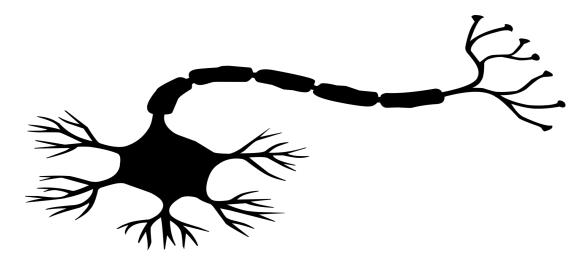


Learning objectives

- State the 3 different areas of the nervous symptom for polyvagal theory
- Identify how to create a polyvagal profile map in play therapy.
- Identify different polyvagal interventions to use in play therapy.



The Therapeutic Agents of Play

- Self expression
- Access to the unconscious
- Indirect teaching

Facilitates Communication Fosters Emotional Wellness

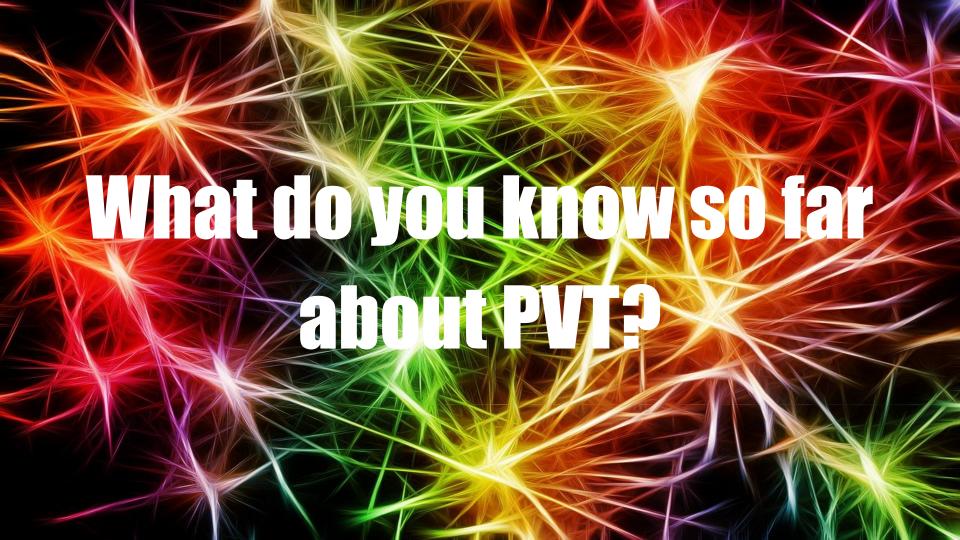
- Catharsis
- Abreaction
- Positive emotions
- Counterconditioning fears
- Stress inoculation
- Stress management

- Creative problem solving
- Resiliency
- Moral Development
- Accelerated psychological development
- Self-regulation
- Self-esteem

Increases Personal Strengths Enhances Social Relationships

- Therapeutic relationship
- Attachment
- Social competence
- Empathy

Adapted from Schaefer & Drewes (2014), Parson, J (2017) chart concept



Polyvagal Theory

Polyvagal theory was born out of **Dr. Stephen Porges** research question on how one nerve -**the vagus nerve-** and it's tone could be both a

marker of resilience *and* a risk factor for

newborns.



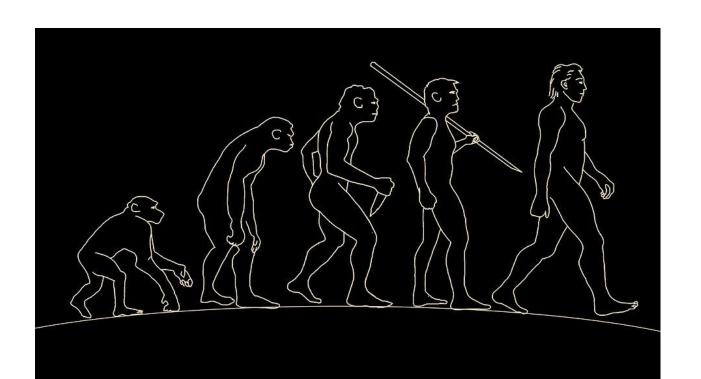
Polyvagal Theory - 3 organizing principles

Hierarchy - the autonomic nervous system reacts from 3 pathways of response:

- dorsal vagal (immobilization)
- sympathetic nervous system (mobilization)
- ventral vagal (social engagement & connection)

It is COMPLETELY VOLUNTARY! Each stage is the unique and it CHANGES EVERYTHING!

The more danger you're in, the ancient the autonomic response.



Polyvagal Theory - 3 organizing principles

Neuroception- "detection without awareness", it's automatic & instant

A subcortical experience happening far below the realm of conscious thought. It is the way our autonomic nervous system responds to cues of safety, danger, and life-threat from within our bodies, in the world around us, and in our connections to others.

If we took time to think about it, we'd already be dead!

Polyvagal Theory - 3 organizing principles

Co-regulation

"Polyvagal theory identifies co-regulation as a biological imperative: a need that must be met to sustain life. It is through reciprocal regulation of our autonomic states that we feel safe to move into connection and create trusting relationships."

Neuroception scan others to check if they are safe and will mirror them. **Safety cues safety.**

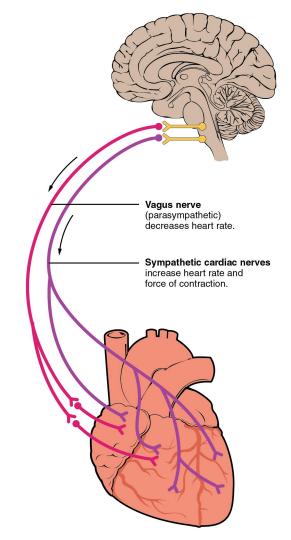
Dana (2018) p. 4

Play Therapy - the role we can play as therapists

- Help clients understand how their body and brain works together
- Help clients gain awareness of their own reactions and connections with self, others, and the world
- Help clients create and maintain meaningful relationships
- Create a SAFE space and relationship in therapy
- Help clients through co-regulation
- Find ways to process traumatic experiences
- Help clients build adaptive coping strategies
- Explore sensory experiences
- Help bring to awareness the subconscious



"The autonomic nervous system is made up of two main branches, the sympathetic and the parasympathetic, and responds to signals and sensations via three pathways, each with a characteristic pattern of response...



The <u>sympathetic branch</u> is found in the middle part of the spinal cord and represents the *pathway that prepares* us for action.

It responds to cues of danger and triggers the release of adrenaline, which fuels the **fight-or-flight response**.



This is HULK mode!



The Sympathetic state is **YELLOW** danger zone.

- Your heart rate speeds up
- Pain tolerance goes up
- Flat facial affect
- Middle ear muscles turn off: Better to hear extreme low & high frequency sounds



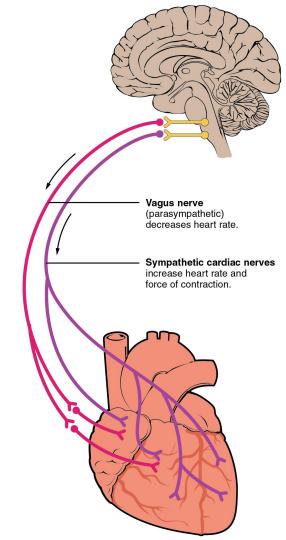
In the **parasympathetic branch**, Polyvagal Theory focuses on two pathways

("a pair of" = parasympathetic)

traveling within a nerve called the vagus...

The vagus is divided into two parts: the **ventral vagal pathway** and the **dorsal vagal pathway**.

Both act as a BREAK ... one slows you down to help you engage socially. The other slows you down to make sure you *survive*.



The ventral vagal pathway responds to cues of safety and supports feelings of being safely engaged and socially connected.



This is Bruce Banner mode.



The Ventral Vagal state is **GREEN** safety zone.

- Your heart rate slows
- Saliva and digestion are stimulated
- Facial muscles are activated/more expressive
- Increased vocal prosody & eye contact
- Middle ear muscles turn on: Better to hear human voice

The Ventral Vagal = Feeling Safe = Crucial

- Facilitates general health
- Releases beneficial hormones (oxytocin)
- Helps learning, critical thinking, & productivity
- Makes life more relaxing and enjoyable
- Makes people like you
- Allows bodily functions to operate
- OPTIMIZES THE ENTIRE HUMAN EXPERIENCE

Healthy individuals move back and forth between green and yellow with ease.







We can see this in healthy play when people know how to tease, tickle, play fight and still engage socially and stay connected.

In contrast, the **dorsal vagal pathway** responds to cues of extreme danger.

It takes us out of connection, out of awareness, and into a protective state of collapse. When we feel frozen, numb, or "not here", the doral vagus has taken control." p. 8-9

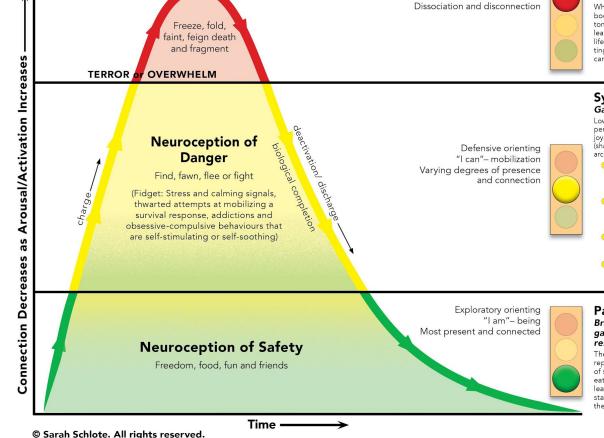


The Dorsal Vagal state is **RED** life threat zone.

- Immobilization/freezing
- Death Feigning
- Our sense of time shuts off (past, present, future don't exist)



This is **INVOLUNTARY**. An important point to understand since many victims are blamed for not running away.



Neuroception of Life Threat

Parasympathetic Nervous System: Brake System: Dorsal Vagal Dominance (high tone)

Disorientation "I can't" - immobilization

> When the other strategies are not possible or successful, the body enters a state of energy conservation involving either tonic (rigid) immobility or collapsed (floppy) immobility. Defeat, learned helplessness, shame, shutdown, numbing, depressed life energy, derealization, depersonalization, personality splitting, altered states of consciousness, or loss of consciousness can be experienced.

Sympathetic Nervous System: Gas Pedal: Sympathetic Dominance

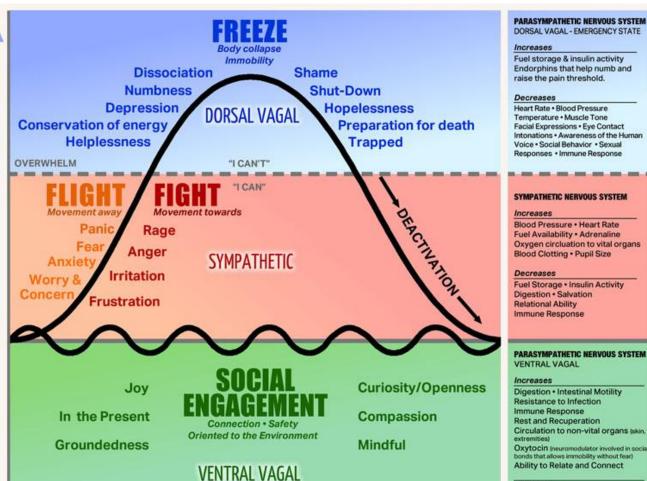
Low to moderate amounts of arousal or stress, especially if tempered by the social engagement system, can be tolerable, enjoyable or invigorating and are not necessarily a sign of danger (shaded area). As a sense of danger or distress increases, a hierarchy of responses begins to mobilize:

- Find: AKA "tend and befriend". looking to the herd/pack or attachment figures for comfort, soothing or protection (attachment cry, proximity seeking, reaching towards, clinging, cohesion, bunching, protesting separation)
- Fawn: Appeasement behaviours to defuse conflict and tension and decrease likelihood of harm, pain or rejection (reasoning, complying, placating, peace keeping, caretakina, codependency, Stockholm syndrome, etc.)
- O Flee: Wariness, nervousness, anxiety, panic; avoiding, ignoring, moving away, away-from marching, running away, stampeding
- Fight: Irritability, frustration, anger, rage; resistance, posturing, intimidation, aggression, defending, protecting

Parasympathetic Nervous System: Brake System: Ventral Vagal Dominance (social en-

gagement) or Dorsal Vagal Dominance (low tone, rest and digest) These states are the most conducive to relationships, resting,

repair (emotional and physical) and restoration. The felt sense of safety supports sleeping, reading, meditation, prayer, and eating, as well as healthy social interactions, exploration, learning, procreation, and play. The more active of these states involves a degree of tolerable or pleasurable sympathetic arousal (shaded area).



SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

Increases

Blood Pressure • Heart Rate Fuel Availability • Adrenaline Oxygen circluation to vital organs Blood Clotting • Pupil Size

Decreases

Fuel Storage • Insulin Activity Digestion • Salvation Relational Ability Immune Response

PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM **VENTRAL VAGAL**

Increases

Digestion • Intestinal Motility Resistance to Infection Immune Response Rest and Recuperation Circulation to non-vital organs (skin. extremities) Oxytocin (neuromodulator involved in social bonds that allows immobility without fear) Ability to Relate and Connect

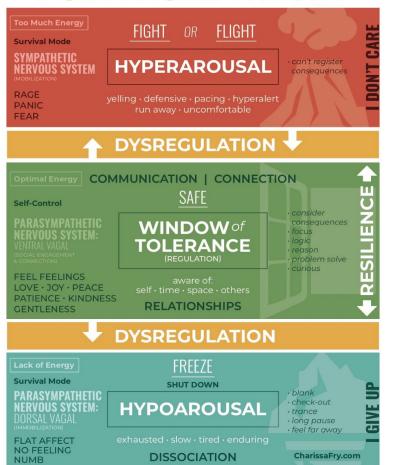
Decreases

Defensive Responses

Source:

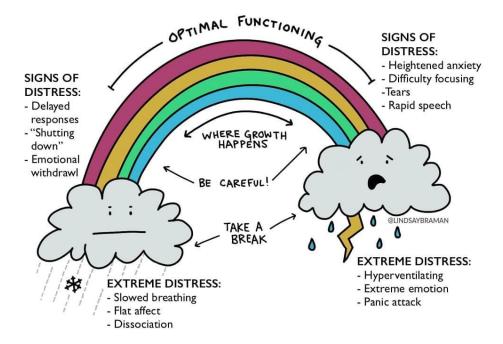
https://themovementpara digm.com/how-to-map-y <u>our-own-nervous-sytem-t</u> he-polyvagal-theory/

POLYVAGAL THEORY



WINDOW OF TOLERANCE

(IN RAINBOW FORM!)



Source:

https://lindsaybraman.com/ emotional-regulation-pdf/

TRAUMA: IFS & THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

Internal Family Systems

PolyVagal Theory

FREEZE PROTECTORS

COLLAPSE e.g. chronic fatigue, inertia, fainting, narcolepsy, seeking sleep, oblivion or death.

SUBMIT e.g. depression, apathy, keeping quiet, dissociation, delusion, spiritual bypassing, fawning, going blank, addictions that numb.

I CAN'T

I HURT

I MUST

FREEZE

COLLAPSE

Dorsal Vagal (PNS)

SUBMIT

HYPO-aroused Sympathetic NS

Seeking safety via DISCONNECTION

FIX

EXILES

Without the support to process them, overwhelming feelings must be stored away. This creates a reservoir of banished, often young, parts holding unprocessed rage, terror, grief, shame & hopelessness, sometimes as physical symptoms. In exile, they keep trying to be heard & helped, activated by familiar events.

Protectors try to keep Exiles away, either as proactive 'Managers' or reactive 'Firefighters' - using whatever survival strategy they originally found to help.



FIGHT

HYPER-aroused Sympathetic NS

Seeking safety via ACTION

FIX PROTECTORS

e.g. hyper-vigilance, bullying, quitting, rebelling, flashbacks, inflammation, rushing, anxiety, lying, perfectionism, controlling, bracing, criticising, OCD,



raris leef saite to relat & work as a team. Needs & feelings can be spoken & met. Resilience develops. Possibility for individuation, play, trust, growth, spontaneity, intimacy, learning, healthy boundaries, creativity, rest, repair & flourishing.

FLOW

SELF/CO-REGULATION

> Ventral Vagal (PNS) with flexible access to other ANS states

I AM

Finding safety in CONNECTION

SELF

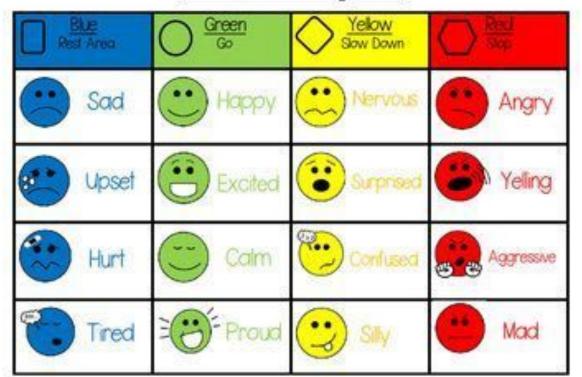
(aka soul / inner knowing / core self)
A mindful, embodied reservoir of
clarity, curiosity, compassion, calm
& confidence. Being not doing.

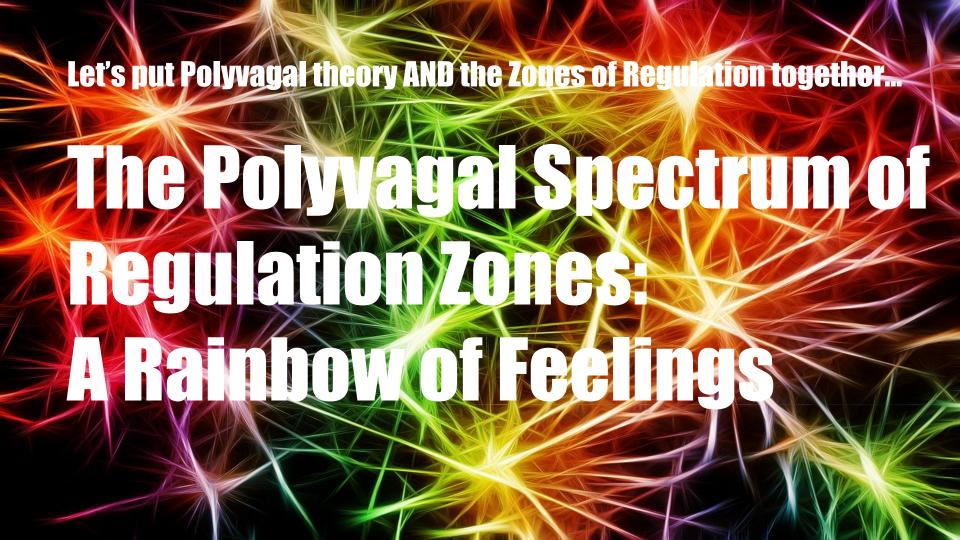
THE SURVIVE/THRIVE SPIRAL

Ruth Culver © 2020 - Download PDF at: www.calmheart.co.uk Updated 11/20



The Zones of Regulation

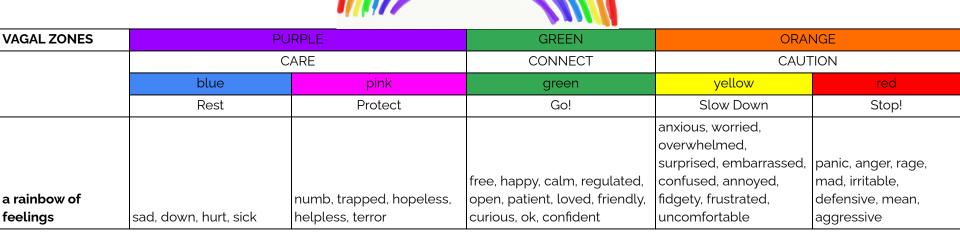




the polyvagal spectrum of regulation zones: a rainbow of feelings by Laura Hutchison, PsyD, LP, RPT/S

	,	· / /		
BLUE		GREEN	YELLOW	RED
Rest Area		GO!	Slow Down	STOP!
sad, down, depressed, sick, hurt, tired, defeated		regulated, calm, happy, ready, ok, proud, curious, confident	anxious, worried, overwhelmed, agitated, disappointed, nervous, surprised, embarrassed, confused, annoyed	angry, mad, panicked, screaming, aggressive, terrified, mean
	DORSAL VAGAL	VENTRAL VAGAL	SYMPATHETIC	
	PARASYMPATHETIC			
Freeze Connect/Safe		Connect/Safe	Fight/Flight	
	immobilized, disconnection, terror, feign, fragment, dissociate, depression, helpless, hopeless, trapped, hypoarousal, exhausted, slow, numb, flat affect, collapse	free, fun, friendly, joy, grounded, curious, open, compassionate, mindful, regulated, loved, peaceful, patient, gentle, resilient, communicative	fidgety, panic, fear, anxiety, worry, concern, rage, anger, irritation, frustration, fear, defensive, uncomfortable	
	Rest Area sad, down, depressed,	Rest Area sad, down, depressed, sick, hurt, tired, defeated DORSAL VAGAL PARASY Freeze immobilized, disconnection, terror, feign, fragment, dissociate, depression, helpless, hopeless, trapped, hypoarousal, exhausted, slow, numb, flat affect,	Rest Area GO! regulated, calm, happy, ready, ok, proud, curious, confident DORSAL VAGAL PARASYMPATHETIC Freeze immobilized, disconnection, terror, feign, fragment, dissociate, depression, helpless, hopeless, trapped, hypoarousal, exhausted, slow, numb, flat affect, pregulated, calm, happy, ready, oconfident VENTRAL VAGAL PARASYMPATHETIC Free, fun, friendly, joy, grounded, curious, open, compassionate, mindful, regulated, loved, peaceful, patient, gentle, resilient,	Rest Area GO! Slow Down anxious, worried, overwhelmed, agitated, disappointed, nervous, surprised, embarrassed, confident DORSAL VAGAL PARASYMPATHETIC Freeze immobilized, disconnection, terror, feign, fragment, dissociate, depression, helpless, hopeless, trapped, hypoarousal, exhausted, slow, numb, flat affect, Square GO! Slow Down anxious, worried, overwhelmed, agitated, disappointed, nervous, surprised, embarrassed, confused, annoyed VENTRAL VAGAL SYMPATHETIC Freeze Connect/Safe Fight/ grounded, curious, open, compassionate, mindful, regulated, loved, peaceful, slow, numb, flat affect, patient, gentle, resilient, fidgety, panic, fear, anxiet anger, irritation, frustration

The Polyvagal Spectrum of Regulation: A Rainbow of Feelings





Our bodies have a BIAS towards keeping us SAFE.

We have the evolutionary set point of seeing danger where there is no danger. Things tend to turn out better than we think they would.



The Autonomic Nervous System is a <u>*SYSTEM***</u>**_

THAT INVOLVES TONS OF BODY PARTS and organs.

... and the VAGUS NERVE links all of them together.

80% of the pathways go from the brain to the organs ... and 20% come from the organs to the brain.

This is how you can control some of it through controlling your breath (breath is the ONLY one we can control). The lungs can signal to the brain that things are ok.

-Vagus nerve controls or contributes to a lot of the things your body does automatically, such as:



Helping you breathe by communicating with your lungs



Controlling your heart rate



Keeping your blood pressure levels stable



Decreasing inflammation by sending an anti-inflammatory signal



Activating your immune response



Allowing your gut and brain to communicate which is where those "gut feelings" come from



Helping you relax and stay calm so it's easier to deal with stress or anxiety



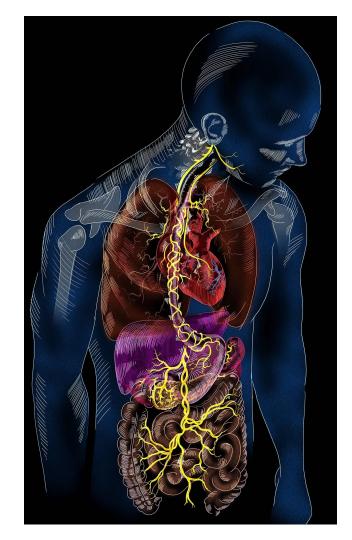
Lower vagal tone is linked to...

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Headaches
- Poor Satiety or inability to relax while eating
- Insomnia
- Poor breathing patterns
- Loneliness
- Dysregulated, overactive hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis

- Poor glucose control
- Frequent urination
- Cognitive impairment
- Chronic inflammation
- Gallbladder issues
- Constipation
- Hiatal hernia
- Chronic fatigue
- Food sensitivities
- Higher blood pressure

Higher vagal tone is linked to healthier hearts, less inflammation, stronger social bonds, greater ability to feel calm and peaceful, and tend to exhibit better emotion regulation.

https://paulaowens.com/vagus-nerve-strengthen-vagal-tone/



Trauma is NOT just psychological. It is PHYSICAL.

AND NOT JUST Trauma...

Autism, depression, anxiety, schizophrenia, etc. share:

- Difficulty to ever feel "safe"
- Auditory hypersensitivity
- Flat facial affect
- Lack of vocal prosody
- High heart rate/low vagal tone



Think of a time when you were in the parasympathetic Ventral Vagal state (safe, connected, social)

- What it feels like
- What it looks like
- What it sounds like
- What's happening in your body
- What would you do

- What do you feel
- What do you think or say
- How is your sleep
- How are your eating habits

Think of a time when you were in the Sympathetic state of WORRY (mobilized/fight or flight)

- What it feels like
- What it looks like
- What it sounds like
- What's happening in your body
- What would you do

- What do you feel
- What do you think or say
- How is your sleep
- How are your eating habits

Think of a time when you were in the Sympathetic state of ANGER (mobilized/fight or flight)

- What it feels like
- What it looks like
- What it sounds like
- What's happening in your body
- What would you do

- What do you feel
- What do you think or say
- How is your sleep
- How are your eating habits

Think of a time when you were in the BLUE ZONE of regulation

- What it feels like
- What it looks like
- What it sounds like
- What's happening in your body
- What would you do

- What do you feel
- What do you think or say
- How is your sleep
- How are your eating habits

Think of a time when you were in the parasympathetic Dorsal Vagal state (immobilized)

- What it feels like
- What it looks like
- What it sounds like
- What's happening in your body
- What would you do

- What do you feel
- What do you think or say
- How is your sleep
- How are your eating habits

When finished with the descriptions, write in titles that fit each state.

Next, finish these sentence stems of each state:

"I am ... "
"The world is..."

Think about your dorsal vagal state and blue zone....



What brings you here?

These are TRIGGERS.

Think about your sympathetic states....



What brings you here?

These are TRIGGERS.

Think about your ventral vagal state....



What brings you here?

These are GLIMMERS.





Notice & Name

Do in session and/or assign as homework.

- 1. Tune into your thoughts, feelings, and the way your body feels.
- 2. Notice where you are on your autonomic map.
- Name the state.
- 4. Bring curiosity. What is there to learn from your autonomic nervous system in this moment?

Three Things: Show & Tell

Have the client choose an object to represent each state of autonomic response.

- What drew you to that object?
- How did you make that choice?
- What state was the most difficult?
- What state was the easiest?
- Tell a story about each object

Draw The State

Have the client draw or paint a picture to represent each state of autonomic response.

- Why did you choose this way to draw the state?
- How did you make that choice?
- What state was the most difficult?
- What state was the easiest?
- Tell a story about each drawing?
- What feelings or memories came up while drawing each state?

Musical Maps



Have the client create a playlist for each state to represent each state of autonomic response.

- Why did you choose this song for this state?
- What state was the most difficult to find songs for?
- What state was the easiest?
- What feelings or memories came up while picking these songs?
- How might you use these playlists?

Another way to do this activity is to combine it with the "Draw/Paint the State" activity. Listen to the playlists while creating the art.

Musical Maps

Dorsal Vagal - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NEpfvTdR5-U

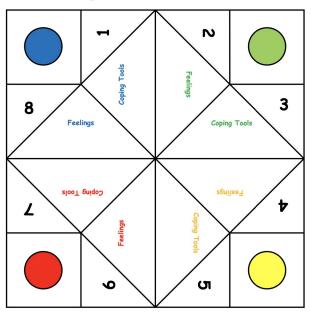
Parasympathic - Anger - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MNwZ_WHhgdw

Anxiety - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=df4_KR06HLI

Ventral Vagal - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZyhrYis509A

Zones of Regulation - Cootie Catcher

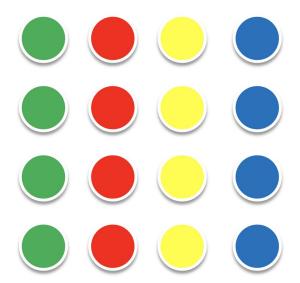
Self Regulation - Review Catcher



Source: Everybody's a Genius

Zones of Regulation - Finger Twister

Finger Twister!



Source: Everybody's a Genius

Two Breaths in Transition

1

Discuss and practice these 2 types of breath.

The **breath of fear** is initiated with a sense of startle accompanied by a quick, audible and often a brief holding of breath. One hand moves to the heart, and the shoulders tense upward. The face freezes with eyes opened wide. If standing there is a move up onto the toes, and when either standing or sitting there is a sense of energy moving upward and of losing contact with the ground triggering a sense of being unanchored.

The **sigh of relief** that follows begins with the release of breath in an audible, deep sigh characterized by a long, slow exhalation and some form of resistance to the breath either through contraction at the back of the throat of slightly pursed lips, often followed by a moment of apnea (temporary suspension of breath. The hand remains on the heart as the shoulders relax. There is a feeling of the face softening, especially around the eyes. If standing, there is a settling back onto the soles of the feet and when either standing or sitting there is a sense of energy moving down to connect with the earth, bringing a sense of being safely grounded.

A Hunt for (Neuroception) Clues \checkmark



Do in session and/or assign as homework.

- 1. What is a clue for safety or unsafety from inside your body?
- 2. What is a clue for safety or unsafety from the environment?
- 3. What is a cue for safety or unsafety between you and another person?

Autonomic Landmarks







Do in session and/or assign as homework.

"Autonomic landmarks are internal reference points that mark the experience of states." They are key experiences.

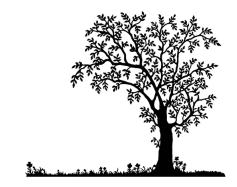
Take time to think about key moments in your memory for each state (dorsal vagal, sympathetic, & ventral vagal).

Make sure to identify the concrete details of what happened, how you responded, what you felt like, what you thought, and sensory cues around you.

Give the moment a "landmark" title.

Autonomic Tree

Do in session and/or assign as homework.



Start by visualizing different types of trees and their unique characteristics - roots, branches, leaves, sizes, shapes, colors.

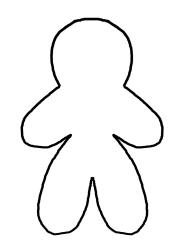
Create your tree or trees - design one tree that illustrates all three states or 3 different trees.

Body Mapping

Find the place in your body where you feel most connected with your ...

- Ventral Vagal State/Green Zone
- Sympathetic Yellow Zone
- Sympathetic Red Zone
- Blue Zone
- Dorsal Vagal State/Pink Zone

It may be helpful to first recall a time you were in that each state and then connect where you feel it most in your body. Use that color to shade in where you feel that state in your body.



Autonomic Alphabet



Think of a word that begins with each letter of the alphabet to describe EACH of the autonomic states.

Dorsal/Pink - Absent, Blank, Collapsed, Despairing, Exhausted, Foggy, Grim, Hopeless, Impenetrable, Judged, Knocked out, Lost, Missing, Numb, Overwhelmed, Pathetic, Queasy, Retracted, Shutdown, Terrified, Unloved, Void, Without, eXpressionless, Young, Zoned out

Sympathetic/Orange (Yellow &/or Red Zones) -Alarmed, Buzzing, Claustrophobic, Deranged, Envious, Frightened, Grasping, Harried, Irrational, Judgemental, Knotted, Looping, Manic, Nasty, Overdoing, Pressured, Quick, Raging, Stuck, Troubled, Unwanted, Vibrating, Worried, eXtrem, Yearning, Zigzagging.

Ventral/Green - Awesome, Benevolent, Courageous, Devoted, Eloquent, Free, Grateful, Happy, Joyful, Kind, Loving, Mellow, Nice, Open, Playful, Quiet, Relaxed, Skilled, Trusting, Uplifted, Vibrant, Whole, eXtraordinary, YES, and in the Zone.

Autonomic Name



For each letter in YOUR name think of a word describes EACH of the autonomic states.

L - lost

A - alone

U - unloved

R - rejected

A - adrift

L - Livid

A - argumentative

U - unhinged

R - reckless

A - Alert

L - Loved

A - Amazing

U - Uninhibited

R - Rested

A - Awe-inspired

Go on a GLIMMER Hunt* * ** **

Start a journal to record any Glimmer you find throughout the day. You may want to set an intention to find a certain (doable) number of Glimmers each day. Honor each glimmer you find!

Create your own "Ventral Vagal Space"

A RELAXATION STATION * COZY SPOT * COMFORT CORNER * ZEN ZONE

Find an easily accessible spot in your home where you feel most at ease. Change or remove any items that cause dissatisfaction or unease.

Think about how your sensory needs are being met:

- What type of lighting do you prefer?
- What noises (if any) do you want around you?
- What smells are there?
- What textures can you feel?
- Does your body feel comfortable and grounded?

Natural Techniques For Stimulating The Vagus Nerve



Exercise

Exercise is good for your brain's cognitive faculties, your mental health and your gut flow, thanks to its ability to stimulate the vagus nerve.



Thoughtful meditation

You can improve your mood simply by silently repeating positive phrases about your friends and family.



Sinaina

Humming, chanting and singing are all exercises that increase heart rate variability (HRV). Higher HRV is linked with "reduced morbidity and mortality" and "improved psychological well-being and quality of life."

Singing also increases oxytocin, aka the love hormone, because it's an activity that brings people closer together.



Garalina

Gargling with water stimulates the muscles of the pallet and has been shown to improve working memory performance.



Deep, slow breathing

Breathing slowly and deeply activates your vagus nerve to send messages to your brain that help lower your blood pressure and heart rate.



Chill ou

Exposure to cold dampens the fight or flight response and increases the rest and digest response, like taking a cold shower or drinking ice water.



Laughing Laughter is a natural immune booster which, like singing, can increase HRV in a group setting.



Disciplines like yoga increase vagus nerve activity to help keep you calm and are particularly effective for people suffering from anxiety or depression.



Do's and Don'ts

Derived from the polyvagal theory

By Ravi Dykema

DO

Do make eye contact when you feel safe.

Do express with your face.

Do modulate your voice (use expression).

Do listen to voices, separate them from background sounds.

Do adjust your circumstances to feel safer, e.g. move to a quieter place.

Do adjust your focus to things that will make you feel safe, e.g. feel your sensations or focus on something familiar.

Do play a musical instrument.

Do try moving into social relationships instead of away, as a way to reduce slight anxiety.

DON'T

Don't combine intimate conversation with hard exercise; you'll misread all the other person's cues.

Don't always isolate yourself in order to feel safer: try connecting with others too.

Don't push yourself harder to be social when you feel unsafe; seek safety first.

Don't ignore your gut reactions: adapt to them and learn from them.

Don't use fighting or fleeing with loved ones; instead, find a way to get to safety.

Don't adopt a flat, expressionless affect with people who you want to feel safe with you.

Don't substitute internet relating for face-to-face or phone contact.

Don't assume other's outbursts reveal their "true" attitudes or motivations. Their calmer social capacities (like empathy) are "true" too.









Improving Vagal Tone

AKA NErvous system Hacks

- Breath slowly
- Speak with smiles, eye contact, and vocal variations
- Listen to mid-frequency music (Disney soundtracks are great!)
- Work, learn, and live in environments that feel "safe"
- Spend time around people you like and love

What ways to YOU like to improve your VAGAL TONE?

теснпіque			NOTES:
Exercise			
Mediation			
Singing			
Humming			
Gargling			
Play an instrument			
Washing face with cold water			
Taking a cool shower or bath			
Drinking ice water			
watching a funny video			
Yoga			
Slow, rhythmic deep breathing			
Speaking Aloud			
taking/eating probiotics			
771 (6)			

Improving Social Skills

Feeling safe is a necessary prerequisite for strong social relationships.

Safety \Longrightarrow Proximity \Longrightarrow Contact \Longrightarrow Social Bonds

Connectedness and co-regulation link social behavior, mental health, and physical health.

Social Skills

THE DO'S & DON'TS

derived from

Polyvagal Theory

DO	DON'T	
make eye contact when you feel safe	have important personal conversations while exercising	
express with your face, speak with SMILES	always isolate in order to feel safe	
modulate your voice (be expressive!)	push yourself too hard to be social if you feel unsafe	
separate voices from background sounds	ignore your gut reactions	
adjust your circumstances to feel safer	use fight or flight with friends and family	
connect with others when you are feeling down or anxious	adapt a flat, expressionless affect	
use appropriate physical touch (touch on the shoulder)	substitute internet connection for face-to-face/phone/face-time contact	
adapt and learn from your gut reactions	don't assume other's outbursts reveal their "true" attitudes/beliefs/motivations	

References

The Polyvagal Theory in Therapy, by Deb Dana (2018)

Polyvagal Exercises for Safety & Connection, by Deb Dana (2020)

Seth Porges https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=br8-qebjlgs

Stephen & Seth Porges https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=L8BGzFBz58I

https://paulaowens.com/vagus-nerve-strengthen-vagal-tone/

Stay in touch ...

Laura Hutchison

Email: playdr@gmail.com

Phone: 248-766-4855

Website: <u>www.playtherapyacademy.com</u>

Blog: http://blog.playdrhutch.com

FB:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/156608250

0323634/

Pinterest: http://www.pinterest.com/playdrmom

Instagram: http://instagram.com/playdr



www.playtherapyacademy.com