



# Body and Brain Cards

Visual prompts for climbers to identify and target specific methods of movement

Climbing is an innate human skill; it's something we can just do. If we stand a child at the base of a tree, they can climb the tree. Compared this to swimming, where if we throw a child (that has not been taught) into a lake, they don't suddenly start doing amazing front crawl. [Legal disclaimer: do not throw children that can't swim into lakes...]. I typically describe this as climbing using the subconscious while fellow Performance Coach Claire Youdale describes the same phenomenon as **climbing with the Body**. One example may be on-sighting an outdoor route.

This ability to climb carries us to a certain point in complex movement; different complexities for different people. However, sooner or later, the movement becomes *too complex* and we are required to solve the problem manually; or rather, use our conscious mind. Claire describes this as **climbing with the Brain**. Typically, this is referred to as route reading.

Both methods of climbing have distinct advantages and disadvantages. As we have said, our subconscious can only solve problems up to a point, primarily based on schemas developed in long term memory previously... In other words, it picks up on similar problems it has encountered in the past. However if it *has* encountered this movement before, it is incredibly fast at completing the required moves.

To truly enhance our ability to climb, we must be able to tap into both of these abilities. We often run exercises of this nature with breathing but not with movement. To aid this process, below are Prowess Body and Brain cards.

## How to Use Body and Brain Cards

Begin by:

1. printing both pages
2. cut out each card individually, each on different coloured paper (optional but advised)
3. attach them back-to-back so they are aligned
4. laminate the completed card (optional)

This gives you a card that you can keep in your climbing bag.

### Stage 1: Reflection

Following each climb, return to your card and ask yourself:

*Did I climb that with my Body or my Brain?*

Now leave the card with the answer facing upwards.

Complete for each climb

**Goal:** the purpose of this exercise is to **identify whether you are climbing consciously or subconsciously**. Noticing how we *climb already* is a key first step.

### Stage 2: Prediction

Before each climb, ask yourself:

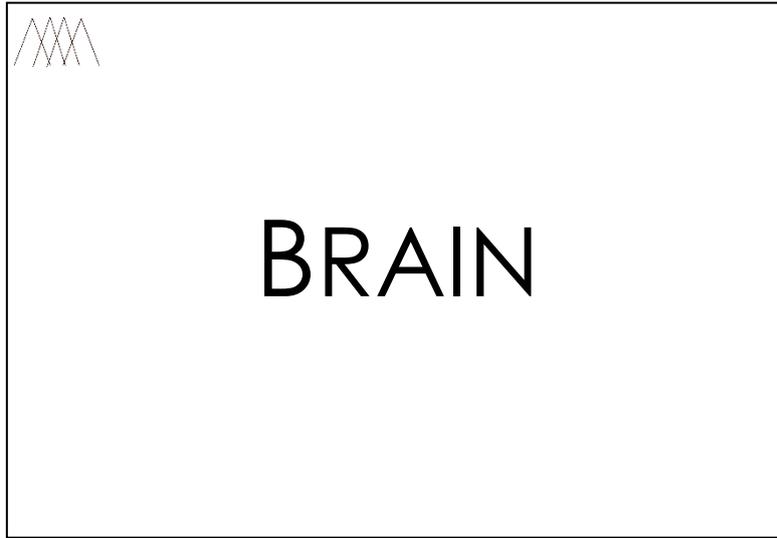
*Am I going to climb the next route with my Body or my Brain?*

Now leave the card with the answer facing upwards.

**Goal:** the purpose of this exercise is to **begin to take control of our conscious mind**. When we begin to truly master climbing movement, we can either switch on to calculate movement or switch off that conscious mind to allow the subconscious to work its magic.



To be printed on coloured paper





# BODY

