

# EMOTIONAL SELF-REGULATION



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# EVOLUTIONARY PSYCHOLOGY: WHY WE ARE UNHAPPY SO MUCH?

## Three Theories

1

Positive states of mind are elusive because our minds are molded to the ancestral environments and we are misfits to modern life.

Examples:  
Urban life without nature, industrialized work, lack of clans and tribes, social media.

2

Distress is important for the survival of our genes.

Examples:  
Jealousy, grief, alertness to minor threats.

Negative emotions are more important to survival than positive emotions.

3

Happiness is not a trait that brings fitness: Mother Nature doesn't care if you are happy.



# THREE THEORIES OF EMOTION

1

## **MINE:** Mental, inside the person

- Emotions are subcortical (completely limbic)
- Emotions don't vary much by culture except in expression

2

## **OURS:** Outside the person, relational

- Emotions are created exogenously in community and culture...
- ...and maybe someplace else
- Emotions vary dramatically between people, places, and times

3

## A hybrid model

- Emotional signals emanate from the limbic system
- They are mediated by culture and context, and in some ways we don't understand
- We manage them in the cortex
- So, emotions vary a lot between individuals and in different places and times



# BASIC EMOTIONS

1. Anger

2. Disgust

3. Fear

4. Interest

5. Joy

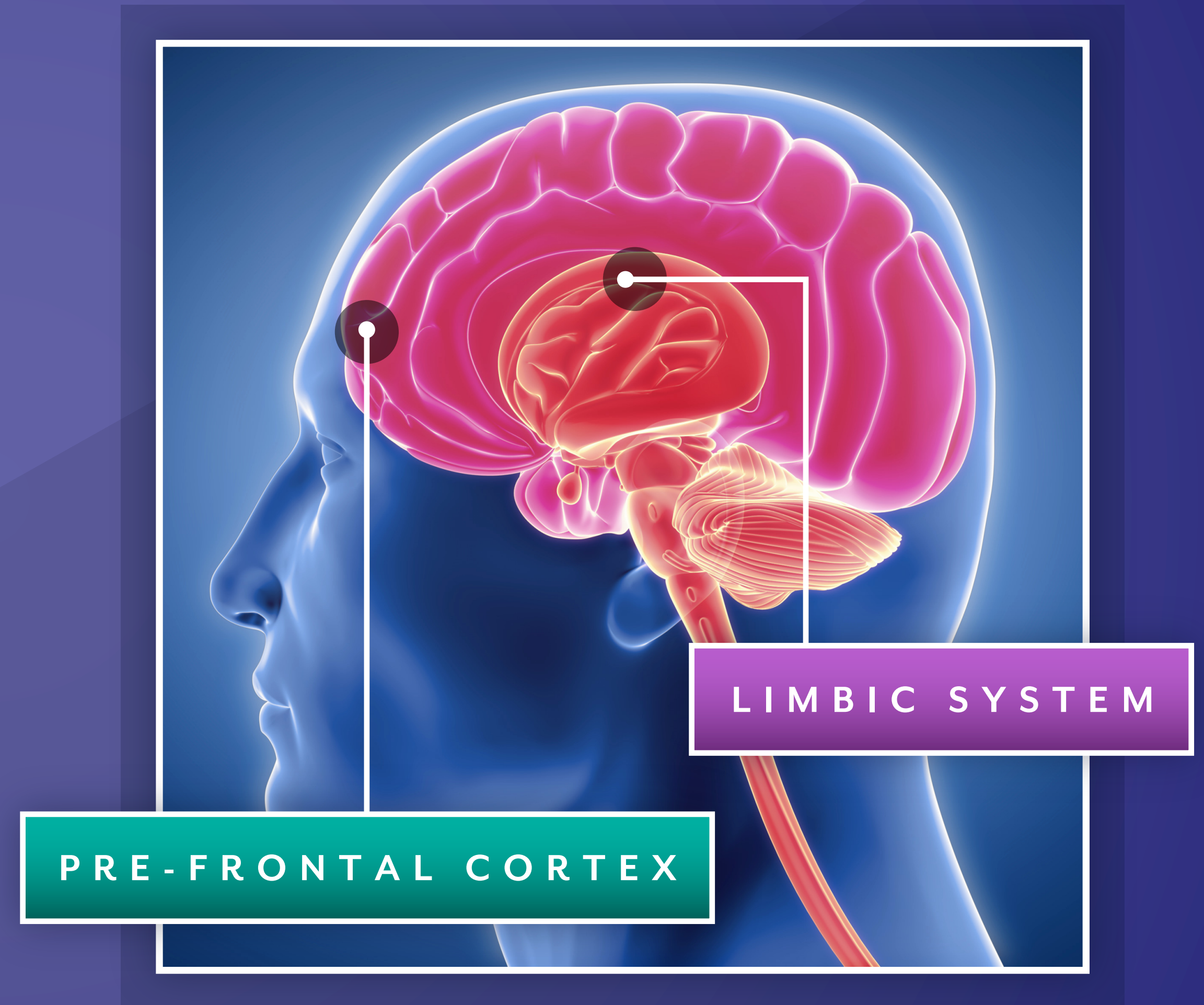
6. Sadness





# MANAGING EMOTIONS

- **Metacognition:** Basic emotions that happen to you originate in the limbic system
- Metacognition of limbic emotions “moves them” to the prefrontal cortex — the **executive center**
- In the executive center they can be **managed**



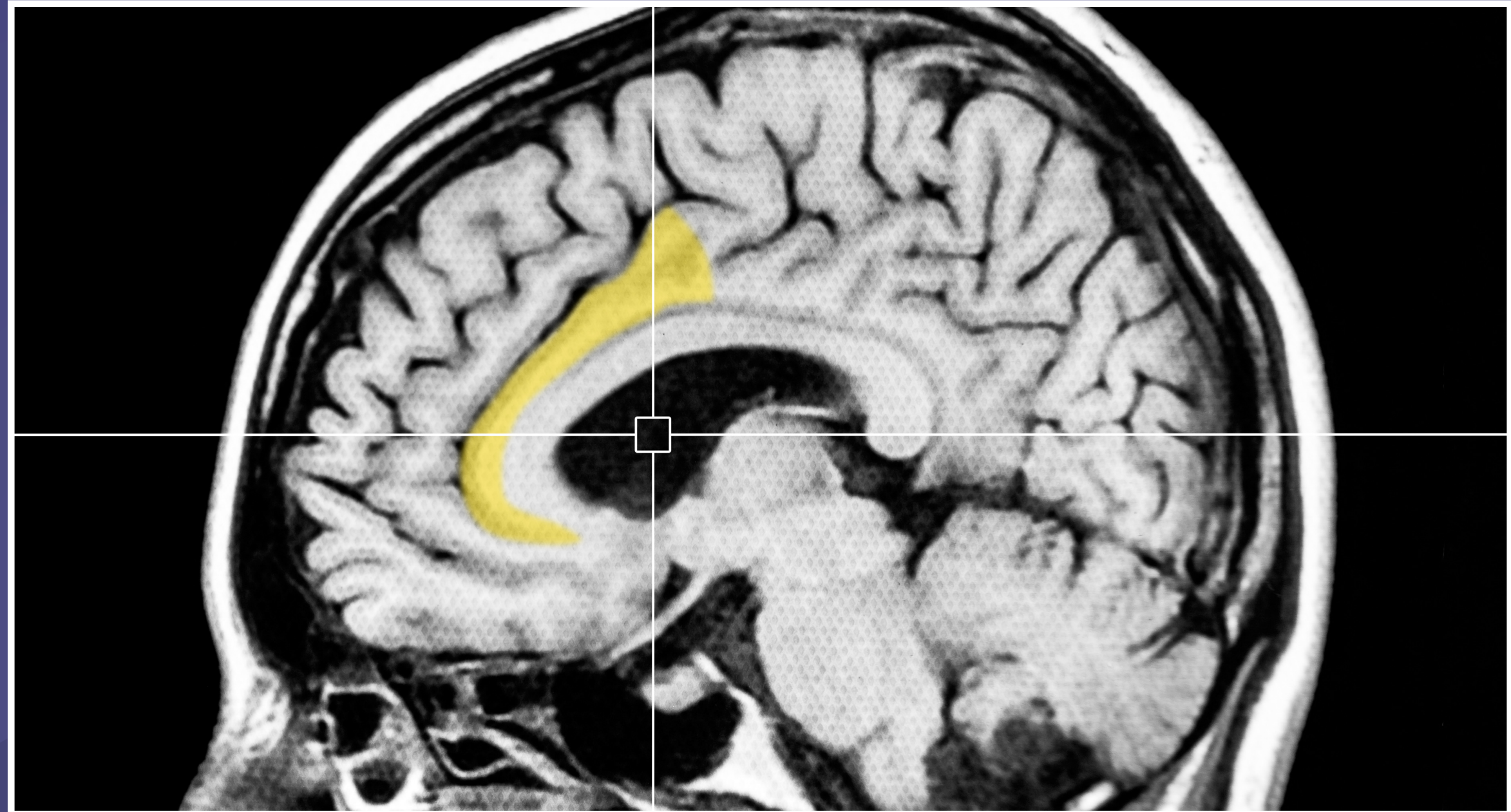


# PAIN



## SENSORY COMPONENT

- Physical pain
- Processed in somatosensory cortex

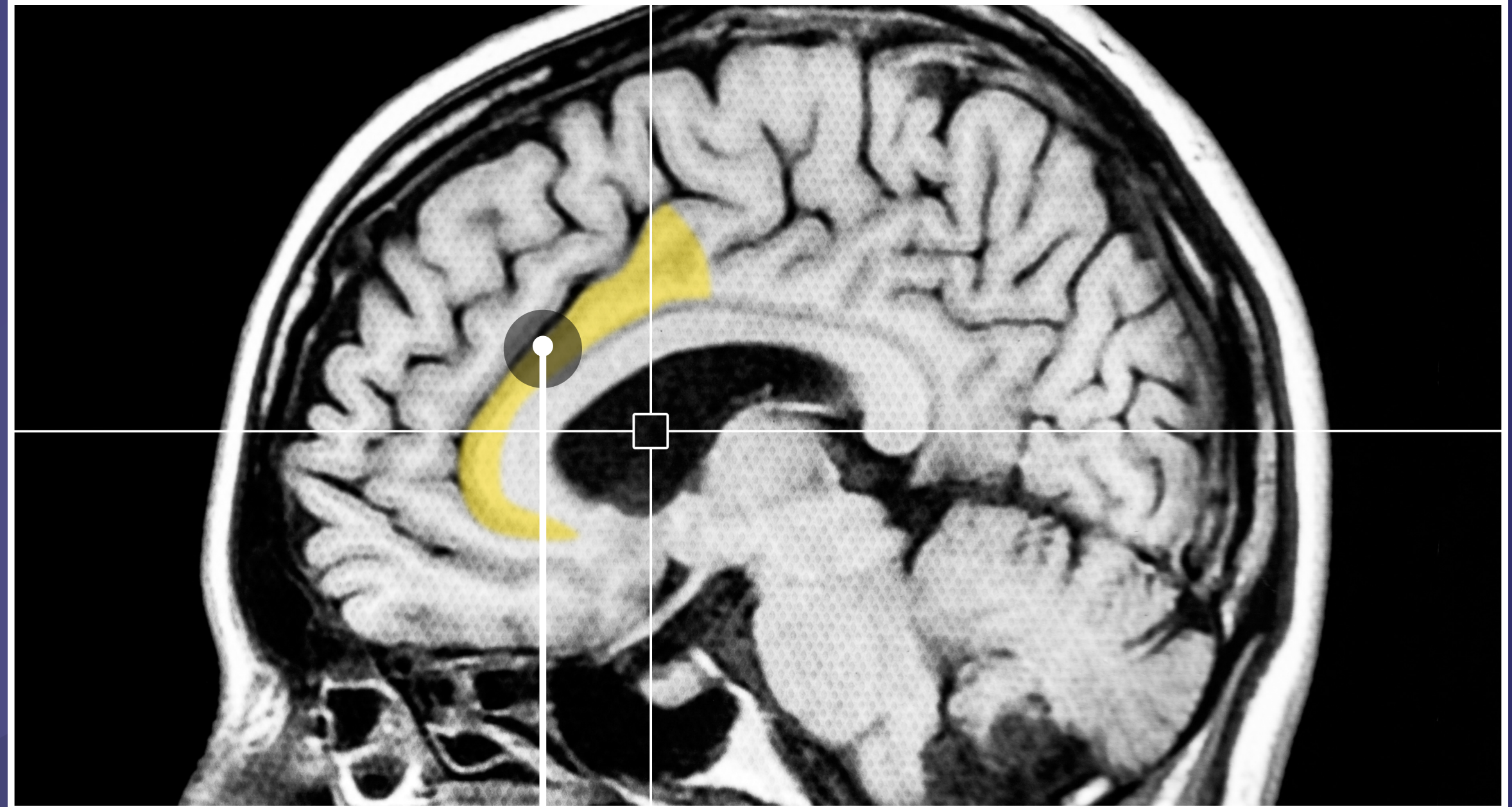


## AFFECTIVE COMPONENT

- Physical pain & emotional pain
- Processed in the dorsal anterior cingulate cortex (dACC) and anterior insula



## ANOTHER WAY



ANTERIOR CINGULATE CORTEX



Pain reducers also  
reduce your  
empathy.