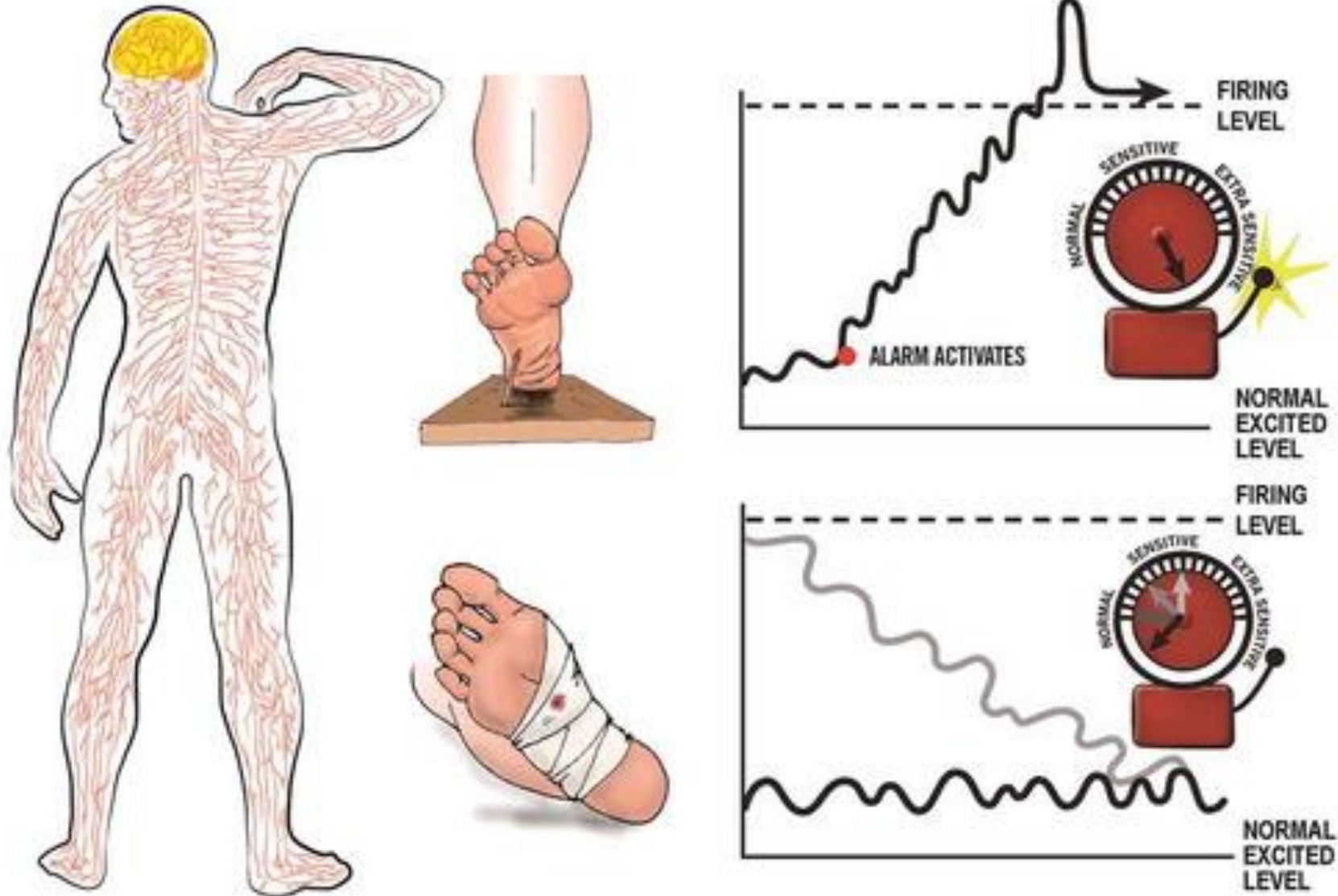
- How we and our patients understand and talk about pain matters
- (e.g., Brain Stimulator, Glip Glop)

# Take Home Point #3

- Knowledge is power
- When people learn why they hurt – they hurt less.
- When people feel safe - they're nervous system can calm

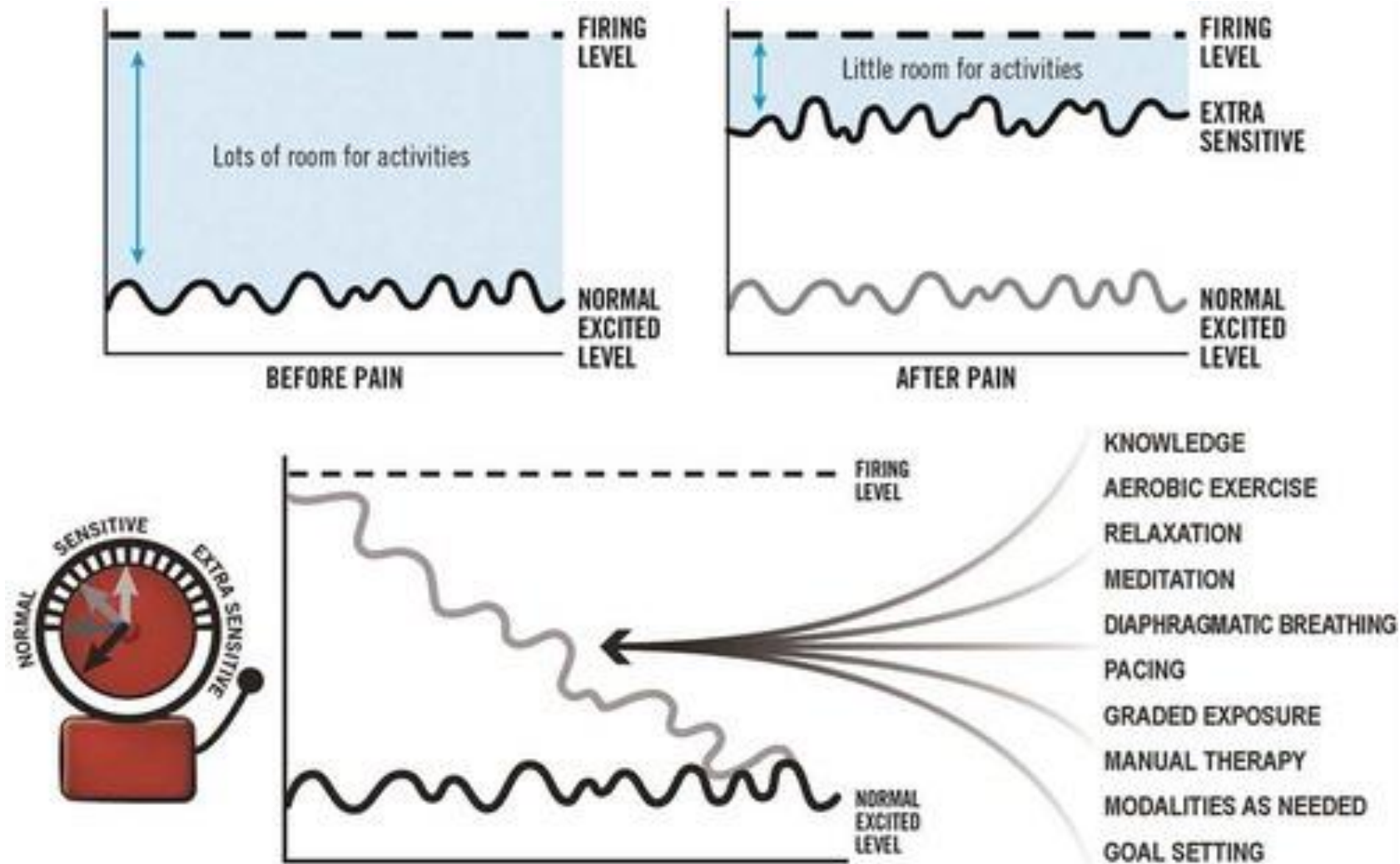


# Pain Neuroscience Education (PNE)



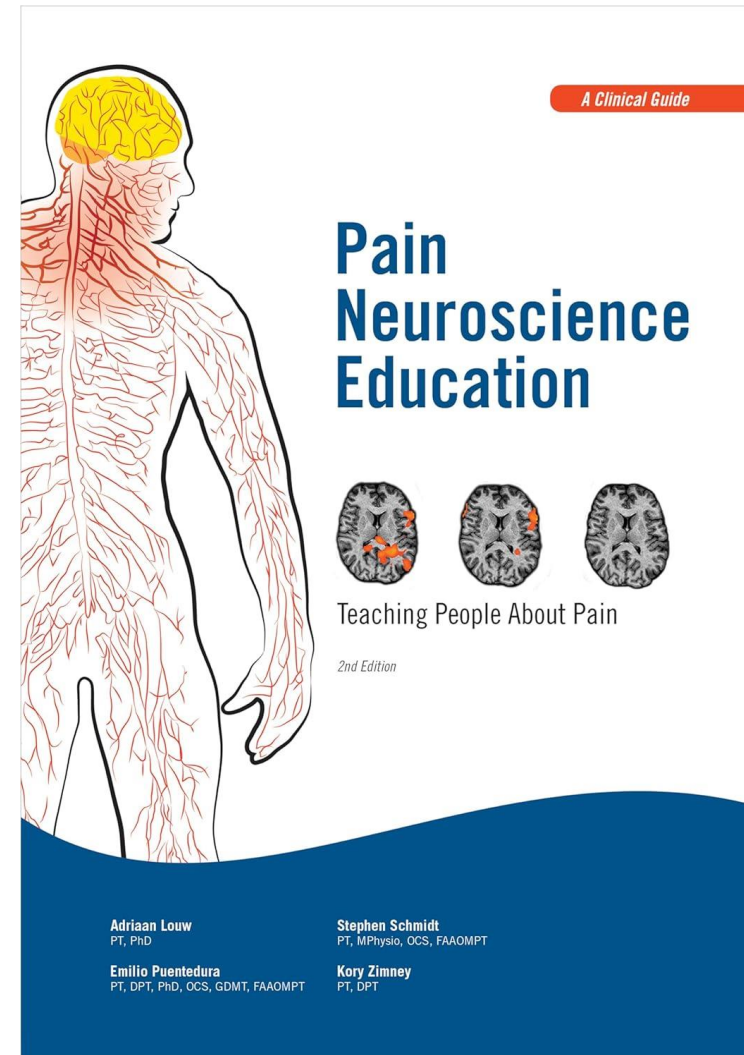


# Pain Neuroscience Education (PNE)





# PNE Resources



# Pain Reprocessing Therapy (PRT)



# Pain Reprocessing Therapy (PRT)

Metaphor: Nervous system as a too sensitive guard dog. Retrain the guard dog

- Fear feeds pain
- Education and experience reduce fear
- Somatic tracking (gentle curiosity and messages of safety)
- Corrective experience (pain = 0 to 8)
- Positive affect generation

# Hypnosis and Self-Hypnosis

# Closing thoughts

- Moving beyond “coping” and “managing”
- Psychology now has the tools to help “heal and recover”