



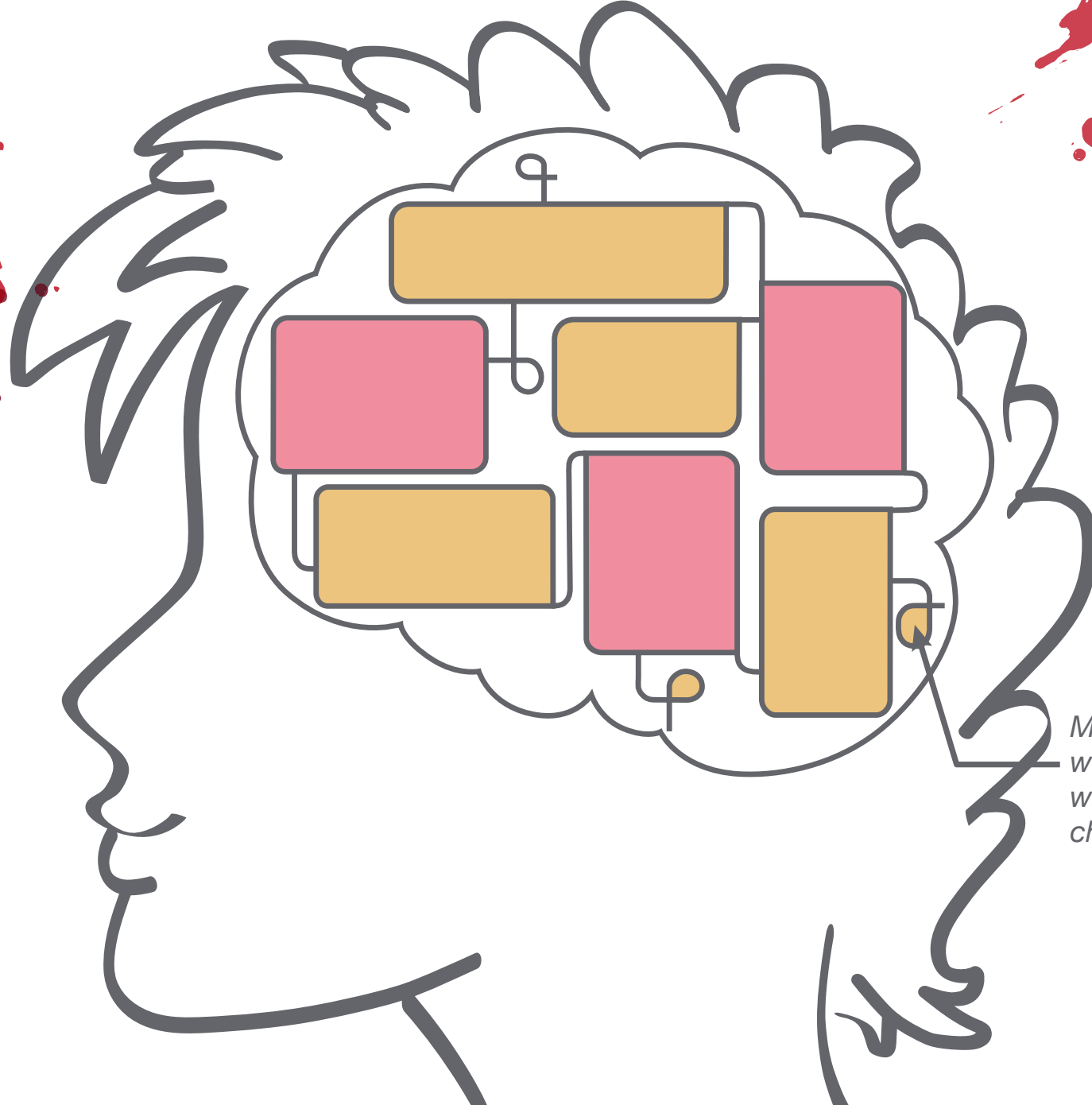
Bringing up Great Kids
PARENTING ADOLESCENTS
HANDOUTS



The Adolescent Brain

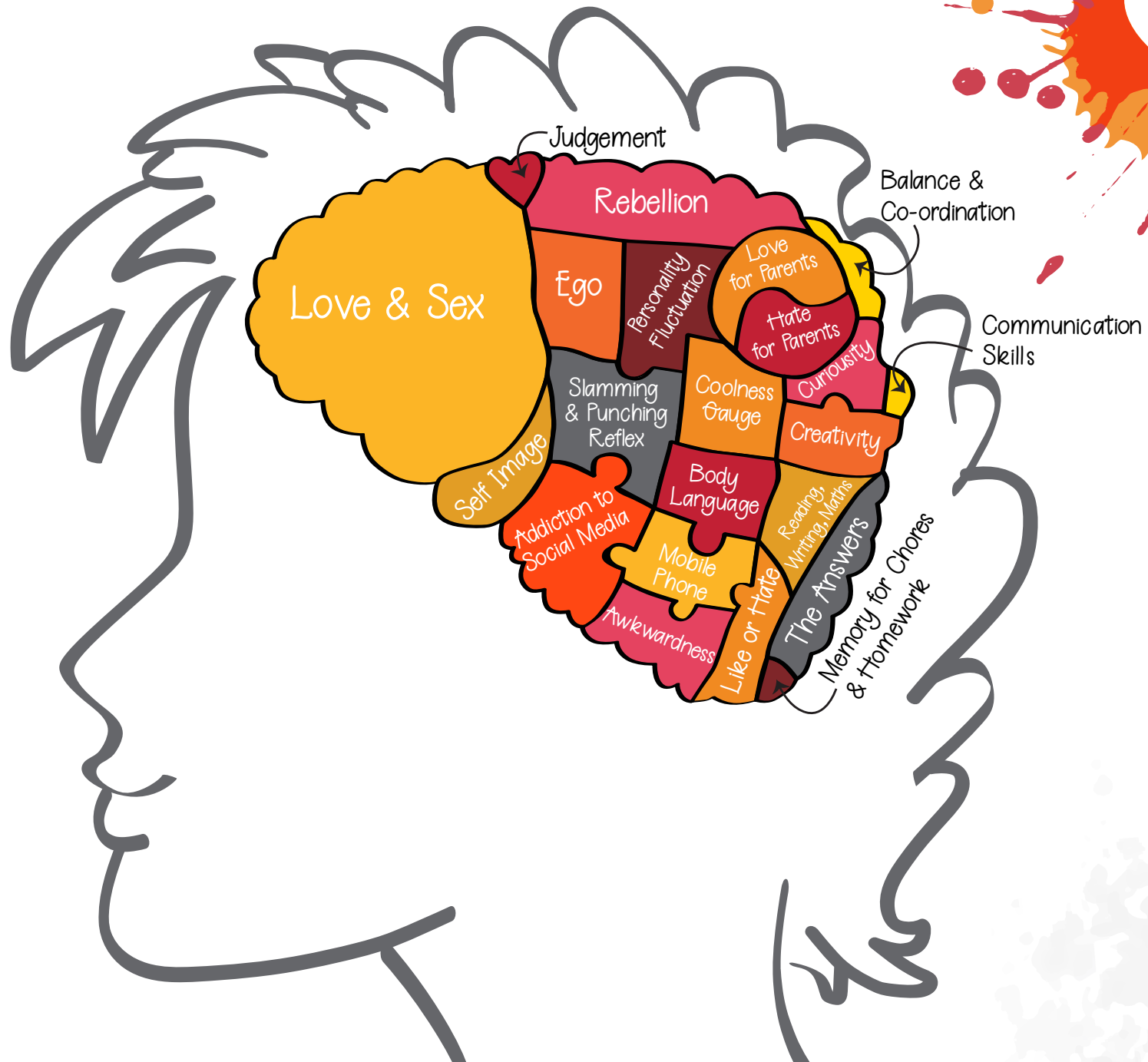


Anatomy of an Adolescent's brain



Memory of what life was like in childhood

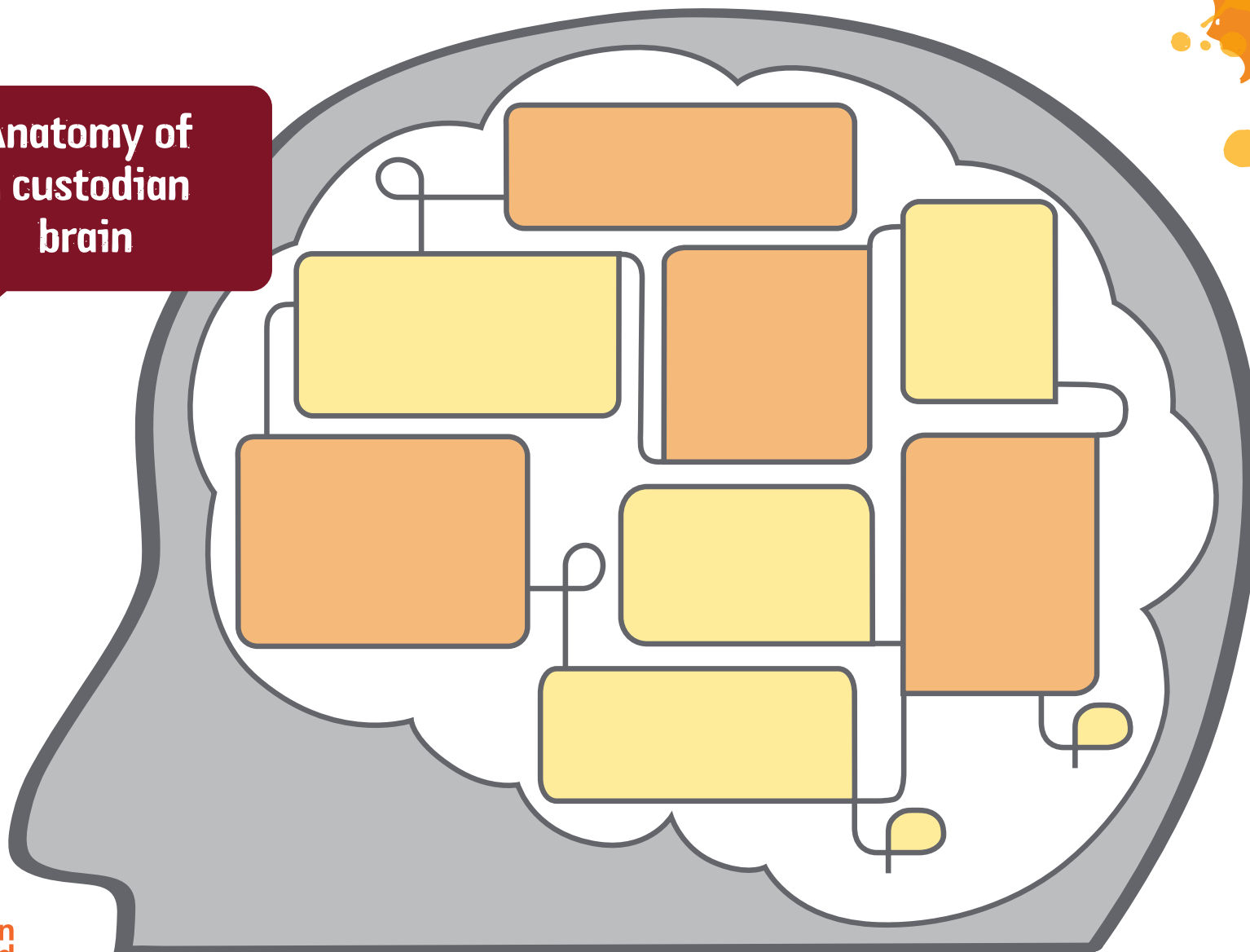
The Adolescent Brain



The Parent Brain



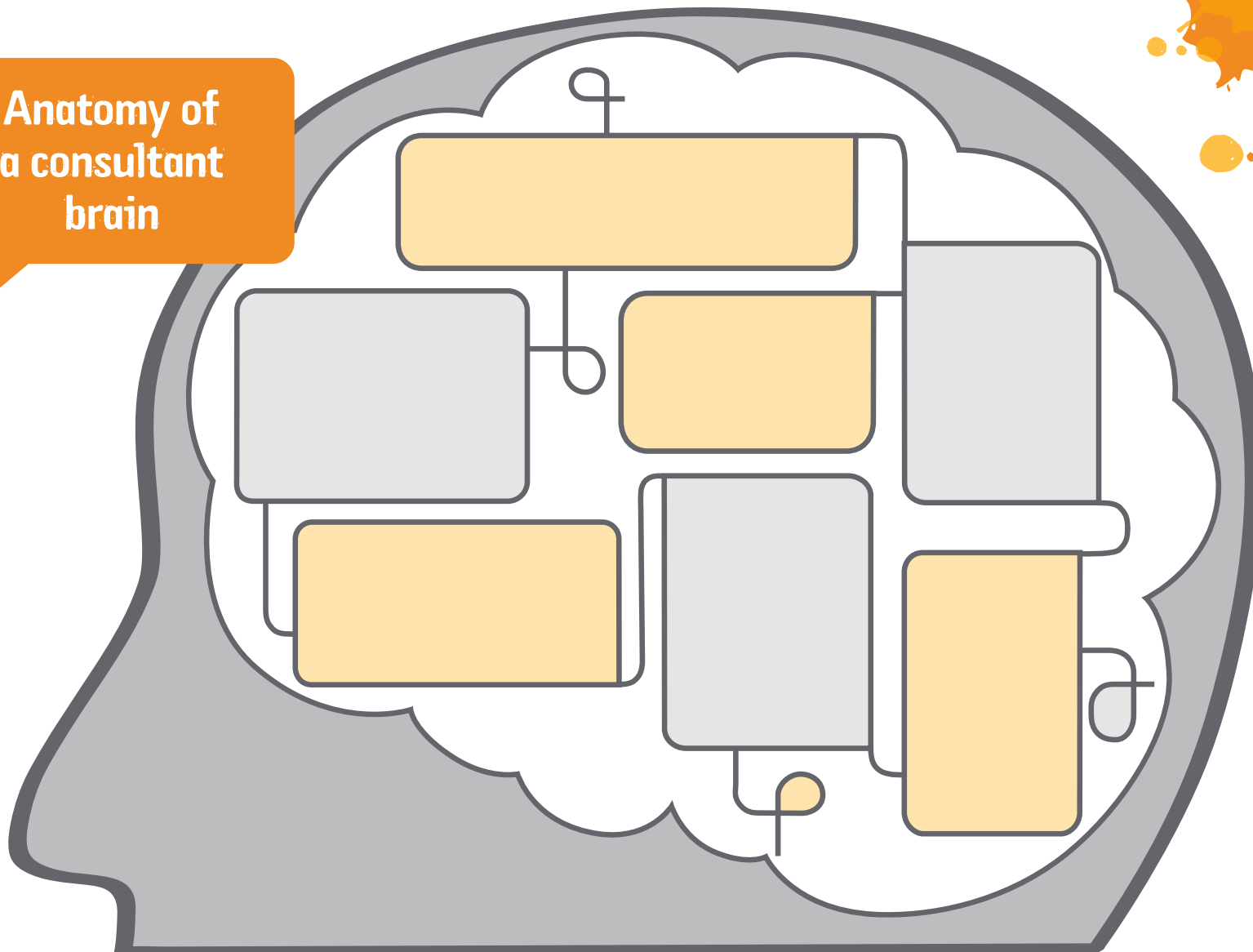
Anatomy of
a custodian
brain



The Parent Brain



Anatomy of
a consultant
brain



The Adolescent's Pre-Frontal Cortex



The adolescent brain is different from the brain of a younger child, and different from an adult brain.

95% of the structure of the brain has been formed by the time children are 6 years old, but huge changes occur during the adolescent years.

The last area of the brain to develop fully, is the front section of the cortex- the **Pre-Frontal Cortex**, situated just behind the forehead.

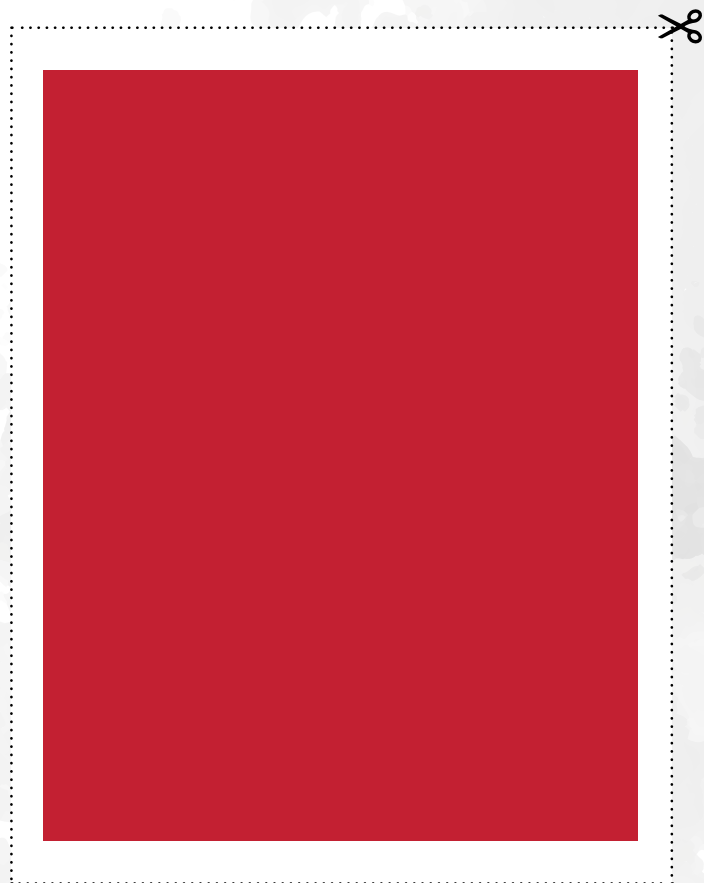
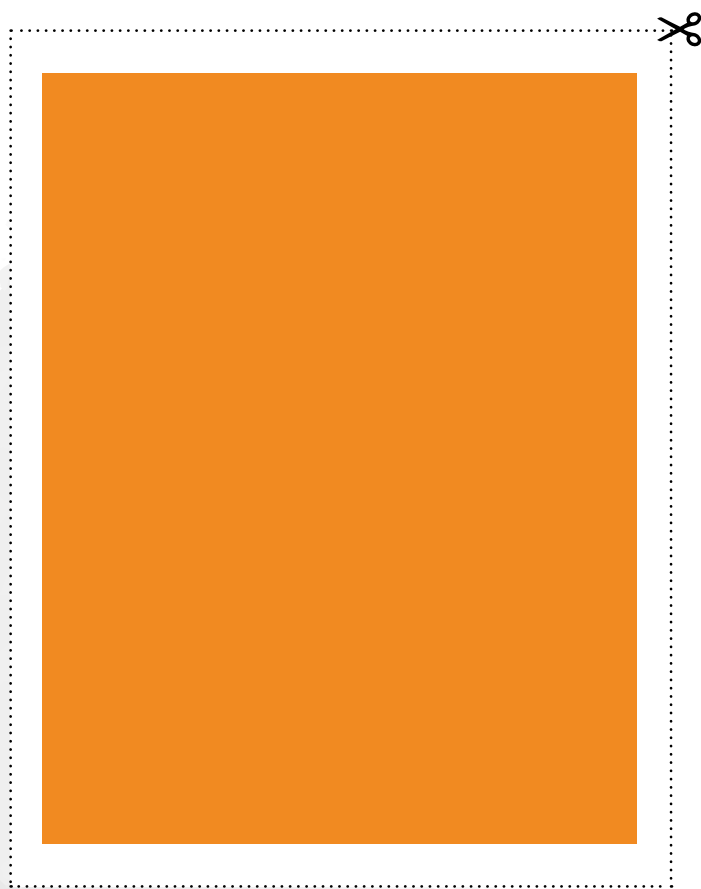
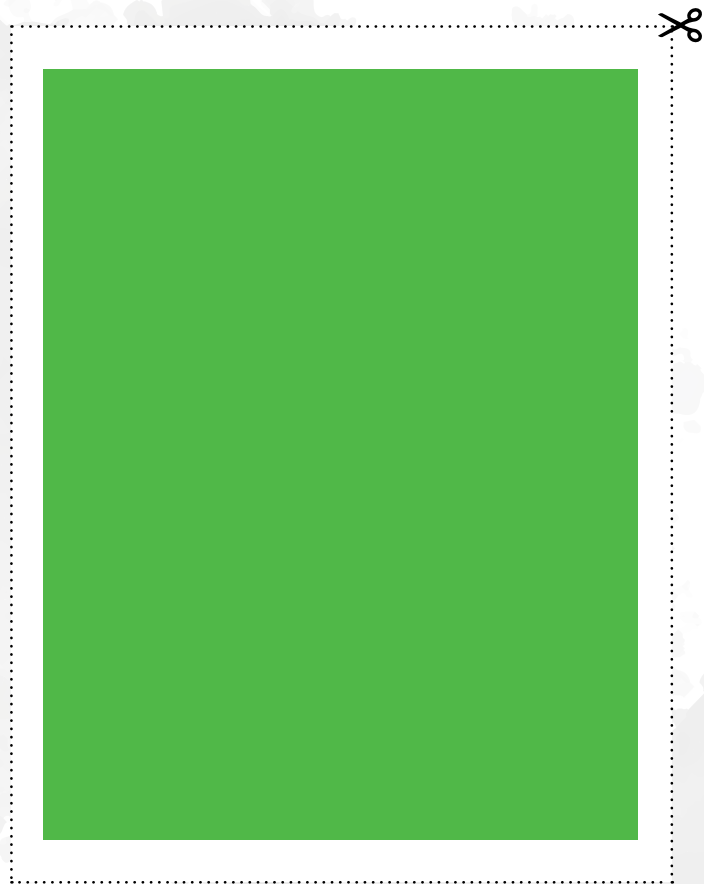
The pre-frontal cortex is the most 'grown up' area of the brain. It has been called 'the CEO of the brain' and 'the area of sober second thought'.

When fully developed, the Pre-Frontal Cortex allows us to:

- **Make sound judgements**
- **Set goals and priorities**
- **Plan**
- **Multi-task**
- **Control our impulses and emotions**

During the adolescent years, the pre-frontal cortex is a 'construction zone', a 'work in progress'. During this time of massive change, the brain doesn't grow much more, but it undergoes a massive remodelling- a bit like having a total network and wiring upgrade.

The Three Cards

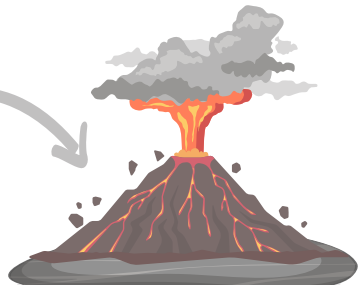
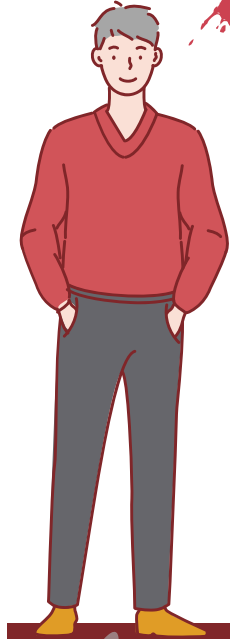


My Journey as an Adolescent



What did you not like about yourself as an adolescent?

What do you like about yourself as an adult?



How long did it take you to get to where you are now?

Pick Your Battles

Take the time to consider situations where a disagreement, a difference of opinion or a difference of choice occurs between yourself and your adolescent. Using the table below, you may consider where your own view, or opinion has come from, take the time to reflect on how your own parents responded when you were a adolescent. Once the table is completed, using the highlighters provided, consider which situations are **red**, **orange**, or **green**.



Parents' choice/opinion/taste/practice	My adolescent's choice/opinion/taste/practice	Where might your views have come from?	How do you wish your parents had responded to you?
Your clothing is too revealing to be worn out.	Everyone is wearing this.		
When you are invited to a family event you will attend.	I don't like them, and you can't make me to go!		
Your music is too loud.	It needs to be loud to be enjoyed.		
You are just eating junk food.	I don't like your boring foods.		
Your friends are a bad influence.	It's none of your business who I hang around with.		
While you're living under my roof, I expect you to follow my rules.	Your rules aren't fair.		

Pick Your Battles



Parents' choice/opinion/taste/practice	My adolescent's choice/opinion/taste/practice	Where might this come from?	How do you wish your parents had responded to you?

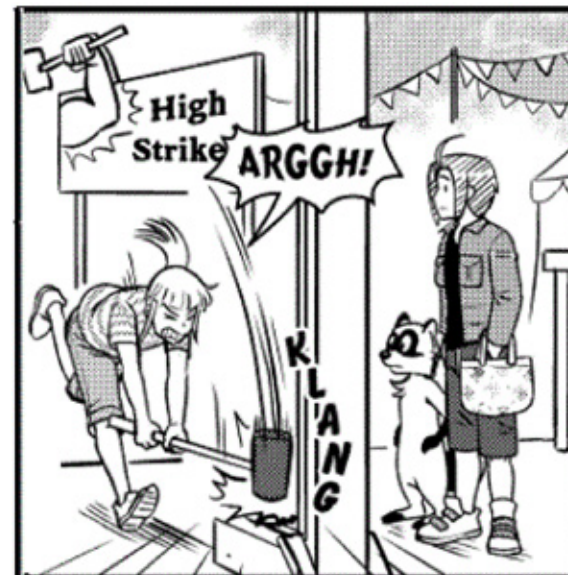
The High Striker

Reflect on the comic and fill in the six spaces according to a real experience with your adolescent(s).

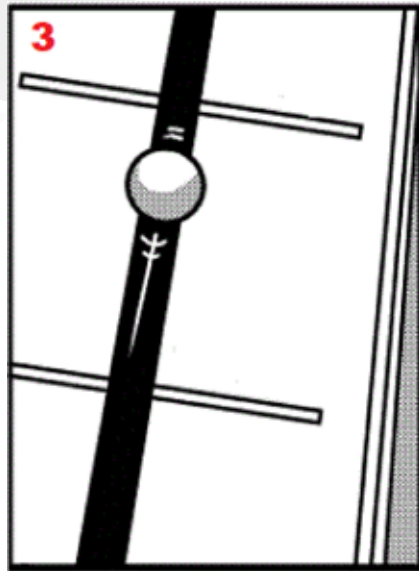
1. What thoughts or feelings may cause BIG emotions in your adolescent?



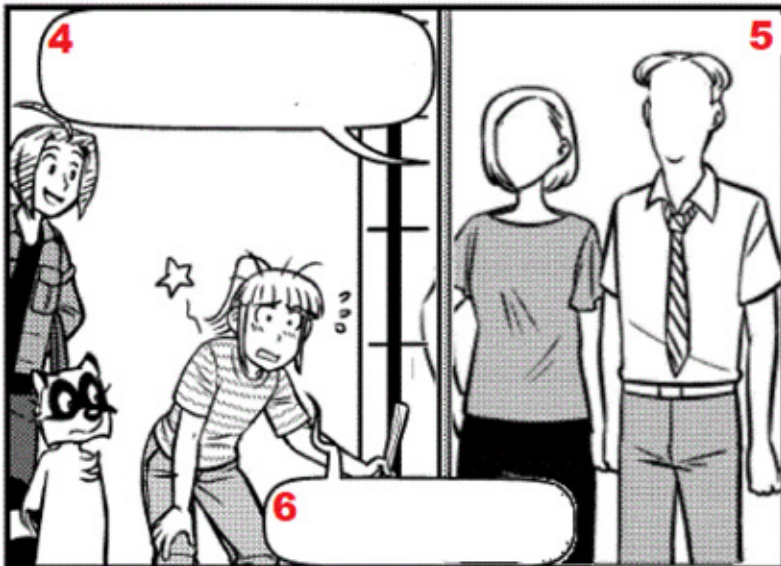
2. What is the act of high striking in your adolescent? (e.g. throwing things or screaming)



The High Striker



3. To what level does this escalate their behaviour?

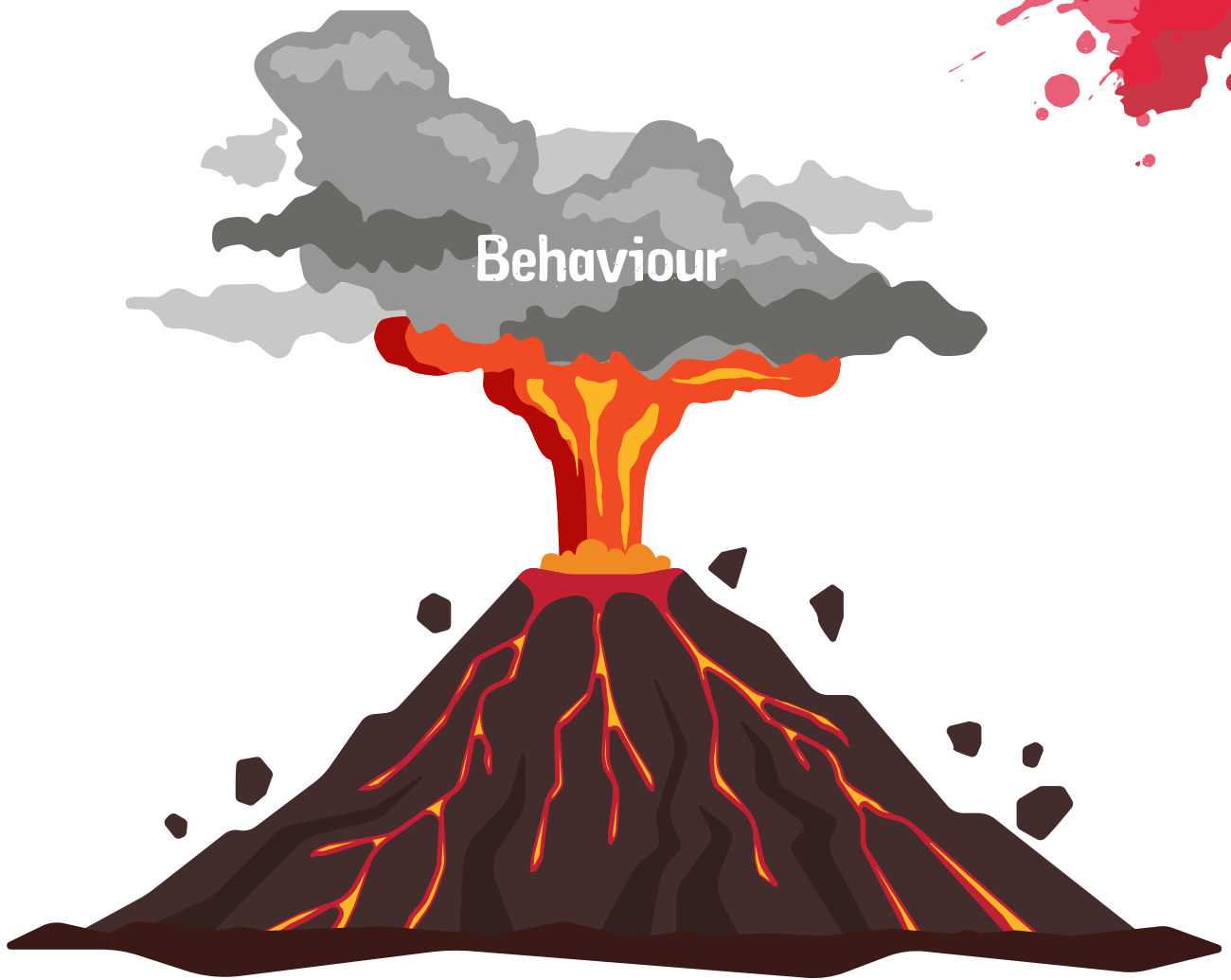


4. How do you respond or wish to respond to your adolescent?

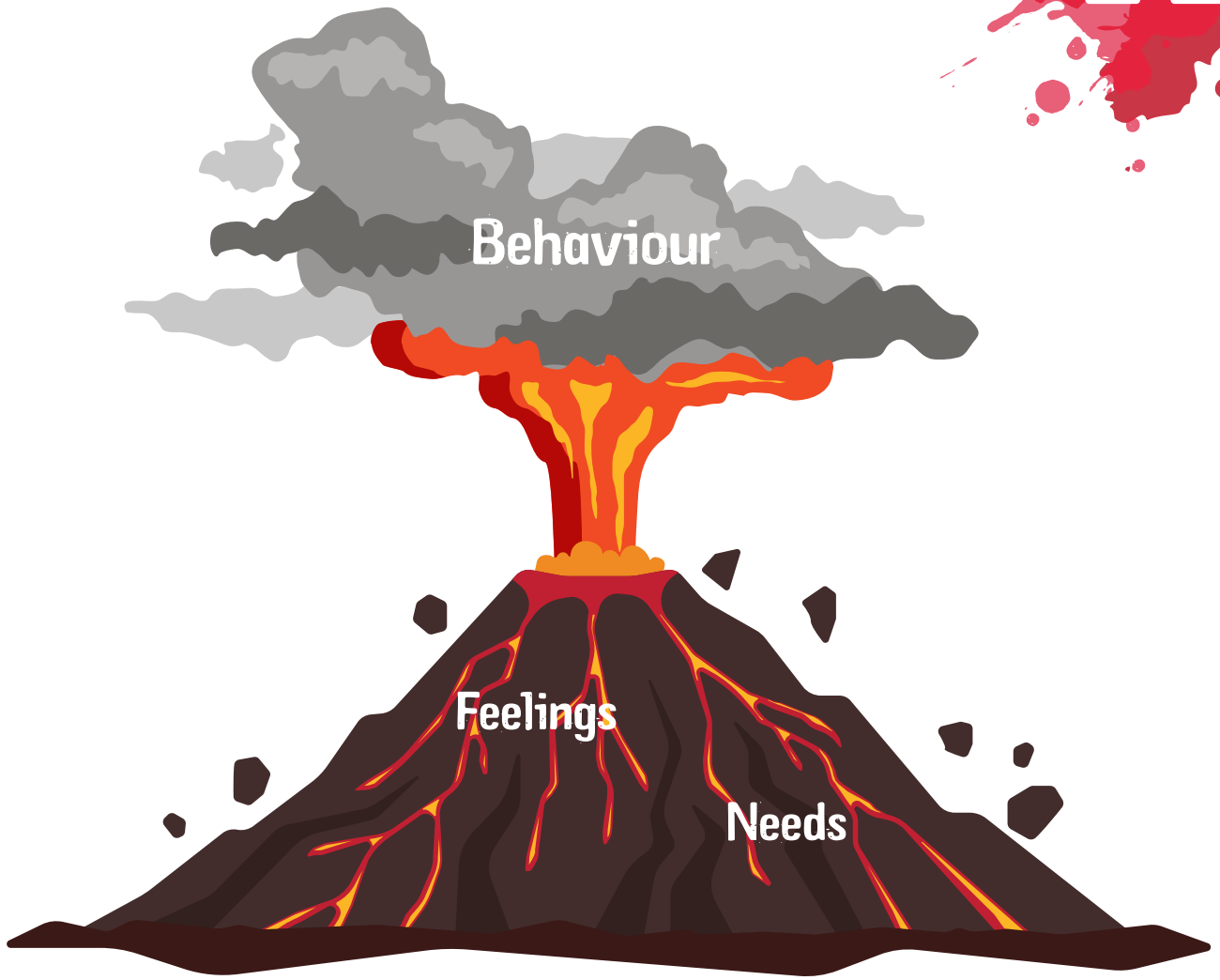
6. How might your adolescent be feeling or reacting after the strike and receiving your response?

5. Design your facial expression while responding.

The Volcano



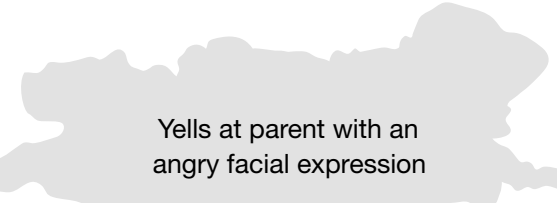
The Volcano



Partially Completed Volcanoes



Yells at parent with an angry facial expression



My adolescent does that because they are feeling...
What they need is...

Ignores everyone at the family dinner while engaged on their phone



My adolescent does that because they are feeling...
What they need is...

Refuses to go to school



My adolescent does that because they are feeling...
What they need is...

Steals perfume from shops/mum



My adolescent does that because they are feeling...
What they need is...

Dresses in a revealing outfit with two new piercings



My adolescent does that because they are feeling...
What they need is...

Never at home, always off hanging out with their friends



My adolescent does that because they are feeling...
What they need is...

Partially Completed Volcanoes



My adolescent does that
because they are feeling...
What they need is...



My adolescent does that
because they are feeling...
What they need is...



My adolescent does that
because they are feeling...
What they need is...



My adolescent does that
because they are feeling...
What they need is...



My adolescent does that
because they are feeling...
What they need is...



My adolescent does that
because they are feeling...
What they need is...

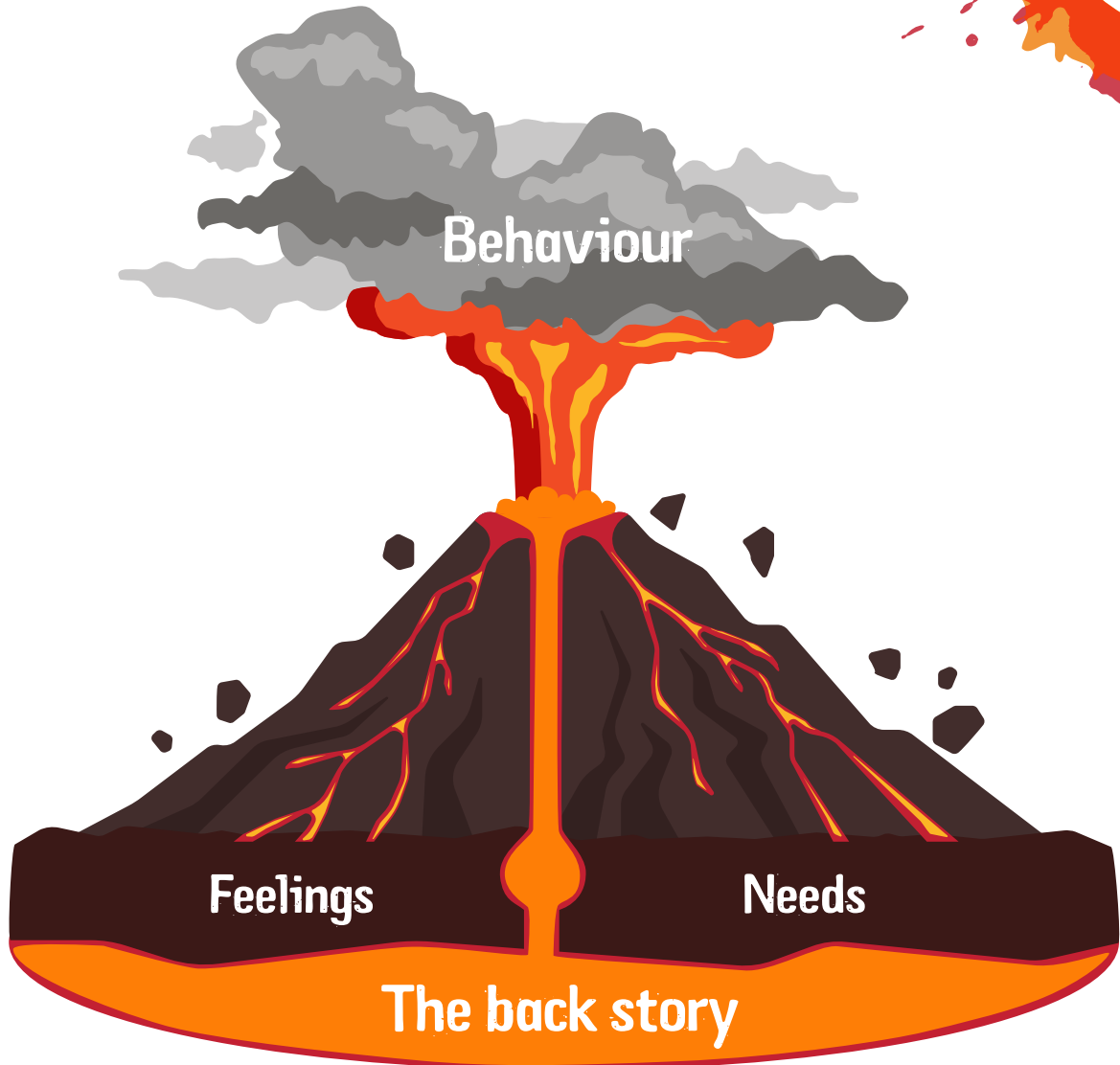
Crossing the Red Line

Possible questions to consider at the time of conflict

1. How are you feeling? How will you share your feelings with your adolescent safely?
2. How do you think your adolescent is feeling? How can you check in with them?
3. Are you open to deeply listen to their side of the story?
4. How do you assess the situation?
5. What values of your family have been damaged now?
6. Was the red line clear to them?
7. How can you help them understand the value that the adolescent has violated?
8. Who is involved in this issue?
9. What can we do to minimise the damage to the relationship?
10. How do you think raising the issue with the adolescent makes him feel?
11. Who may be available to you for consultation/support in this situation?
12. Have you communicated the situation with the other parent? Are you in agreement?
13. Who is the best person to deal with this issue?
14. Are you ready to have an objective, open minded and safe conversation with them?
15. How can you both find repair and move forward?



The Cross Section Volcano



PACE Starters



Playfulness (Setting the scene)

- Meet them where they are at...
- Converse in a way the adolescent is comfortable e.g. text, video message, handwritten notes etc.
- Join them on the play station
- Practice their sport with them
- Go for a drive together
- Walk the dog together



Acceptance (Sentence starters to meet the adolescents where they are at, no judgement)

- Thanks for telling me...
- I'm glad you told me....
- I'm sorry you felt/think that I....
- ... this can happen to anyone ...



Curiosity (Sentence starters to show openness – not making assumptions about the adolescents behaviour or intentions)

- I'm wondering...
- I'm thinking you might be.... Have I got that right?
- Why do you think....
- What was that like.....?
- I'm wondering if you might be feeling.....?

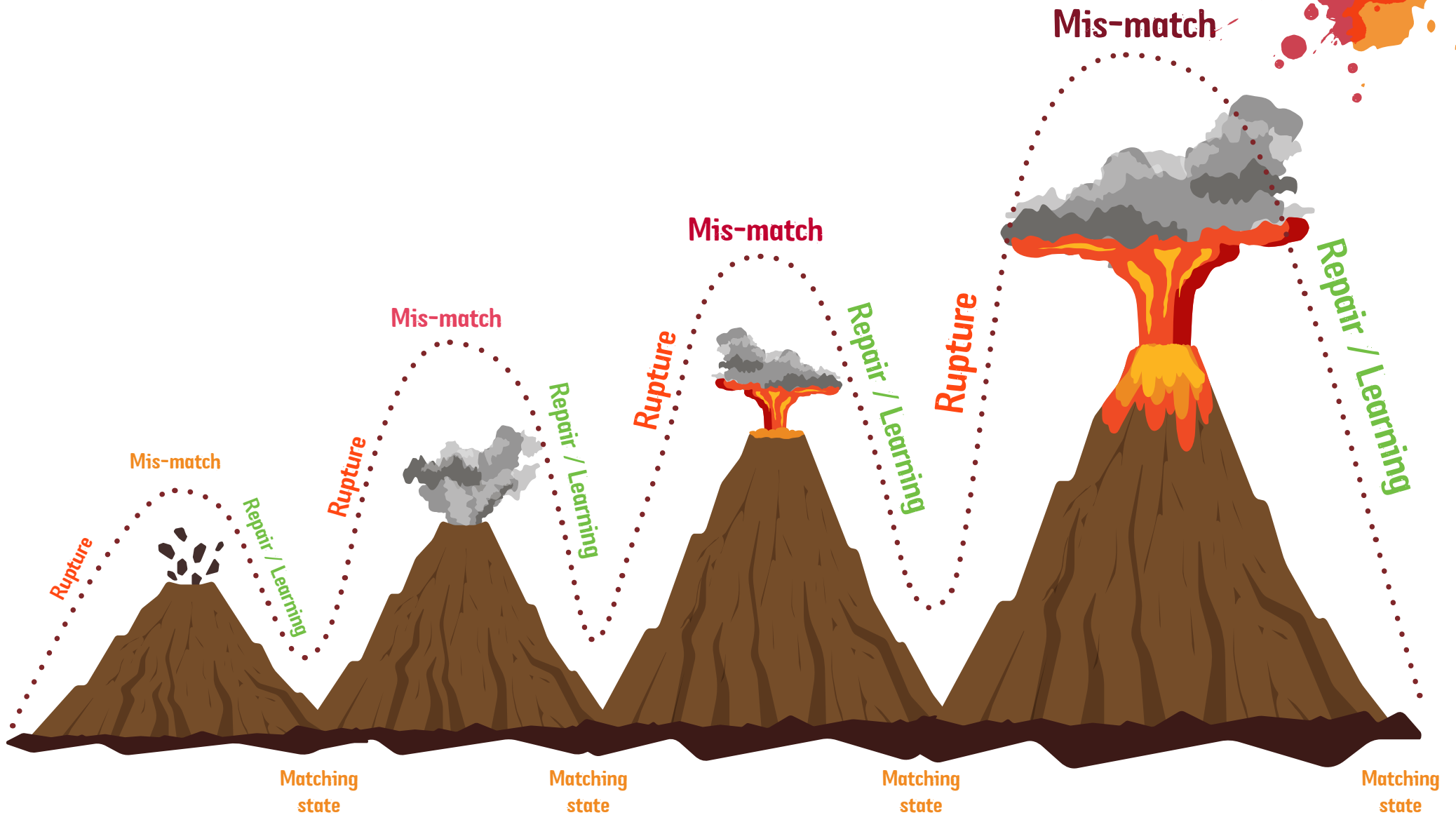


Empathy (Sentence starters on being there for the adolescent ...)

- It must be so hard...
- You seem to really want to...
- I know it's really disappointing that you can't go/do...
- It's so difficult when you try really hard and....
- I'm worried you feel...
- I feel sad that you...
- I'm so sorry that you've been feeling....



Rupture and Repair in Relationships



Communication Barriers

Cliché

You are still young and your whole life is ahead of you. Chin up. Smile and the whole world smiles with you. I hope this teaches you not to count your chickens before they hatch!

'The problem with you'

The problem with you is that you always say the wrong thing. You look untidy and you fidget all the time. You are too keen and not patient enough. You don't listen. Besides you always take things too personally

Philosophical

Everything happens for the best. If you miss one bus another will come along soon. When one door closes another one opens. That job was just not meant for you. You know what we always say in this family when life gives you lemons make lemonade!!

'Take me for instance'

When I was your age and went looking for my first job I cleaned my shoes, put on clean clothes washed my hair. I knew how to make a good impression.

Self-pity

I am so sorry I don't know what to say. My heart breaks for you. Life is so much a matter of luck and we are not a family that has much luck. We don't know anyone who can do us a favour.

Minimising the situation

I don't see why you feel so unhappy. There is really no good reason for you to be so discouraged. Big deal! One job did not work out. It's not even worth talking about.

Reasoning

What did you expect? To get the first job you wanted? Life is not like that. You may have to go for 10 jobs before you get lucky.



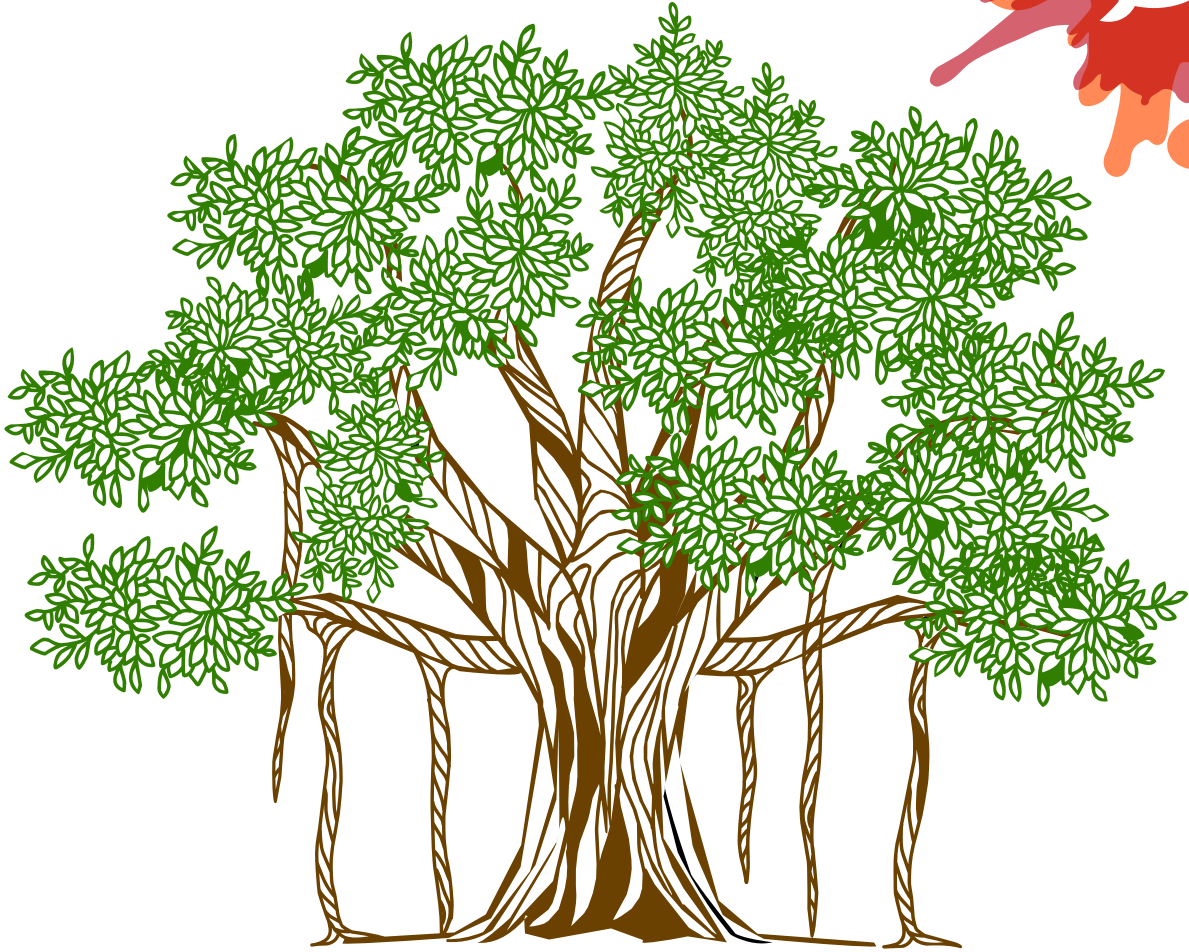
A Way Forward

- You really wanted that job, didn't you?
- And it seemed like the perfect job for you too
- How disappointing
- Getting a job so you can have your own money is something you are really looking forward to.

- I really did
- Yeah well, that wasn't the way it worked out
- Yeah it sure is
- Yeah, I know. (pause) I guess I will just have to apply for another one. It's not the end of the world.



The Banyan Tree



1. How can parents balance between staying connected and allowing space for exploration?

2. How can adolescents maintain their connection with the family?

3. In what ways does the family 'feed' the adolescent?





4. What does the adolescent bring to the family?

5. How does being "rooted" look like in real family life?

6. How does having your own roots in new grounds look like in real family life?

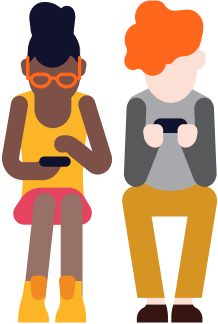



Four Adolescents



The Adolescent	What we see	Adolescent face	Parent face	How do you feel about this?	How does it look?	How does it look from a consultant perspective?
The couch adolescent						
The certain adolescent						

Four Adolescents



The Adolescent	What we see	Adolescent face	Parent face	How do you feel about this?	How does it look?	How does it look from a consultant perspective?
The web surfer adolescent						
The achiever adolescent						

Jar of Life

Take the time to think about your adolescent and then identify what some of the **most important things (golf balls)** for your adolescent may be. Next identify some of the **other important things (the pebbles)** and finally **everything else (the sand)**.



The Changing Landscape



Take the time to consider the following:

What aspects of your relationship with your adolescent has already changed?

What are the little indications that some things are changing over time?

What is unresolved and continues to occur?

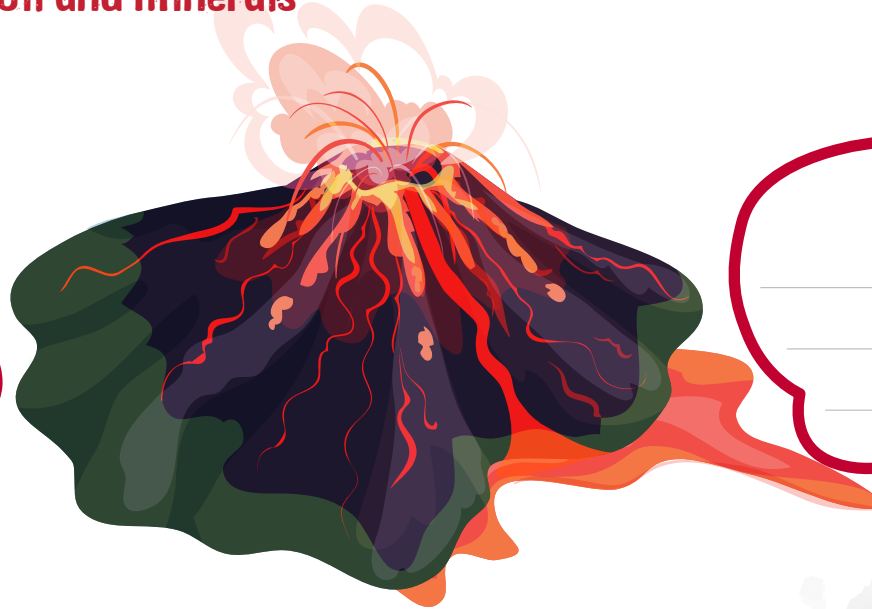


Fertile Ground

**Volcanoes can be scary....
But they are the origin of fertile soil and minerals**

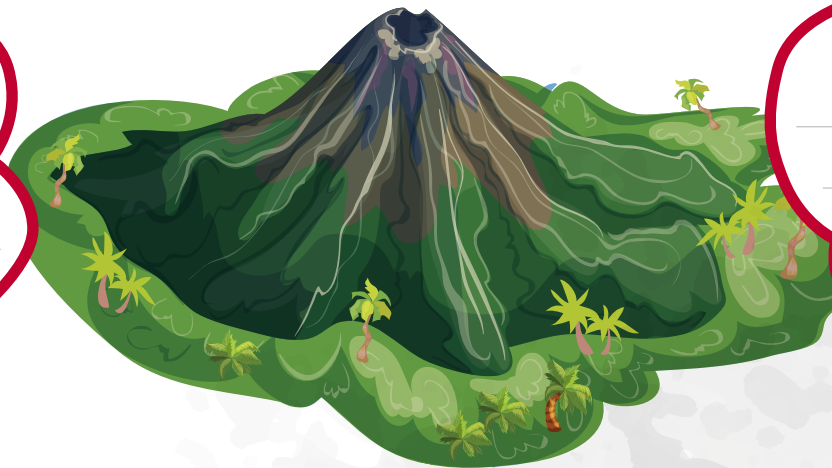


How do you deal with the eruption in a way that doesn't harm the relationship?



How do you feel when the relationship volcano erupts?

How do you feel when you see signs of change & growth?



How can you support nurture and connection?
