

Explaining the vmPFC to a Client

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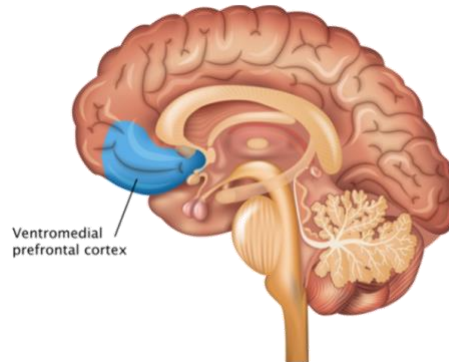


Image Source: The Science of Psychotherapy, 2020

There's a part of your brain that takes what you feel for someone and turns it into something that actually shapes what you do, not just in the moment you're with them, but afterward, when they're not in front of you anymore.

When that part is working fully, someone you love stays present in your mind even when they're not in the room. What you feel for them doesn't just show up when they're right there. It carries forward, shaping your day, your choices, the small things you do because you were thinking of them.

In some people, this part hasn't fully developed. So the feeling is completely real, you're not pretending, you're not lying, but it doesn't stay. The moment ends, and so does the feeling's hold on you, until the next time they're in front of you again.

That's not a lack of love. It's a specific function that never got the chance to fully build. And it can still be built, through practice, attention, and repetition, the same way any underused capacity grows stronger over time.