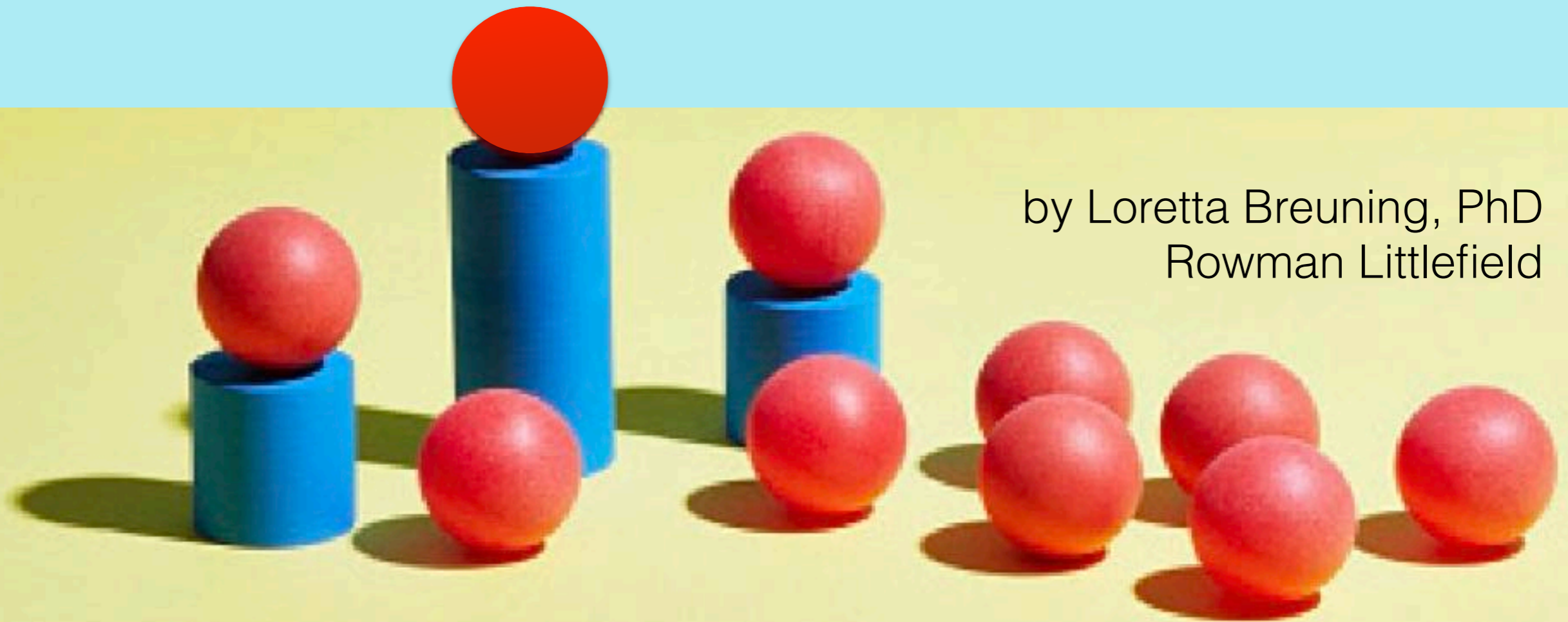


# Status Games

## Why We Play and How to Stop



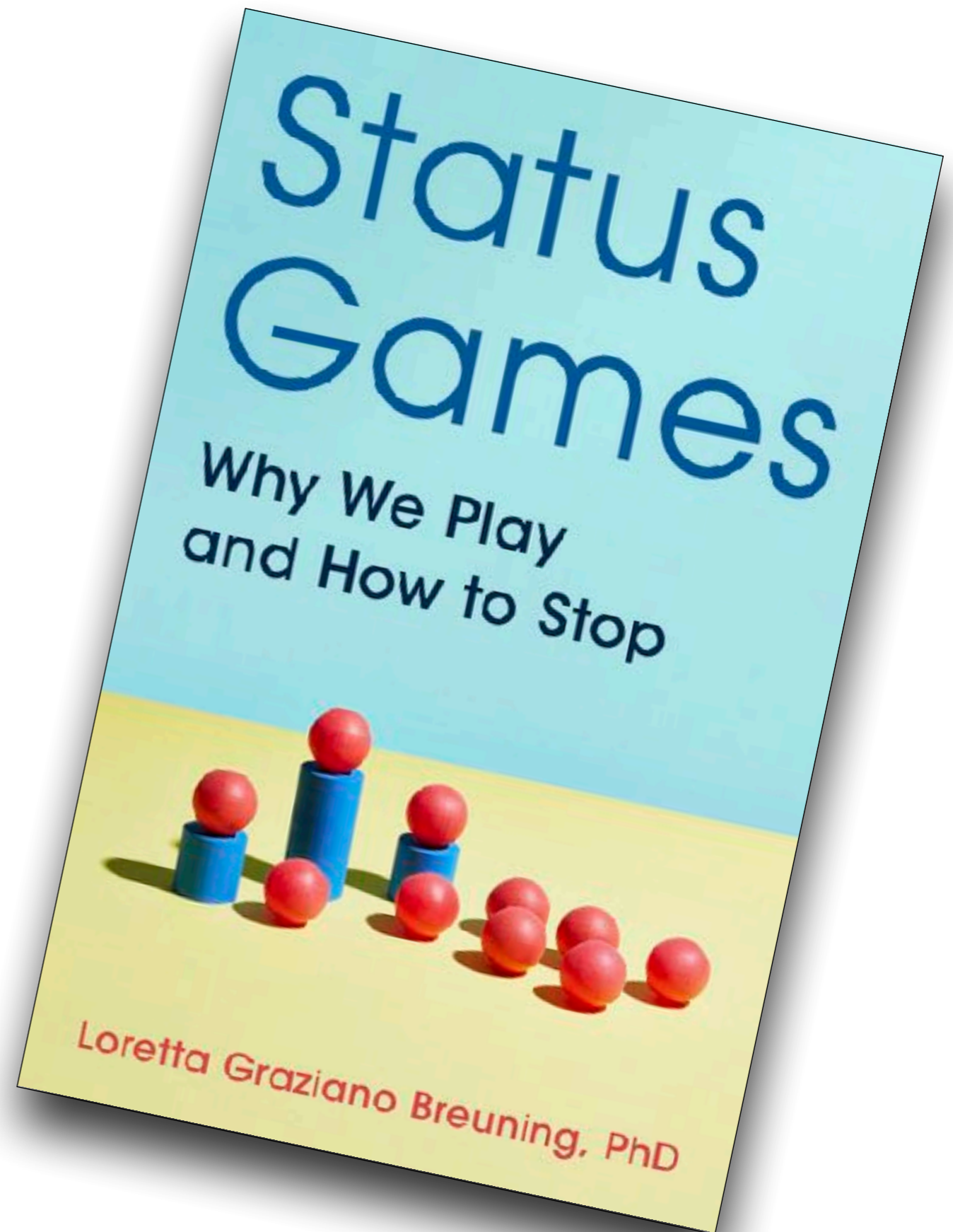
by Loretta Breuning, PhD  
Rowman Littlefield

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**Rowman Littlefield**

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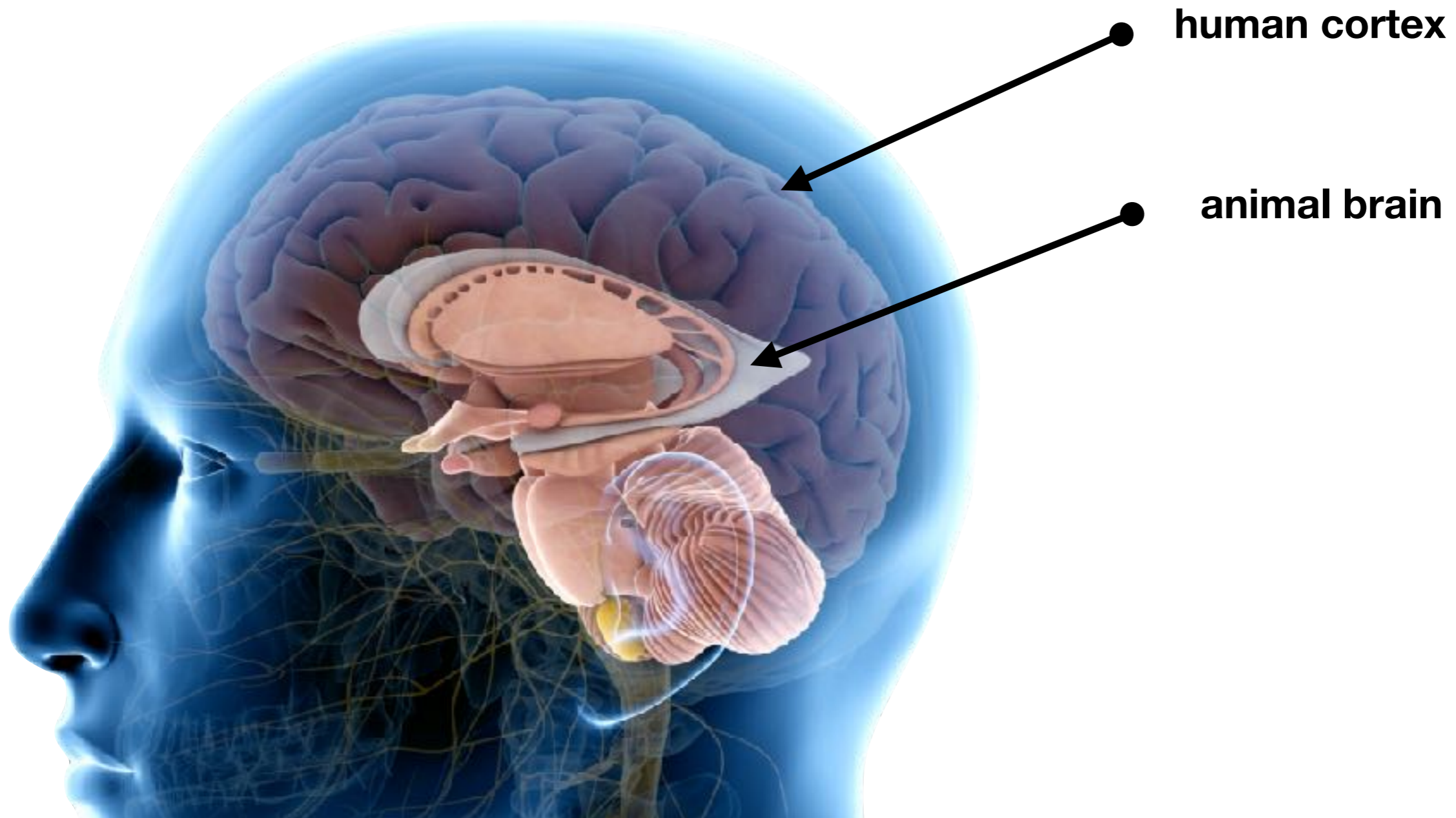




**People care about status because  
animals care about status**



# **We've inherited the limbic brain that motivates this**





**Your mammal brain rewards  
you with a drip of **serotonin**  
when you raise your status**







**Serotonin  
is **not**  
aggression.**

**It's the calm  
sense that  
“ I will get  
the banana ”**



**Serotonin is soon metabolized,  
so you have to **keep seeking the  
one-up position** to keep feeling it**



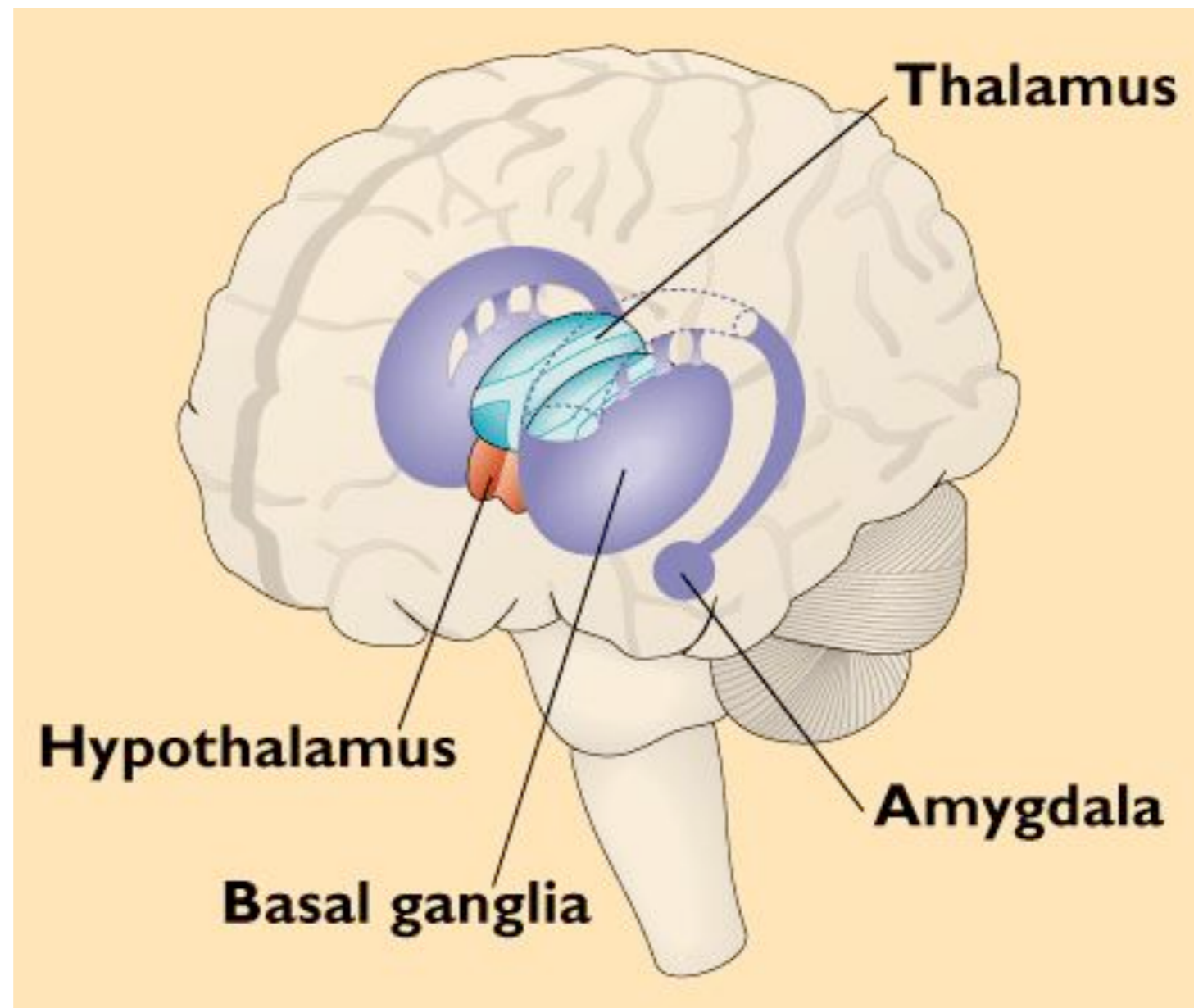


**The good feeling motivates you  
to **repeat** behaviors that  
raise your status**

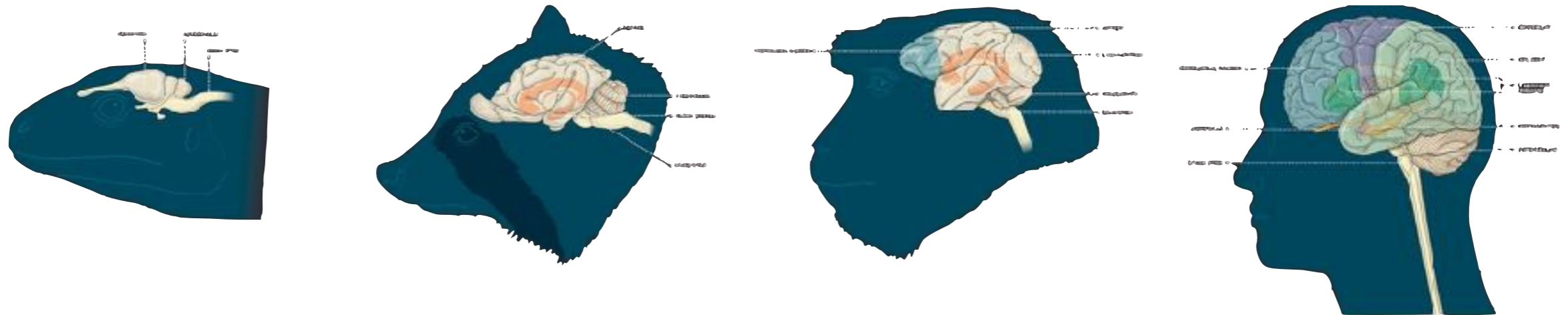




I'm not saying we **should**  
think this way, but we do

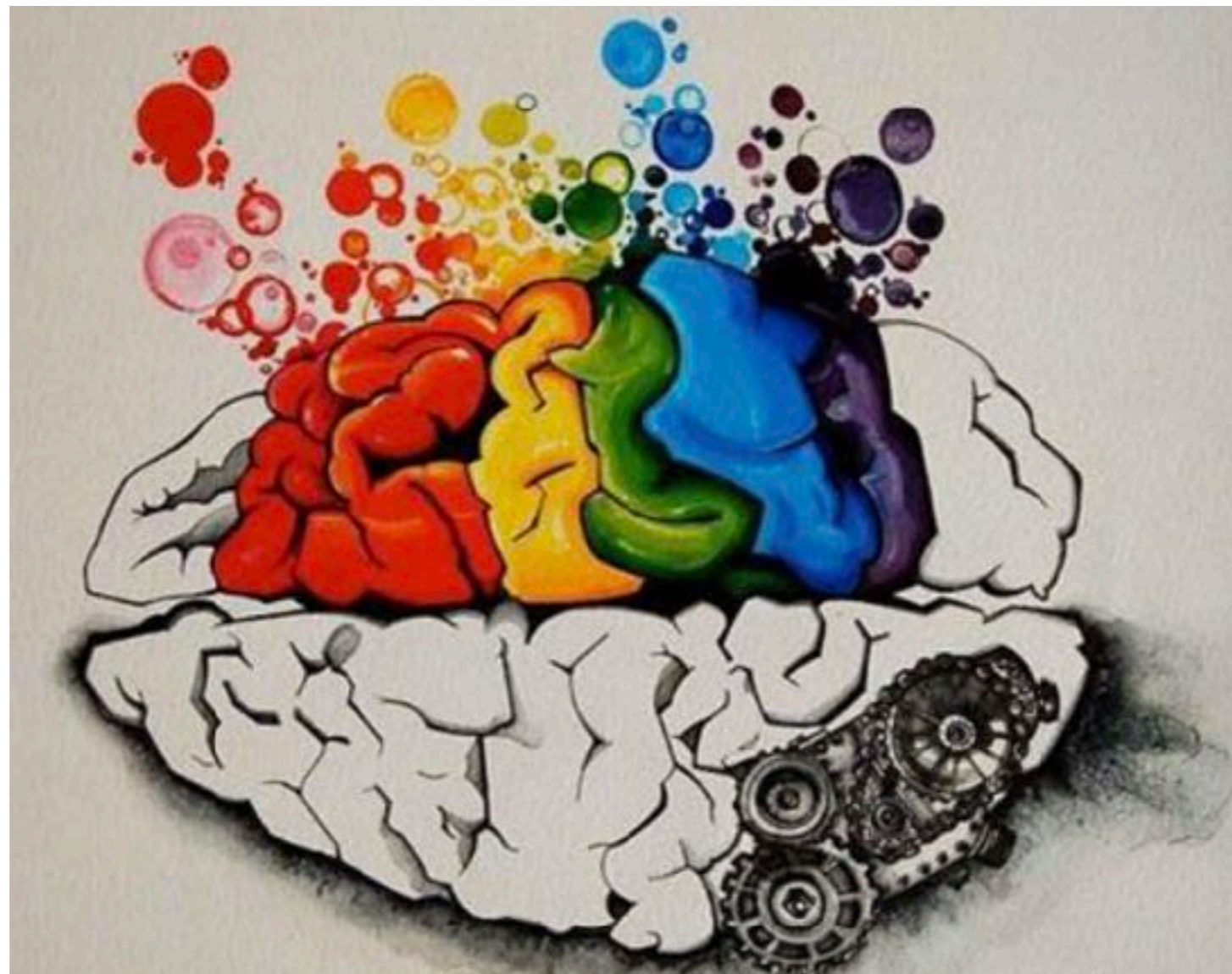


**Natural selection built a brain  
that **makes social comparisons**  
to promote its survival**





**It rewards you with the good feeling of serotonin when you gain a position of strength**

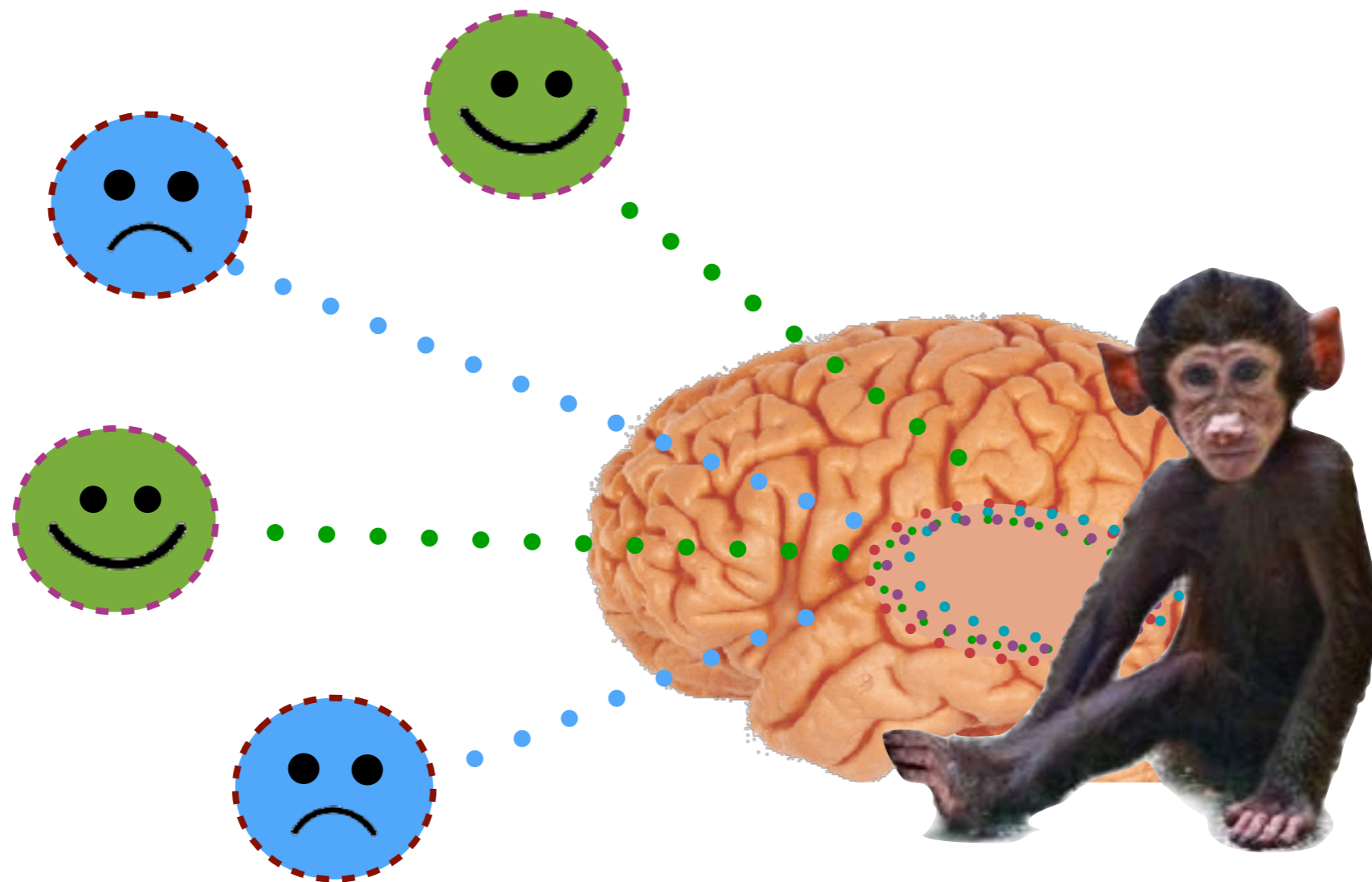


**It alarms you with the bad feeling of  
cortisol when you see a potential  
threat to your relative position**

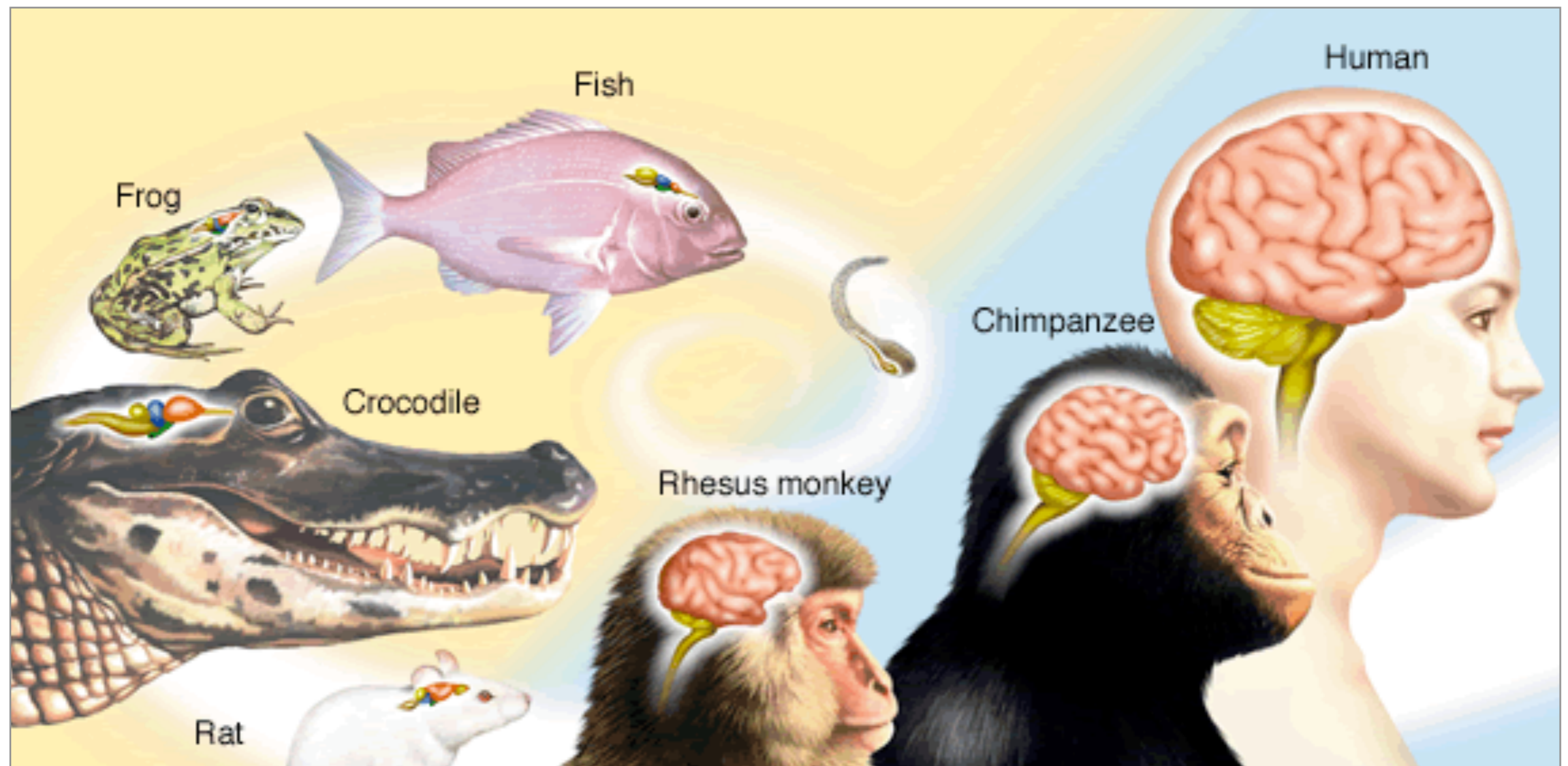




**You don't think this in words  
because your animal brain  
doesn't process language**



These facts were revealed by **a century of research** on mammalian social behavior, but now they are taboo





**It's easy to see the mammalian  
urge for status in others,  
especially those you don't like**



**It's easy to see the one-up impulse  
throughout human history**

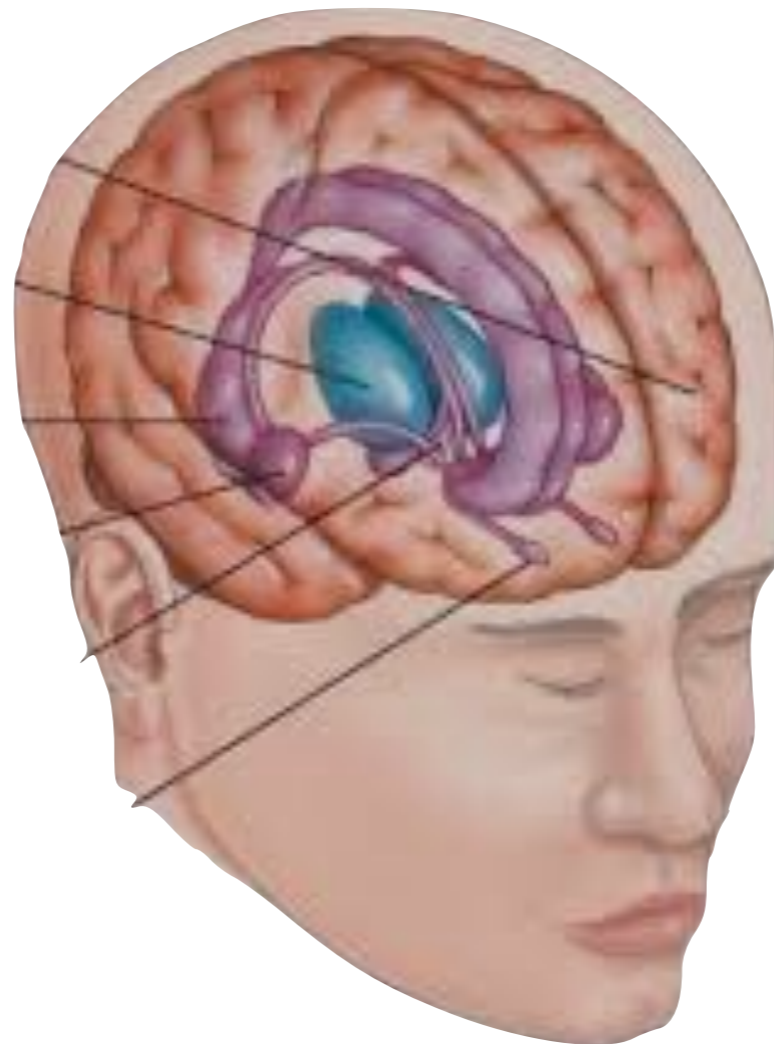




It's hard to see it in **yourself**, your friends, and cute furry creatures

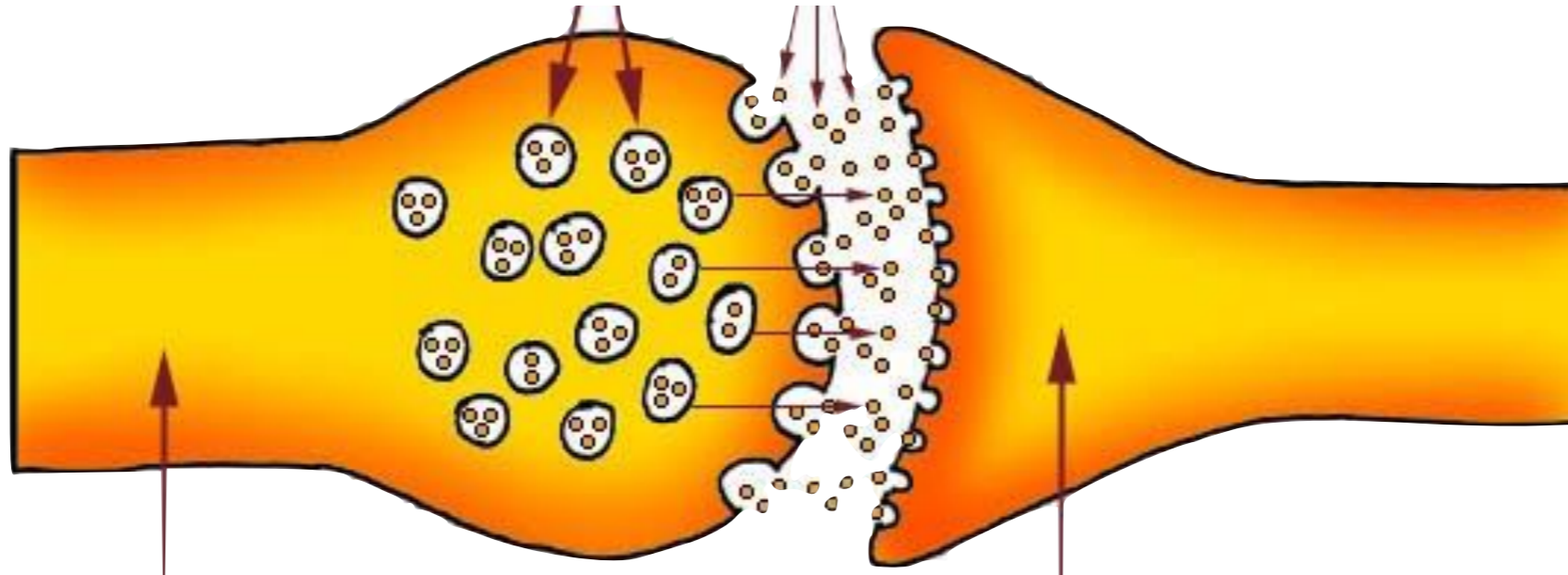


**But when you get real  
about these feelings, you  
have **power over them****

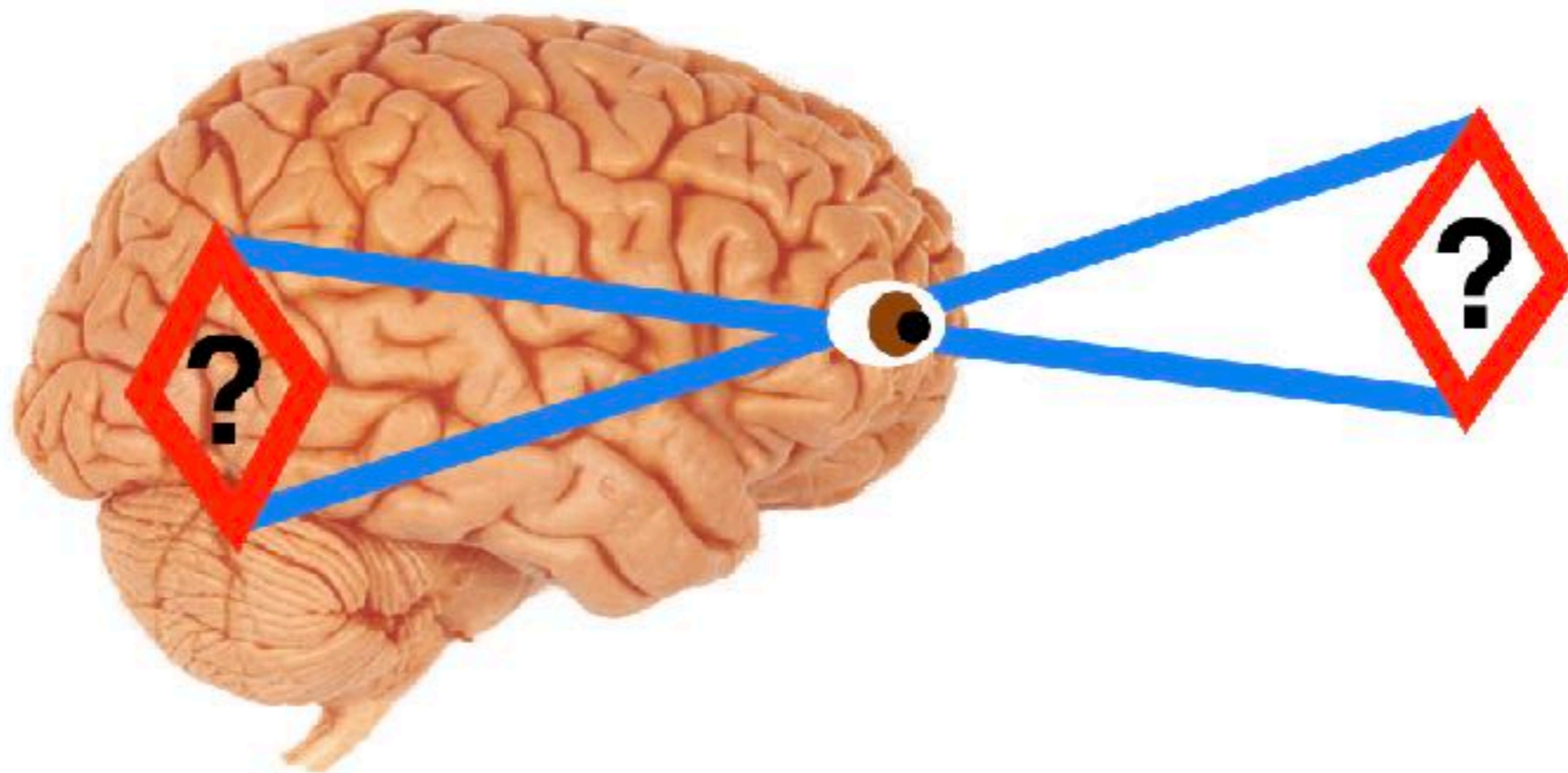




**Neurons connect when serotonin flows,**  
**so whatever raised your status in the past**  
**wired you to expect good feelings from **that****

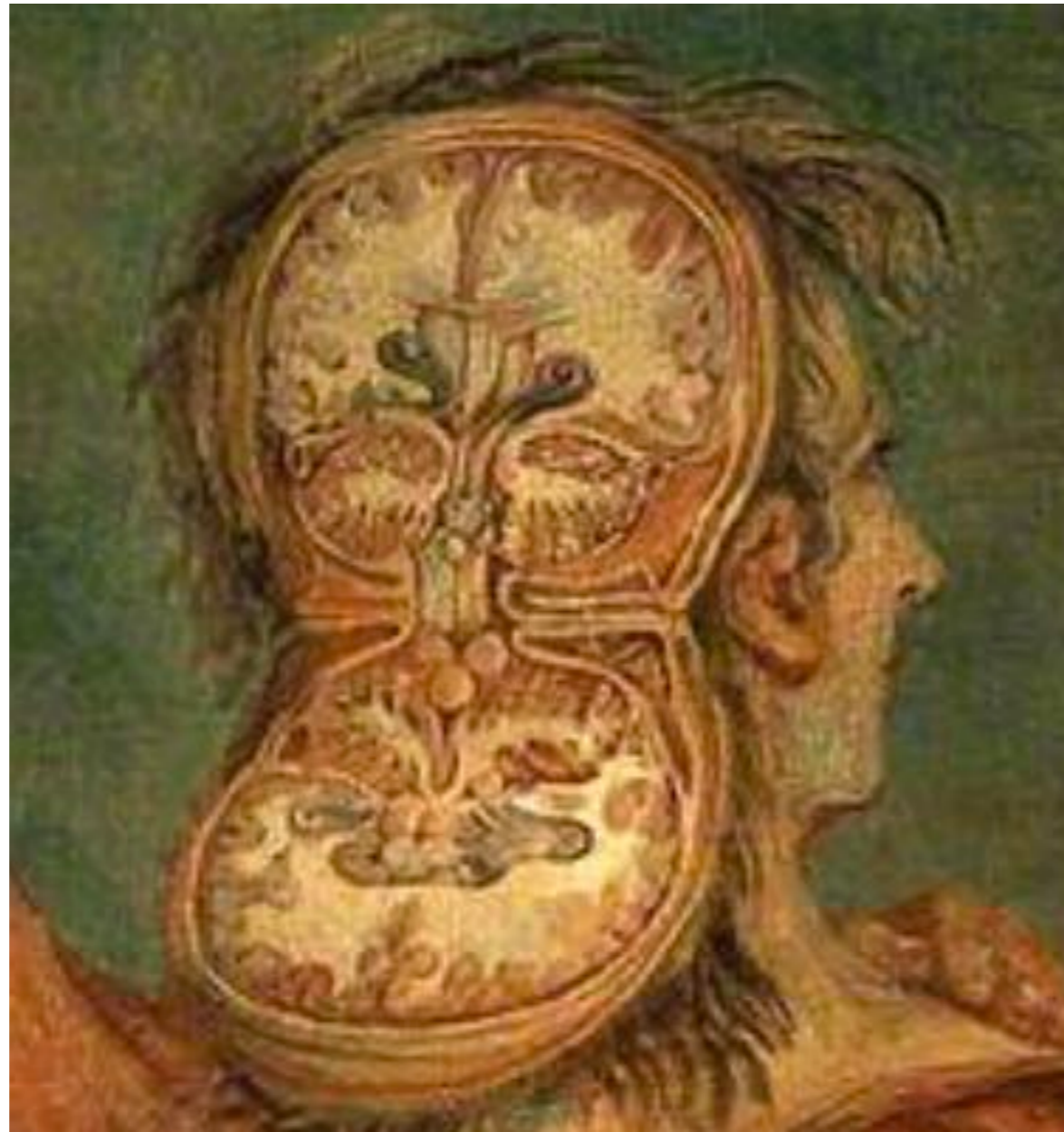


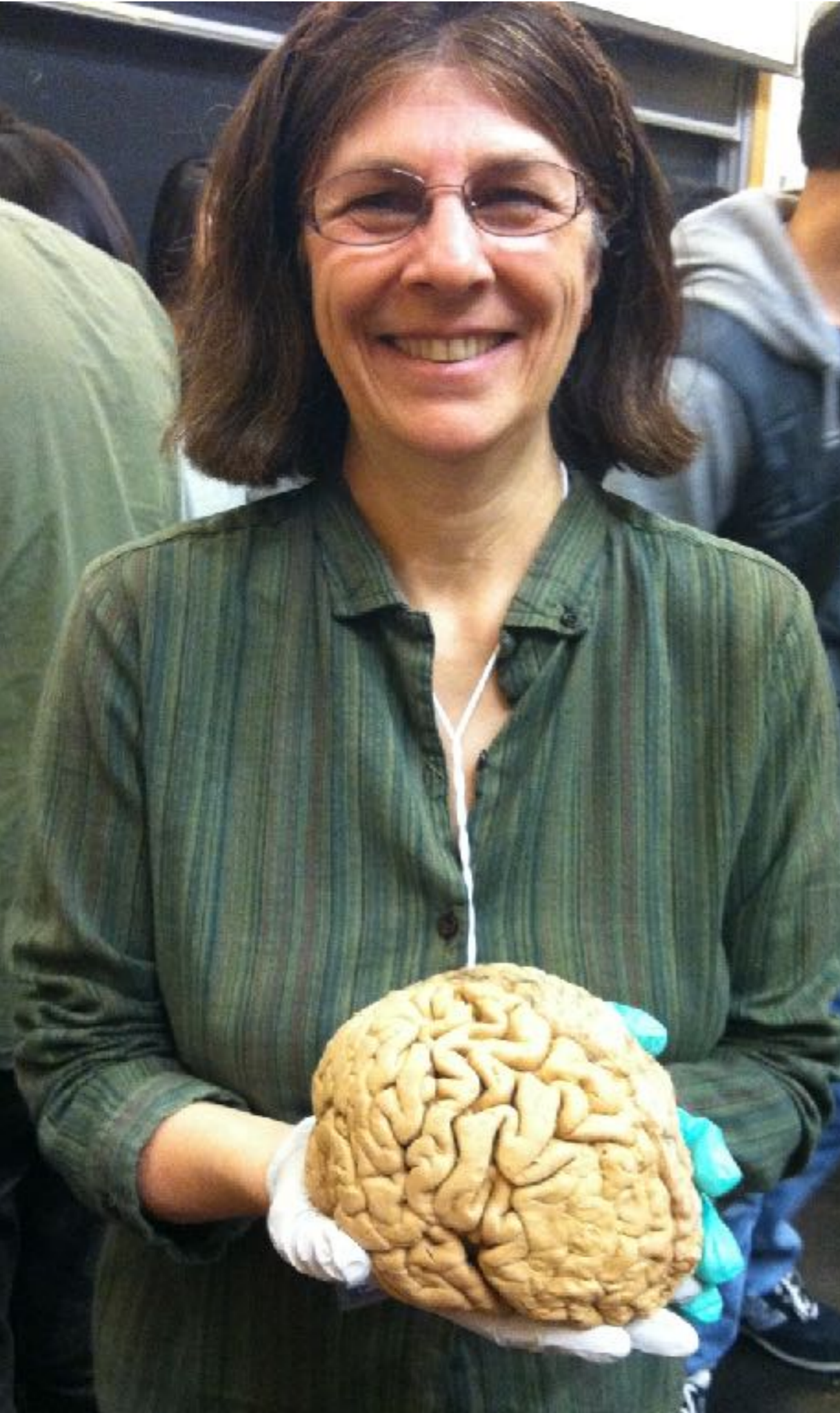
**We all see the world through the lens of our old neural pathways**





**We all keep looking for ways to stimulate **serotonin** and avoid **cortisol** in ways that worked before**





**What's a  
big-brained  
mammal to  
do?**



# Status Games

helps you find healthy ways to give your inner mammal the serotonin it craves

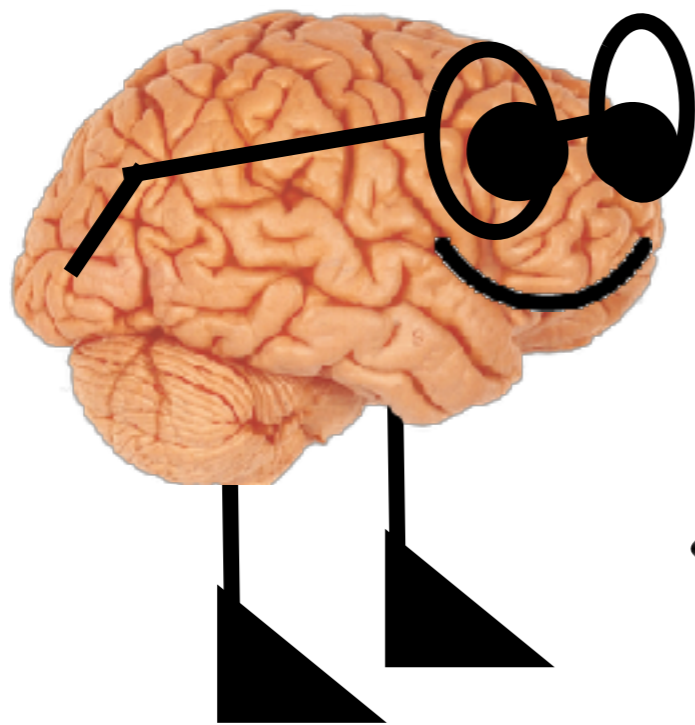




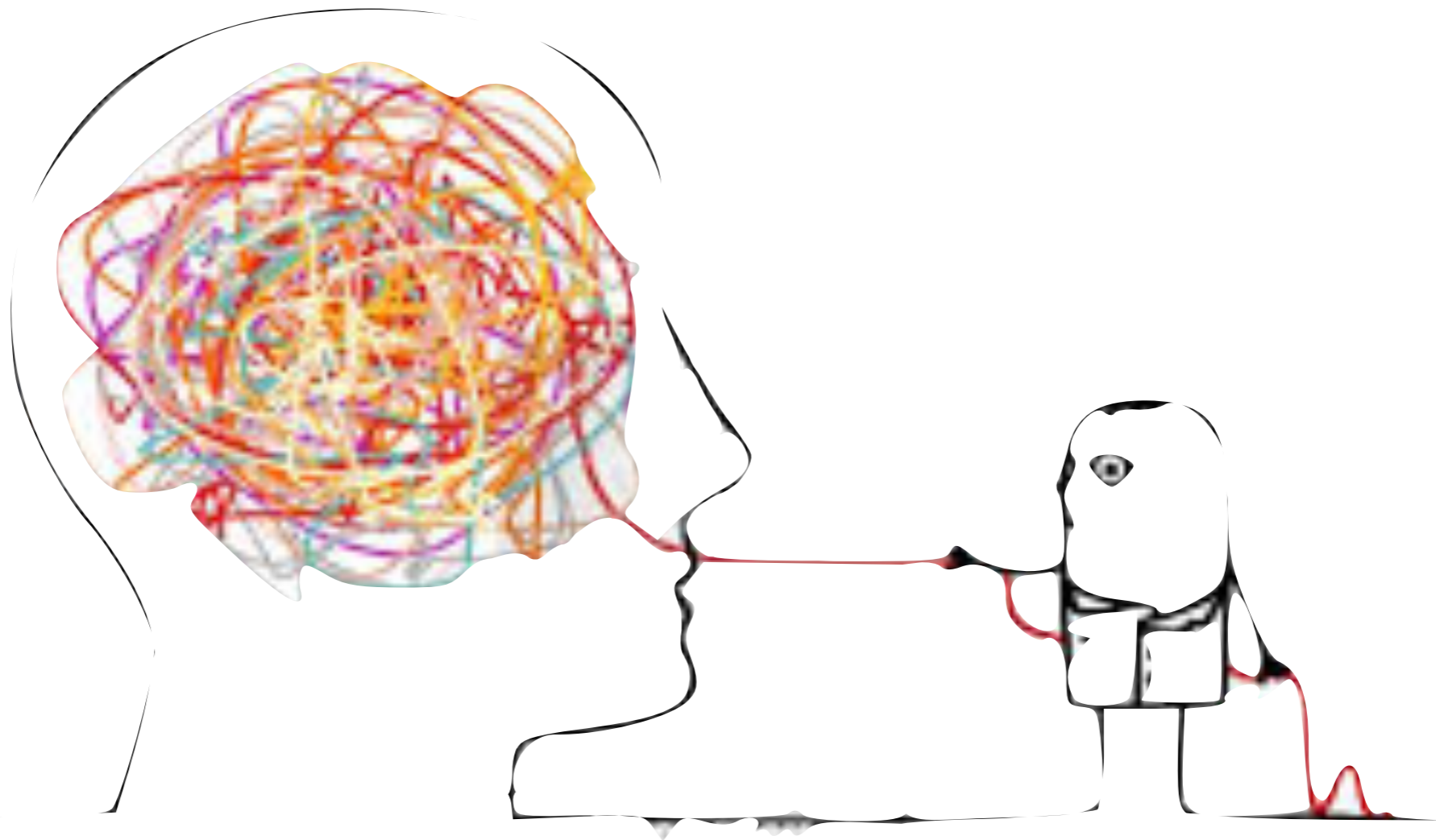
**It helps you put yourself up  
without putting others down**



**You will learn to spark  
serotonin without junk status**



**Repetition will build new  
pathways so it feels normal**





**You will always be a  
mammal among mammals**



**But you can rewire yourself  
to enjoy nature's serotonin**



**You'll be glad you did!**





**Your questions are invited:**

**Loretta@InnerMammalInstitute.org**

