

PAIN AND THE BRAIN: HOW IT REALLY WORKS

How we might think pain works



Many of us have a very simple view of how our brain feels pain. But in reality, pain is a two-way street...

Past and present life experiences

inside your brain

Focus of attention

Pain memories

Your mood - anxiety, anger depression

Sleep problems

Genetics

Nerves more sensitive

How it REALLY works



Pain is one of our protective systems. It is designed to keep us safe and well, and it's controlled by the brain.

Our brain decides when to protect us based on information it receives from:

- 1) areas of the body, and
- 2) many other factors it gathers from elsewhere

It assesses the current situation based on *both* these types of information.

If the brain decides it needs to protect, pain will happen.

In persistent pain, even though the original trigger for the pain may have stopped, the other factors are still there, so the brain keeps the pain going. It's a bit like the brain struggling to turn down the 'volume control'.