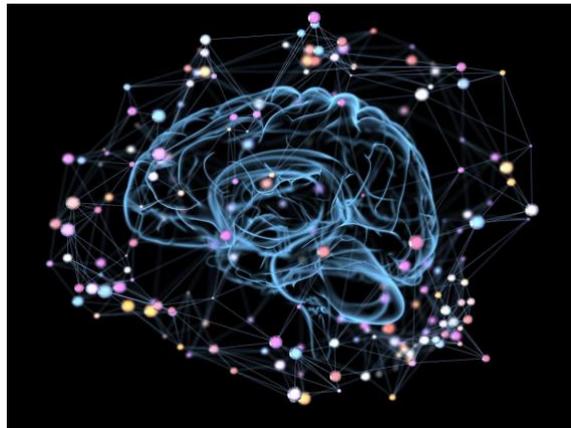


## **Bringing uniqueness back into your therapeutic approach**

Every single individual comes into the world as a blank slate, with no beliefs about what is right and wrong, or past experiences that help them understand how safe they are in different environments. Your brain's ultimate objective is to keep you safe, and it does that by continuously scanning your environment to learn how to best respond in order to stay out of danger and move into safety.

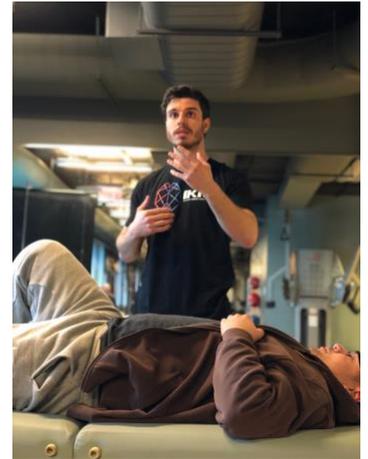
Your brain is always searching for things that are familiar. This enables it to make effective predictions, because it has a blueprint of what happened in the past and how you responded. If you were successful in your response and stayed out of danger, it will repeat the same pattern. This is a good thing, but can also become troublesome when the things that protected you were outputs of pain, tension, or weakness. Now, when we speak about danger or threat, we don't mean being chased by a bear or tiger. This could be anything from the stress of work to getting your body into a position similar to one where you injured yourself in the past.



Think about it this way, if in the past you sustained a significant injury during a deadlift, and without effective rehabilitation, you decided to try another deadlift weeks later, how do you think you will respond? You may perhaps notice an increase in protective tension or pain throughout your body because your brain remembers that the last time you were in this position, things didn't turn out very well. Yes, that tension, pain, or even weakness can oftentimes be expressions of protection and survival because your brain feels threatened and puts the brakes on in order to feel safe. Of course, this is not a very sustainable expression of safety, and can really delay the recovery process. The point we want to emphasise here is that every single individual has a unique neurology with unique past experiences, and so will respond differently to different inputs & environments. This is crucial to understand, as too many of us are taking a cookie cutter approach, where a client with shoulder pain gets the same exercises as the next client with shoulder pain. They both have the same exercises, but different nervous systems, and this is often the same for other body parts unfortunately. There is certainly a shift happening, but there are still many that take the lazy approach.

Understanding your client's past injury history (what happened, what position they were in, what environment they were in, what kind of treatment approach did they engage in). We

have spoken before about how every biologically significant event, including injuries, surgeries, and even listening to fear-mongering language from health professionals, are multisensory experiences. That means that your nervous system doesn't just remember the position you were in, but also what you saw, heard, felt, and so on. With this in mind, doesn't it make sense that we need to engage more of the sensory systems within our scope of practice as healthcare professionals during the rehab process, and work with the client's unique neurology to help them find safety in movements, positions, & environments that their brain may have previously determined unsafe? We need to establish proof of safety in the face of danger. This is absolutely crucial to helping our clients improve their function on multiple levels, and the key is making it EASY!



On an IKN course, we teach you how to assess your client's unique neurology and engage it with your current treatment approach. You don't have to drastically change your whole approach, but you need to dig a little deeper and look at things from a top-down perspective in a manner that makes sense to both you and your client, as the client's understanding of what's going on is just as important as your understanding. This is where treatment and rehab is heading, and we would love to see you at an IKN course soon to be part of it!

