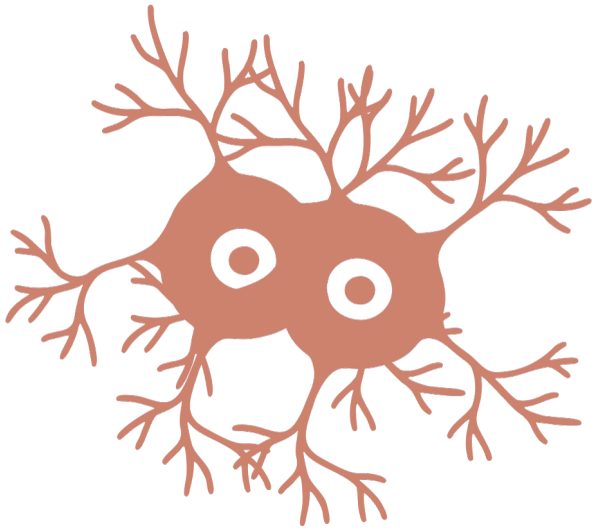
Nervous-System Regulation Journal

Worksheets and Techniques for Inner Balance

AMANDA THOMAS
Coaching



Hands-On Methods for Stress Relief and Self-Regulation

AMANDATHOMASCOACHING.COM

WELCOME TO YOUR JOURNEY OF INNER BALANCE

EMBARKING ON THIS WORKBOOK, YOU'RE SET TO MASTER YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM REGULATION, ESSENTIAL FOR A BALANCED LIFE.

WHAT IS NERVOUS SYSTEM REGULATION?

It's the process by which our nervous system adjusts to stress, promoting calmness and reducing arousal. An imbalance between the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems can lead to a dysregulated state, impacting our decision-making, social interactions, and mental health, with symptoms ranging from anxiety to chronic pain.

BALANCING YOUR SYSTEM

Our autonomic nervous system runs essential functions like breathing and digestion, with the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems working together for equilibrium.

REGULATION TECHNIQUES

Learn to recognize body signals (interoception) and use mindfulness, breathwork, and other techniques to regulate your nervous system, thereby improving mental health.

Dive into the exercises within to enhance your self-awareness and emotional well-being. Progress at your own pace, and use this workbook as a tool for peace and emotional health.

BEST WISHES,

Amanda Thomas

TABLE OF CONTENTS

PART 1

Neurological Essentials:

Understanding Your Nervous System



PART 2

Assess and Address:

Nervous System Analysis and Stress Management

PART 3

Regulation and Resilience:

Resources for more Balance

PART 4

Active Engagement:

TechniquesforNervousSystem Regulation

PART 5

Strategies, Self-Care and Sustained Reflection

NEUROLOGICAL ESSENTIALS: UNDERSTANDING YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM

05 The Human Nervous System



06 The Parasympathetic Nervous System

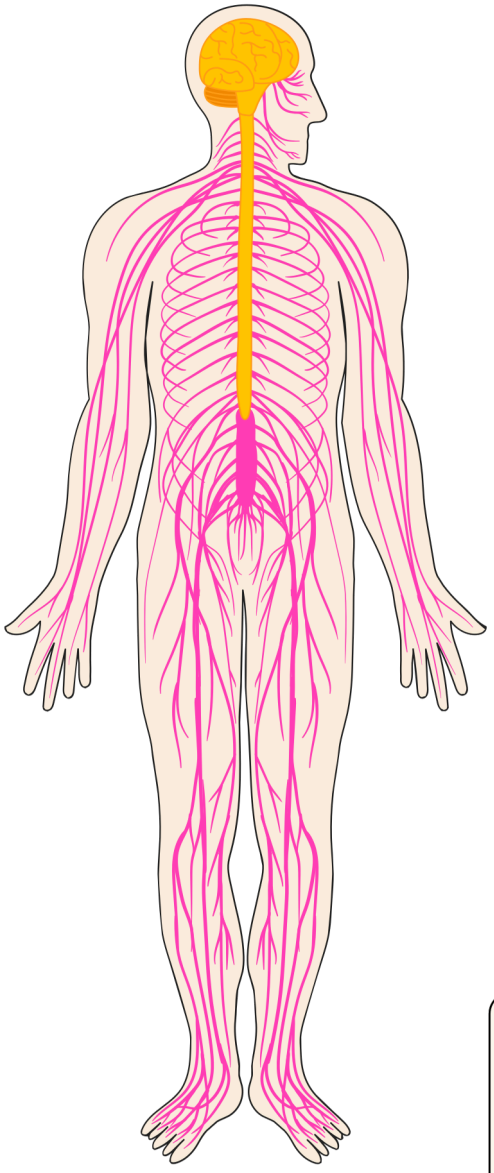
07 The Vagus Nerve

08 Polyvagal Theory: Ventral and Dorsal Vagal System

09 Polyvagal Theory: The Three Stages of Response

10 Polyvagal Theory: The Hierarchy Ladder

THE HUMAN NERVOUS SYSTEM



CENTRAL NERVOUS SYSTEM (CNS)

BRAIN: Command center for processing, decision-making, and emotion regulation.

SPINAL CORD: message relay between brain and body

PERIPHERAL NERVOUS SYSTEM (PNS)

AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM (ANS): involuntary functions, homeostasis

SOMATIC NERVOUS SYSTEM: voluntary movements, sensory info, muscle control

PARASYMPATHETIC:

The PNS, or "rest and digest" system, activates when you're relaxed or recovering. It slows your heart rate, boosts digestion, and helps conserve and restore energy.

SYMPATHETIC:

The SNS acts like your body's "fight or flight" system. It raises your heart rate and redirects blood from non-essential functions, like digestion, to your muscles.

THE PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

The Parasympathetic Nervous System (PNS) is the calm side of your body's control systems. It kicks in when you're relaxing, helping your body recover after a busy day. It works together with the Sympathetic Nervous System, which acts like an alarm system, preparing you for action.

HOMEOSTASIS

Your body is always working to keep things stable, a state called 'homeostasis.' Homeostasis refers to the coordinated and largely automatic reactions that keep the body in a stable state, such as regulating temperature, oxygen levels in the blood, and pH balance.

Here's a more detailed look at how the parasympathetic nervous system supports various organs in maintaining homeostasis:



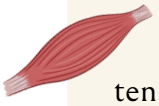
Brain:
Helps stay calm and peaceful.



Digestive system:
Stimulates digestion & increases gut movement.



Slows Heartbeat



Muscles:
Decreases muscle tension, promotes relaxation.



Lungs:
Helps take big, deep breaths



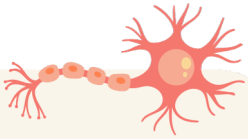
Eyes:
Makes your pupil smaller when it's time to relax.

THE VAGUS NERVE

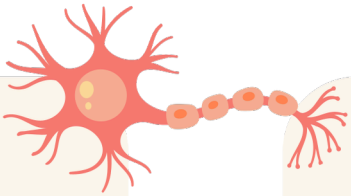
In essence, the vagus nerve is a vital part of the parasympathetic nervous system. It plays a key role in carrying out the calming and restorative functions associated with the parasympathetic system.

When things get too intense or past traumas start to weigh heavily, the vagus nerve activates the parasympathetic system, essentially hitting the "chill out" button for your body. It signals your heart to slow down and your breathing to ease, helping you find peace amidst the chaos.

The vagus nerve is a key part of the parasympathetic nervous system.



It's a specific nerve, also known as cranial nerve X, and is the longest nerve in the autonomic nervous system.



It starts at the brainstem and extends down through the body, connecting to the heart, lungs, digestive tract, and other organs.

It carries out many of the "rest and digest" functions by transmitting signals between the brain and the organs it connects to.

POLYVAGAL THEORY

VENTRAL AND DORSAL VAGAL SYSTEM

The vagus nerve plays a crucial role in managing both our physical and emotional reactions to stress and social behavior. Polyvagal Theory, introduced by Dr. Stephen W. Porges in the 1990s, explains that the vagus nerve has two branches with distinct functions. The 'new' vagal system helps us navigate stressful situations through social engagement and calming strategies, while the 'old' vagal system is linked to the body's restful states and digestion processes. This division highlights our complex physiological responses to the environment.

VENTRAL VAGAL SYSTEM

It responds to cues of safety and helps you feel socially connected and engaged.

- Calmness
- Safety
- Social Engagement



DORSAL VAGAL SYSTEM

When it senses extreme danger, it takes over, disconnecting you from the world and plunging you into a protective state of collapse.

- Disconnection
- Numbness
- Anxiety



POLYVAGAL THEORY
THE THREE STAGES OF RESPONSE

RED GEAR - IMMOBILIZATION (DORSAL VAGUS):



Imagine you encounter something really scary, like a lion! Your body might freeze, just like a possum playing dead. It's that "deer in headlights" reaction.



Think of someone fainting at the sight of blood or having a panic attack during a traumatic event.

YELLOW GEAR - MOBILIZATION (SYMPATHETIC):



Now, imagine you need to run from that lion. Your body kicks into action mode, ready to fight or escape. Your heart races, and you're on high alert.



Imagine feeling stressed, anxious, or having too much coffee—your body is in this high-gear state.

GREEN GEAR - SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT (VENTRAL VAGUS):

But what if you're sitting around a campfire with friends, feeling safe and relaxed? That's when your body is in social mode. You can chat, laugh, and enjoy the evening.



When you're calm, making friends, and managing your emotions well, you're in the "green gear."



POLYVAGAL THEORY

THEHIERARCHYLADDER

VENTRAL VAGUS - ENGAGED, SECURE, AND SOCIALSTATE

COGNITIVE PERCEPTIONS:	PHYSIOLOGICAL RESPONSES:	EMOTIONAL STATE:
"I feel at ease."	Empathy and curiosity	Enhanced digestion and rest
"I feel secure and present in the moment."	Feeling connected and at peace	Improved recovery and resilience Stronger immunity and blood circulation

SYMPATHETIC - MOBILIZATION, ACTIVE DEFENSESTATE

COGNITIVE PERCEPTIONS:	PHYSIOLOGICAL RESPONSES:	EMOTIONAL STATE:
"I am on edge."	Anxiety and alertness	Heightened senses and alertness
"I feel agitated and need to protect myself."	Feeling overwhelmed or confrontational	Increased heart rate and muscle tension

DORSAL VAGUS - DISCONNECTION, CONSERVATIONSTATE

COGNITIVE PERCEPTIONS:	PHYSIOLOGICAL RESPONSES:	EMOTIONAL STATE:
• "I am invisible, disconnected."	• Sensations of helplessness or disconnection	• Low heart rate variability
• "The world feels overwhelming and insurmountable	• Numbness or disassociation	• Reduced social interaction
	• Despair and a profound Sense of solitude	• Elevated stress hormone levels
		• Decreased metabolic rate and energy

ASSESS AND ADDRESS:

NERVOUS SYSTEM ANALYSIS AND STRESS MANAGEMENT

12 Nervous System Assessment Worksheet

15 Stress Response Worksheets



NERVOUS SYSTEM ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET 1/3

Understanding your nervous system's responses can be key to managing your well-being. Take a moment to assess and identify any symptoms of dysregulation. Please reflect on and answer the following questions. There are no right or wrong answers—this is all about your personal experience.

1.Identifying symptoms:

For each symptom listed below, please indicate how often you experience it and rate its intensity on a scale of 0-10, with 0 being 'not present' and 10 being 'extremely intense.' Be sure to fill in the start and end dates for the time period you are documenting.

DATE: ..... UNTIL: .....

Symptom	Frequency (Daily, Weekly,Monthly, Rarely)	Intensity (0-10)
Headaches Muscle tension		
Stomach upset Rapid		
heartbeat Difficulty		
breathing		
Insomnia, excessive sleeping		
Fatigue		
Difficulty concentrating		
.....		
.....		
.....		
.....		

NERVOUS SYSTEM ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET 2/3

2. Emotional awareness:

In the past week, how often haveyou experienced the following emotions? Rate each emotionfrom 0 (never) to 10 (constantly).

Emotion	Rating (0-10)
Anxiety	
Sadness	
Anger	
Joy	
.....	
.....	

3. Behavioral responses:

reflect on how you typically reactwhen feeling stressed or overwhelmed. Check the behaviorsthat apply and consider their frequency.

Behavior	Often	Some-times	Rarely	Never
Withdraw from social activities				
Procrastinate important tasks				
Engage in compulsive behaviors (e.g., eating,shopping)				
Experience bursts of energy or agitation				
Use substances to cope (e.g., alcohol, drugs)				
....				

NERVOUS SYSTEM ASSESSMENT WORKSHEET 3/3

4. Physical and mental relaxation:

which relaxationmethods have you tried, and how effective do you findthem? Rate each method from 0 (not effective) to 10 (highlyeffective).

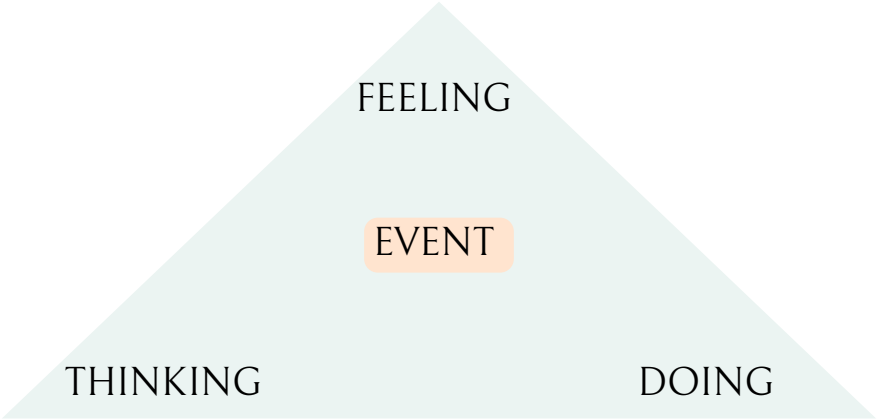
Method	Rating (0-10)
Deep breathing exercises	
Progressive muscle relaxation	
Yoga or Tai Chi	
Meditation or Mindfulness practice	
Regular physical exercise	
.....	
.....	
.....	
.....	
.....	

Rating the methods will help you understand which practices enhance your well-being. Revisiting this process regularly allows you to track your progress and refine your personal toolkit for managing stress and building resilience.

STRESS RESPONSE WORKSHEET 1/2

Track your stress responses over the course of a week. By recording how you react to different stressors, you'll be able to observe patterns in your physical, emotional, and cognitive responses. Recognizing these patterns is the first step toward managing stress more effectively.

CONGNITIVE TRIANGLE



1. Situation description:
Briefly describe the situationthat induced stress with date and time.

2. Physical responses: List any physical reactions you experienced, e.g., heart palpitations, sweating, muscle tension.

STRESS RESPONSE WORKSHEET 2/2

3. Emotional responses:
Describe your emotional state during and after the situation, e.g., anxiety, anger.

4. Cognitive responses:
Note any thoughts you had duringthe situation, including worry, negative predictions,self-criticism.

REFLECT ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- Are my thoughts accurate?
- Are my thoughts helpful?
- What could I say to myself that would be more accurate, positive, or helpful?
- How would I feel if I told myself this?

Duplicate these pages for each stress response you want tolog throughout the week.

REGULATION AND RESILIENCE: RESOURCES FOR MORE BALANCE

18 Regulation, Dysregulation andCo-regulation

19 Regulation Worksheet, DysregulationWorksheet, Co-regulation Worksheet

23 Emotional Regulation Worksheet

25 Resilience: The Path to Inner Strength

26 Enhancing Resilience in Your Life

27 Resilience Worksheet

28 Exploring Resources: Building YourSupport System

29 Positive Moments Jar

30 Morning Gratitude Worksheet

REGULATION, DYSREGULATIONAND CO-REGULATION

REGULATION

Regulation involves managing your emotional and physical state, shifting from high stress to calm or from lethargy to being alert.

For example, a student feeling nervous before an exam takes deep, slow breaths to calm their racing heart, helping them focus and recall their studies.





DYSREGULATION

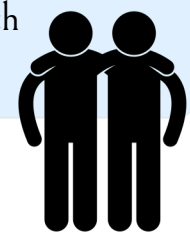
Dysregulation refers to difficulty managing one's emotional state, which can lead to long-term health and emotional issues.

For example, an employee under constant stress may find themselves unable to unwind in the evening, leading to insomnia and irritability that impact both their work and personal life.

CO-REGULATION

Co-regulation is when people support each other in finding balance and calm, like a couple comforting one another after a tough day.

Example: imagine a couple facing a stressful situation, like a job loss. They sit together, share their worries and fears openly, and listen to each other with empathy and understanding.



REGULATION WORKSHEET





ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

1. Can you recall a recent situation where you felt overwhelmed but were able to calm yourself down? What strategies did you use?

2. How do you know when you are in a well-regulated state? What physical sensations or thoughts do you notice?

DYSREGULATION WORKSHEET



ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

1. Think about a time when you felt out of control with your emotions. What triggered this feeling?

2. During moments of dysregulation, what physical sensations do you experience? (e.g., tightness in the chest, racing heart, etc.)

3. Have you noticed any patterns or common factors that contribute to feelings of dysregulation in your life?

CO-REGULATION WORKSHEET 1/2

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS.

1. Who in your life helps you feel calm and safe when youare stressed? What do they do that is helpful?

2. Describe an experience where someone else's presence helped you regulate your emotions. What was it about their behavior or actions that assisted you?

3. How comfortable do you feel asking for support when you need help returning to a state of calm?

CO-REGULATION WORKSHEET 2/2



4.Describe a moment when you felt at ease and socially connected. Who were you with, and what were you doing?

5.List the social activities or interactions that help you feel relaxed and connected.

EMOTIONAL REGULATION WORKSHEET 1/2

Emotional regulation is a key component of maintaining a balanced nervous system. This worksheet is designed to help you identify, understand, and manage your emotions more effectively.

1. CURRENT EMOTION

Describe what you are feeling right now. Try to be asspecific as possible. For example, instead of "Bad," you might say "Frustrated" or "Anxious.

2. INTENSITY

On a scale of 0 to 10, rate the intensity of your emotion.

3. PHYSICAL SENSATIONS

Note any physical sensations you associate with this motion (e.g., tightness in chest, butterflies in stomach...)

4. TRIGGER

What event, thought, or situation triggered this emotion?

EMOTIONAL REGULATION WORKSHEET 2/2

5. THOUGHTS

What thoughts are going through your mind right now?

6. ACCEPTANCE

Take a moment to accept your emotion. It's okay to feelwhat you're feeling.

7. BREATHING EXERCISE

Practice deep breathing for a few minutes to help regulate your emotional state.

8. REFRAMING THOUGHTS

Can you challenge or reframe any negative thoughts into more balanced or positive ones?

9. PROBLEM-SOLVING

Can you challenge or reframe any negative thoughts into more balanced or positive ones?

After you have worked through the steps above, reflect on the following questions: how has the intensity of your emotion changed after completing this worksheet? What have you learned about how you experience and process this emotion? What strategies worked best for managing your emotion in this instance?

RESILIENCE: THE PATH TO INNER STRENGTH

Resilience is like an anchor for your mental well-being, helping you stay steady during life's storms. It's the ability to maintain or quickly regain balance and well-being when faced with challenges.



Building a Brain-Friendly Life:

Embracing resilience means understanding what challenges your mental health (like traumas), recognizing what strengthens it (your personal resources), and observing how your thoughts and actions change after overcoming difficulties.

DEFINITION

Resilience involves maintaining a positive mindset, perseverance, and the ability to learn and grow from adversity. This mental and emotional strength enables individuals to navigate tough situations with determination and resourcefulness.

EXAMPLES

- Adaptability
- Optimism
- Self-Confidence
- Problem Solving
- Flexibility
- Emotional Regulation
- Determination

ENHANCING RESILIENCE IN YOUR LIFE

- FOSTER SUPPORTIVE NETWORKS:



Invest in relationships that offer encouragement and comfort. Connections with family, friends, and community groups can serve as vital support systems. Contributing to your community or drawing strength from spiritual practices can also enhance your support network.

- PRACTICE REFLECTIVE GROWTH:



Regularly reflect on past challenges and how you responded to them. Identify the strategies that worked in your favor. Journaling can be a valuable tool for uncovering patterns in how you handle difficulties, helping you make more informed decisions in the future.

- EMBRACE A POSITIVE OUTLOOK:



Let the act of looking ahead energize and inspire you. Embrace change and view potential challenges as opportunities for personal growth.

- DEFINE YOUR PURPOSE:



Commit to daily activities that reinforce your sense of purpose. Set clear, achievable goals to cultivate an optimistic, future-oriented mindset filled with hope.

- PRIORITIZE SELF-CARE:



Prioritize your health and happiness. Enjoy daily activities, stay active, get enough sleep, eat a balanced diet, and incorporate stress-relieving practices like yoga or meditation.

- ACT PROACTIVELY:



Face your challenges head-on. Identify the steps needed to overcome obstacles, create an action plan, and take decisive action. While progress may be gradual, consistent effort will lead to recovery.

Incorporating these resilience-building techniques into your life can greatly enhance your ability to cope with life's ups and downs, making the journey smoother and more manageable.

RESILIENCE WORKSHEET



1. Think about a challenging time in your life. Write down the challenge you faced. Describe it in as much detail as you can remember – what happened, how you felt, and why it was difficult for you.

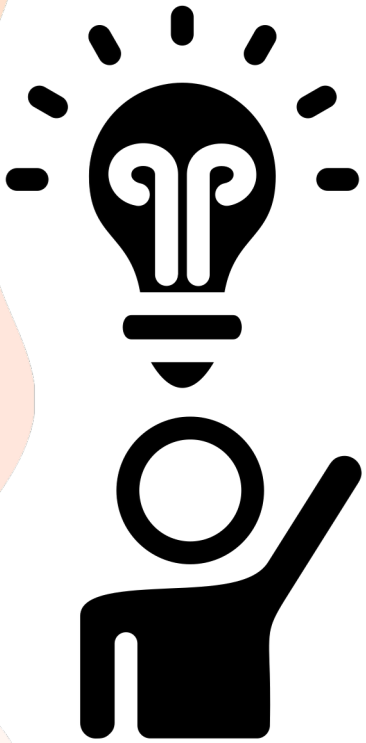
2. Reflect on how you responded to the situation. What did you do that helped you get through it? Write down the strategies, thoughts, and behaviors that supported you.

EXPLORING RESOURCES: BUILDING YOUR SUPPORT SYSTEM

In the context of nervous system regulation, resources are anything that helps you ground, calm, and balance your emotional and physiological states. These can be internal, such as personal strengths and coping mechanisms, or external, like support systems and relaxing environments.

SUPPORTIVE RELATIONSHIPS:
Seek Comfort From loved Ones.

RESILIENCE:
Bounce back From stress With inner Strength



RELAXING ENVIRONMENTS:
Find Peace in Serene Spaces.

SELF-AWARENESS:
Recognize And Regulate Emotions.

RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES:
De-stress With Enjoyable Pursuits.

MINDFULNESS:
Ground Yourself With Calming Practices.

POSITIVE MOMENTS JAR

- Our natural tendency is to overlook daily joys while focusing on negatives, a throwback to survival instincts.
- Actively acknowledging positive experiences can balance our psychological state and enhance our well-being.
- This practice supports a healthier autonomic nervous system by reinforcing a sense of safety and positivity.

SETUP:

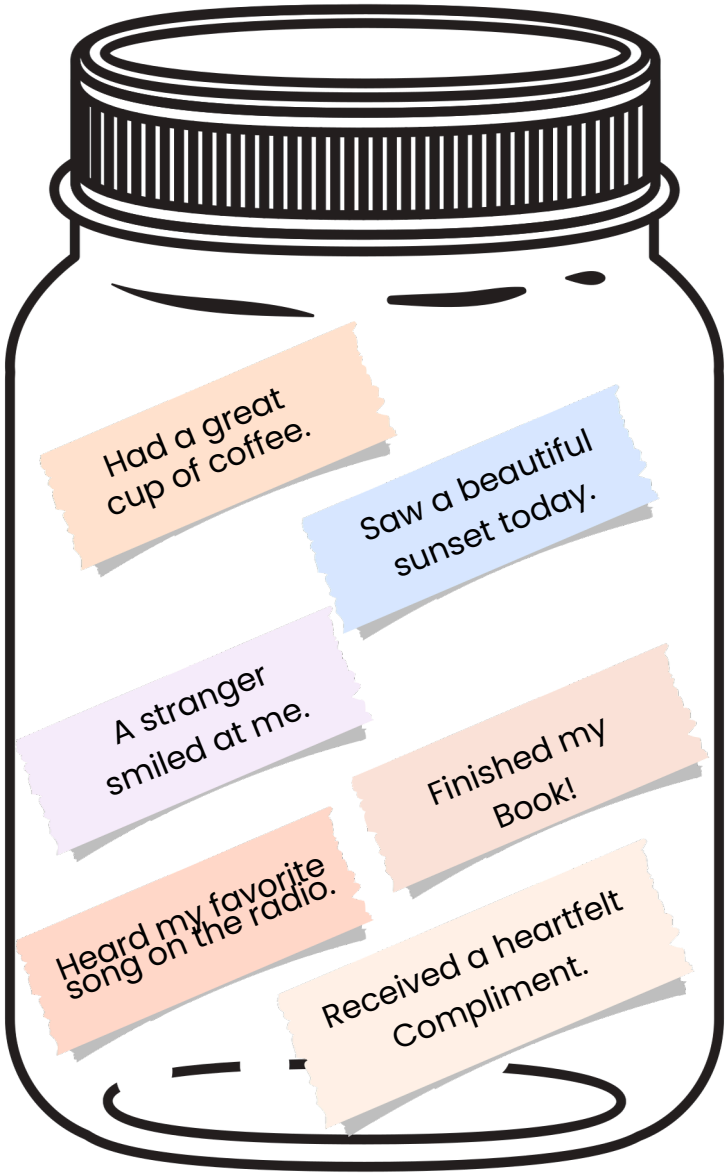
Place an empty jar In a spot at home you often see. Keep small pieces of paper and a pen nearby.

ACTION:

Write down joyful moments or positives as they occur. Deposit these notes into the jar.

PURPOSE

This jar becomes a trove of happy memories for reflection.



MORNING GRATITUDE WORKSHEET

Practicing gratitude in the morning sets a positive tone for the day. By exploring your resources and integrating them into your daily life, you can enhance your well-being and support the therapeutic process of vagus therapy.

Start your day by thinking of three things you're Grateful for. These could be aspects of your life, people you appreciate, or opportunities you have.

01

02

03



TECHNIQUES: ACTIVE REGULATION



32 Deep Breathing Practice

33 Facial Contouring Exercise

34 Tongue Release Exercises

35 Butterfly Hug

36 The Power of Hugging

37 Swallowing Exercises

38 Humming and Toning

39 Eye Massage

40 Five Soothing Hand Positions

41 Concentration / Breath Meditation

DEEP BREATHING PRACTICE

Deep breathing stimulates the vagus nerve. Activating the vagus nerve through deep breathing can lower heart rate and blood pressure, signaling a shift toward a more restful and restorative state.

GUIDED STEPS :

- **Get comfortable:** sit or lie down in a quiet space.
- **Hand position:** one hand on the chest, the other on the abdomen.
- **Breathe in:** slowly inhale through your nose for four counts, feeling the abdomen rise.
- **Hold:** pause your breath for four counts.
- **Breathe out:** exhale slowly through the mouth for six counts, releasing tension.
- **Repeat:** perform 5-10 cycles

TIPS :

- Focus on your breath and use a calming mantra if helpful.
- Practice twice daily for best results



FACIAL CONTOURING EXERCISE

When we touch our faces or are touched by others, we engage our facial and masticatory muscles. This action affects nerves linked to our emotional expressions, which connect to the vagus nerve, influencing our parasympathetic relaxation response.

Our emotional states often manifest in our facial expressions, and our faces can therefore reflect how we are feeling. By looking in a mirror, we can become aware of the expressions we are holding. During this exercise, you can become conscious of your emotions and playfully alter them.

GUIDED STEPS :



1. Assume a comfortable posture.

2 Warm your hands by rubbing them Together.



3. Gently rest your hands on your face, feeling the warmth.

4. With your hands, playfully reshape your facial expressions, exploring movement.



5. Occasionally pause to notice the Sensations.

6.Make faces, smile, and adjust your facial muscles lightly.



This activity recognizes emotions and can relax you by engaging facial nerves connected to the calming vagus nerve.

TONGUE RELEASE EXERCISES

Opening your mouth wide initiates a stretch in the throat's posterior region, where the vagus nerve resides. This stretch can activate the nerve, encouraging a tranquil and relaxed state throughout your body. Gently closing your mouth and using your Tongue to explore the oral cavity activates a network of cranial nerves that synergistically support the calming influence of the vagus nerve, contributing to your overall well-being.

GUIDED STEPS :



Throat Stretch:

Sit comfortably, open your mouth wide as though holding a warm potato on your tongue to stretch the throat, activating the vagus nerve.



Mouth Exploration:

With closed lips, use your tongue to explore inside your mouth, stimulating cranial nerves linked to the vagus nerve.



Tongue Movements:

Rotate your tongue around your lips and teeth, promoting relaxation and vagus nerve activation.



Tongue Extension:

Stick out your tongue, moving it in different directions to directly stimulate the vagus nerve.

BUTTERFLY HUG

The butterfly hug technique activates the calming pathways of the vagus nerve through bilateral stimulation, helping reduce stress and anxiety. It provides a physical anchor for emotional regulation, engaging the body's relaxation response. This can be especially helpful in soothing intense emotional reactions.



GUIDED STEPS :

To practice the Butterfly Hug, follow these steps:

1. Settle In: Choose a quiet area and sit with a straight posture.

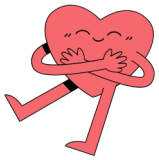
2. Breathe: Begin with deep, steady breaths, eyes closedor gaze soft.

3. Hand Placement: Cross your arms, placing each hand beneath the opposite collarbone, thumbs towards the chin, forming wings.

4.Tap Rhythmically: Gently tap your chest alternately on the left and right, in a rhythmic pattern for eight counts, while breathing deeply.

5. Monitor and continue: After each set of taps, pause to assess how calm you feel. If you're feeling more relaxed or the same, continue with additional sets until your relaxation deepens.

THE POWER OF HUGGING



HEALTH BENEFITS OF HUGGING AND VAGUS NERVE ACTIVATION:



STRESS REDUCTION

When you hug someone, your body releases Oxytocin, often referred to as the "Love Hormone. " this hormone is associated with Happiness and less stress.

BOOSTED IMMUNE SYSTEM

Hugging and the subsequent oxytocin release can improve immune function by reducing stress, which can in turn decrease the chances of becoming sick.

RELAXED MUSCLES

Hugs help relax muscles by releasing tension in the body. The vagus nerve communicates between the brain and the rest of the body, triggering relaxation and reducing pain and discomfort caused by muscle tension.

SWALLOWING EXERCISES

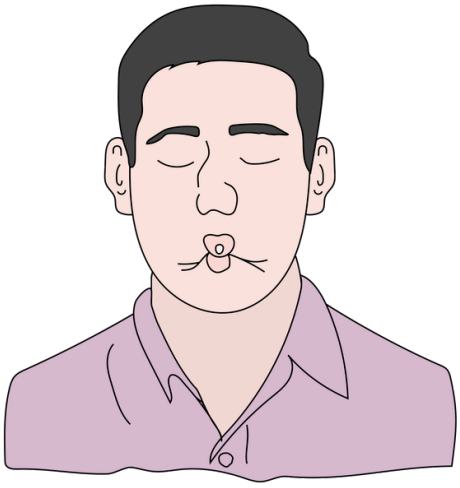


Stress can disrupt the simple act of swallowing, triggering an instinctive reaction that leaves the mouth dry. In contrast, a relaxed state keeps the mouth moist and swallowing easy, indicating a calm parasympathetic system. By sitting comfortably, generating saliva, gently engaging facial muscles, and swallowing mindfully, you can stimulate the vagus nerve's calming pathways, enhancing relaxation with each swallow.

GUIDED STEPS :

1. Find a comfortable seated position, allowing saliva to gather in your mouth naturally.

2. Create a gentle suction between your cheeks and teeth to engage facial muscles.



3. Touch your tongue to your mouth's roof and swallow, activating the vagus nerve.

4. Keep your neck relaxed, chin down, to facilitate swallowing and stimulate the nerve.

5. Notice the movement of your larynx with each swallow, indicating vagus nerve engagement.

6. Practice this mindful swallowing up to 20 times to enhance the vagus nerve's calming effect.

HUMMING AND TONING

The act of humming creates gentle vibrations that resonate throughout the body. These vibrations can stimulate the vagus nerve because it runs through the neck and thorax, where the vibrations from humming are likely to be felt. This can help to enhance the vagus nerve's function.

This exercise can be done in any position, but lying comfortably on your back has proven to be most effective. In this position, the body doesn't need to work as hard to maintain posture, allowing the vibrations to spread more easily and be felt more deeply throughout the body.



GUIDED STEPS :

Let a humming sound resonate from your voice, feeling it as a vibration moving through your body. Focus more on the sensation of the sound rather than how it sounds

Over time, you can play with different vowel sounds like
A, E, I, O, U.

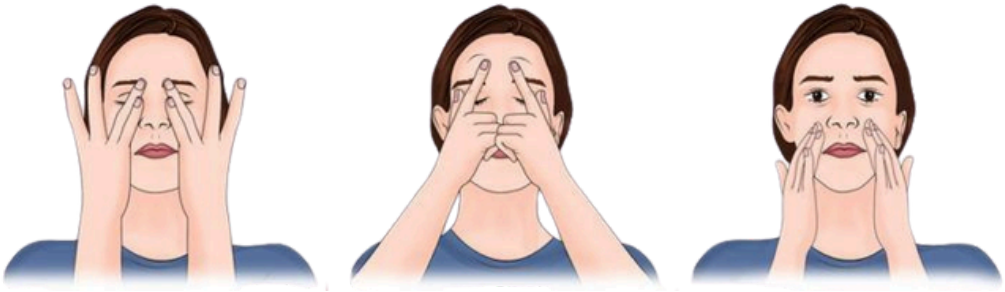
If you need to take a break during the seven-minute exercise, that's okay. After humming for 7 minutes, allow at least 3 minutes for the vibrations to continue their effect. Interoceptive stimuli, such as these vibrations,

can take
quite a while to be integrated into the nervous system.

EYE MASSAGE



Oculocardiac reflex: a treatment as explained below produces a cardiovascular effect and is The result of vagus nerve stimulation; it leads to a decrease in heart rate and blood pressure. The reflex arc runs via parasympathetic fibers Between the trigeminal nerve and the vagus nerve



GUIDED STEPS :

Gently press your closed eyelids with your palm, as if lightly floating a ping pong ball in water. This soft touch calms your nervous system, signaling your brain to activate the vagus nerve, which slows your heart rate and reduces blood pressure, promoting relaxation.

FIVE SOOTHING HAND POSITIONS

Hand positions can be a simple yet profound way to foster calmness and reduce the arousal of the nervous system. These gestures can provide a feeling of being embraced and secure while soothing your internal state. Each hand position has its own way of offering comfort and stability.

THE FIVE HAND POSITIONS:



Place each hand gently on The sides of your Head



Lay one hand on your heart And the other on your abdomen.



Rest one hand on your Forehead and the other on the Back of your head



Position one hand on your Forehead and the other over Your heart



Hold one hand on your solar plexus And the other at the base of your Skull.

TO PRACTICE THIS RELAXATION TECHNIQUE:

1. Start in a comfortable spot with deep, mindful breaths. 2. Hold each of the hand positions for a few minutes, aiming for a 15-minute session 3. Focus on the comfort of your touch. Use any hand position for 5-10 minutes during stressful Times for grounding.

CONCENTRATION / BREATH MEDITATION

Utilize your breath as a focal point to cultivate deeper concentration and mindfulness. This meditation technique is designed to sharpen your focus by using the rhythmic pattern of your breath as a single point of concentration.

GUIDED STEPS :

1. Sit or lie in a quiet space, taking deep breaths to relax.

2. Focus on your breath's pathway, the movement of your chest or abdomen, or its natural rhythm.

3. Keep a gentle, steady attention on breathing; return to this focus when distracted.

4. If helpful, count each breath cycle, starting over if you lose focus.



5. Do this for 10-15 minutes daily for improved focus and stress management.

STRATEGIES, SELF-CARE AND SUSTAINED REFLECTION

43 Coping Skills You Can Practice Right Now

44 Triggers and Coping Strategies Worksheet



46 Self-Care Plan

47 Question Cards - Awareness

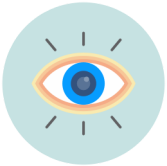
48 Question Cards - Reflection

49 Question Cards - Action



BREATHING

Deep, slow Breaths from Your core; exhale Gradually.



VISUALIZATION

Imagineor viewSerene scenes, Such as beaches Or mountains.



MUSIC

ListentoSoothing or Uplifting music.



COMFORT ITEM

Snuggle with a Comforting item Like a blanket Or a stuffed toy.



MOVEMENT

Shift your focus By engaging in Physical Activity.



RELAXATION

Try muscle Relaxation, a Warm bath, or Yoga.

COPING SKILLS YOU CANPRACTICE RIGHT NOW



IMAGERY

Focus on Calming visuals, Real or in your Mind's eye.



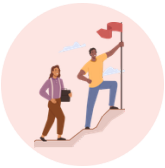
INTERACT

Reach out for Enjoyable Conversations or Do pleasant Activities with Others.



AMUSE YOURSELF

Enjoy leisure Activities like Gaming, puzzles, Cooking, Reading...



REFLECT ON SUCCESS

Recall your Efforts and Acknowledge Your Accomplishments.



ADDRESS CHALLENGES

Consider steps Youcan take to Work through Any issues you're Facing.



SPIRITUALITY

Find solace in Prayer, meaningful Rituals or Activities that Connect you to a Greater purpose.

TRIGGERS AND COPINGSTRATEGIES WORKSHEET 1/2

Understanding what triggers your stress responses and how to effectively cope with these triggers is an essential part of managing your nervous system. This Worksheet will help you identify specific triggers and pair them with coping strategies that work for you.

Describe a situation or stimulus that often leads to a stress response. Note how you typically react to this trigger). List strategies that you have used or plan to use & rate their effectiveness from 0-10.

TRIGGER	COPING STRATEGIES + EFFECTIVENESS

TRIGGERS AND COPINGSTRATEGIES WORKSHEET 2/2



After identifying your triggers and coping strategies.
Please reflect on the following:

1. Are there any patterns in the types of situations that trigger your stress response?

2. Which coping strategies are consistently more effective for you? Are there new strategies you can try that might be more effective?

3. What can you do to remind yourself to use these strategies in the moment of stress?

SELF-CARE PLAN

CATEGORY	COMMITMENT
Physical Activity: Choose one physical you enjoy. How many week will you do it?	
Relaxation Techniques: Identify one relaxation technique that helps you unwind.	
Social Interaction: Name one way you'll connect With others this week.	
Nutrition: List one nutritional goal for the week.	
Sleep: What time will you go to bed each night to ensure adequate rest?	
Enjoyment: Select one hobby or interest to engage in this week.	

I commit to incorporating the above self-care activities into my week to support my nervous system health.

Signature: .....

Remember, small steps can lead to significant changes. Keep this plan where you can see it daily as a gentle reminder of your commitment to self-care.

QUESTION CARDS - AWARENESS



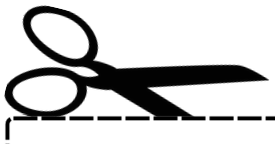
Right now, how calm and grounded do i feel on a scale from 1 to 10?	What physical sensation am i aware of in my body at this moment ?
Am I experiencing any tension or discomfort?Where is it located?	What are my current throughts? Are the fast -paced, slow, positive, or negative?
How would i describe my emotional state at this moment?	When i take a deep breath, what chandes do i noticed in my body and mind?

QUESTION CARDS - REFLECTION



When was the last time i felt a strong emotional response, and what triggered it ?	How did my body react to a recent stressful situation?
Can i identify a recent event where i felt particularly connected or joyful?	What are the situation that typically make me feel anxious or on edge?
Reflecting on the past week, when did i feel most relaxed?	Have there been moments where i felt disengaged or detached? What might have caused this?

QUESTION CARDS - ACTION



What is one thing i can do today to feel more connected and engaged with other?

Which relaxation techinique can i practice to activate my ventral vagus and feel calmer?

How can i gently soo the my nervous system when i notice symptoms of doral shutdown?

What steps can i take to feel safer and more secure in my environment?

Are there any comforting activities that help me engage my parasympathetic nervous system?

What is one self - care practice i can commite to for improving my vagal tone this week?