

Fist for a Brain



1. Extend both arms with palms open facing down and lock your thumbs.
2. Curl your fingers to make two fists.
3. Turn your fists inward and connect your hands until the knuckles touch.
4. Cross over your thumbs.
5. While the fists are touching, pull both toward your chest until you are looking down on your knuckles. This is the approximate size of your brain! Not as big as you thought? Most brains are 2% of your total body weight, about 3 pounds and the size of a small grapefruit. It's not the size that matters, and they do not get larger with a larger person. What matters is the numbers of connections in neurons, and the number of deep crevasses or folds in the brain structure. Those connections form when stimuli result in learning. The thumbs are the front and are crossed to remind us that the left side of the brain controls the right side of the body, and the right side of the brain controls the left side of the body. The knuckles and outside part of the hands represent the cerebrum, or thinking part of the brain.
6. Spread your palms apart and keep your knuckles touching. Look at the tips of your fingers, which represent the limbic system or emotional area. Note how this area is buried deep within the brain, and how the fingers are mirror imaged. This reminds us that most of the structures of the limbic system are duplicated in each hemisphere.
7. The wrists are the brainstem where vital body functions (such as body temperature, heart beat, blood pressure) are controlled. Rotating your hands shows how the brain can move on top of the spinal column, which is represented by your forearms.

