



The Science and Art of Well-Being

Bryce Kessler, Program Director

BRYCE KESSLER

Program Director, 4 years

Cellist, pianist, and educator.
I use music listening and
playing to improve my
mental and emotional
well-being.



The Well is a Cincinnati-based national nonprofit working at the Intersection of Arts & Wellness for Schools, Communities, and Workplaces.

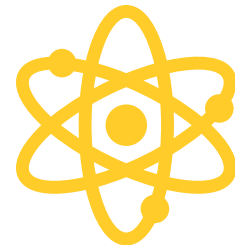
Our mission is to improve the mental and emotional well-being, connectedness, and effectiveness of all persons through arts integration, mindfulness, music, movement, and healing-centered practices.



Today's Objectives



We are going to experience a mindful moment to demonstrate arts-integrated mind-body practices.



We are going to talk about the science of regulation and dysregulation and their effect on social-emotional growth and development.



We will learn about skills and strategies we have found to be most effective for mental and emotional well-being.

MINDFUL MUSIC MOMENTS™

created by **THE WELL**

Daily journeys with guided prompts and world-class music. (English/Spanish)

Serving 300+ schools nationwide, 150+ schools across Ohio.

40+ weeks of daily content, plus worksheets, coloring pages, music playlists, library of guided meditations, Mindful Poetry Moments, and more.

Also serving adults & patients at OhioHealth.



Let's practice a Mindful Music Moment

Melody (2021)

by Sheku Kanneh-Mason



State of Youth Mental Health

- 47.4% of youth are overwhelmed by stress, ages 10-24
- Ages 10-14 felt symptoms of depression or anxiety
 - 23% of girls (1 in 4)
 - 10% of boys (1 in 10)

Surgo Health. (2024). The Youth Mental Health Tracker:
Uplifting Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing from Crisis to Empowerment



State of Adult Mental Health

- 1 in 5 adults with diagnosable mental health condition
- 46% of Americans will become the 1 in 5 sometime in their life.
 - Half of these people will develop conditions by age 14.

1. Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2018). 2017 National Survey on Drug Use and Health: Detailed Tables. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Rockville, MD.
2. Kessler, Ronald C et al. "Lifetime prevalence and age-of-onset distributions of DSM-IV disorders in the National Comorbidity Survey Replication." Archives of general psychiatry vol. 62,6 (2005): 593-602. doi:10.1001/archpsyc.62.6.593



State of Educator Mental Health - 2024

- 59% of teachers report frequent job-related stress.
- 60% report burnout
- General population of working adults reports only 28% of stress and 45% of burnout.

Doan, S., Steiner, E. D., & Pandey, R. (2024, June 18). Teacher well-being and intentions to leave in 2024: Findings from the 2024 State of the American Teacher Survey. RAND. https://www.rand.org/pubs/research_reports/RRA1108-12.html



How and When the Brain Develops

While the brain is a complicated system, when it comes to human development, we can think about the brain in three main centers: Survival Center, Executive Center and Emotional Center.

PREFRONTAL CORTEX

Executive Center

"The Thinking Brain"

Developmental shifts around ages 5-6, 11 & 15. Handles logic, empathy, compassion, creativity, self-regulation, self-awareness, predicting, planning, problem-solving, attention.

LIMBIC SYSTEM

Emotional Center

"The Emotional Brain"

Developmental focus is during ages 0-5. Processes emotions, memory, response to stress, nurturing, caring, separation anxiety, fear, rage, social bonding and hormone control.

REPTILIAN BRAIN

Survival Center

"Fight, Flight or Freeze"

Developed at birth. Regulates autonomic functions: breathing, digestion, heart rate, sleep, hunger, instinctual behaviors & behaviors that sustain life.



Based on How the Brain Develops diagram www.teach-through-love.com. (2009-2022)

Teach Through Love. Flatliner/Getty Images

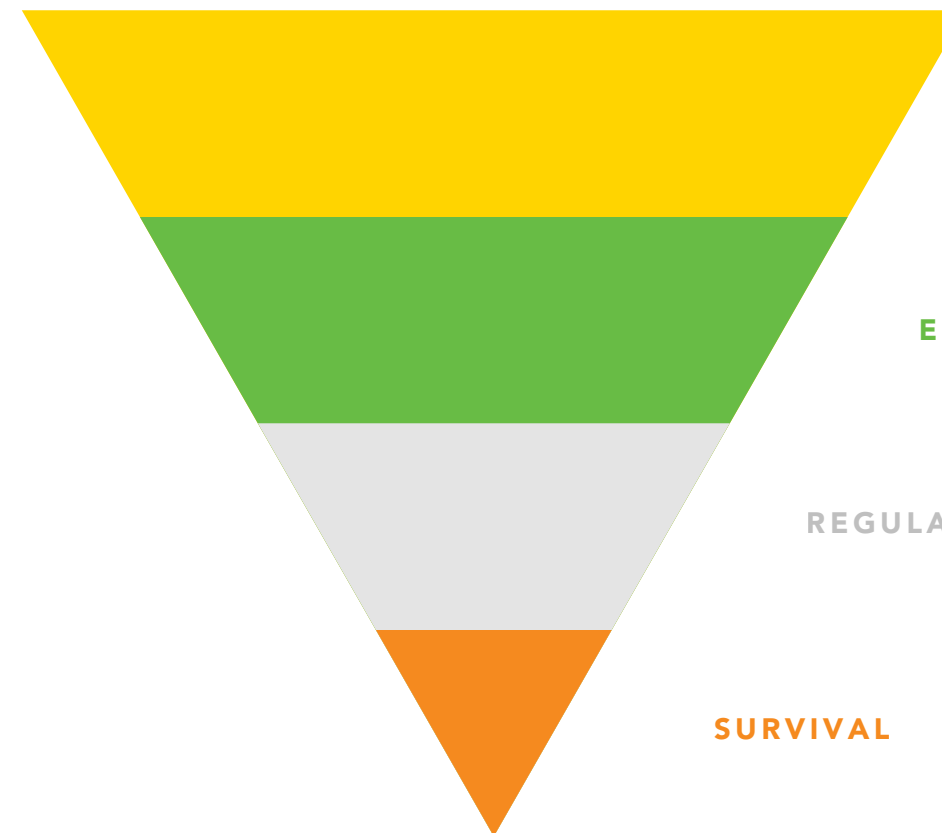
Trauma and Brain Development

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN THERE IS DEVELOPMENTAL STRESS OR TRAUMA

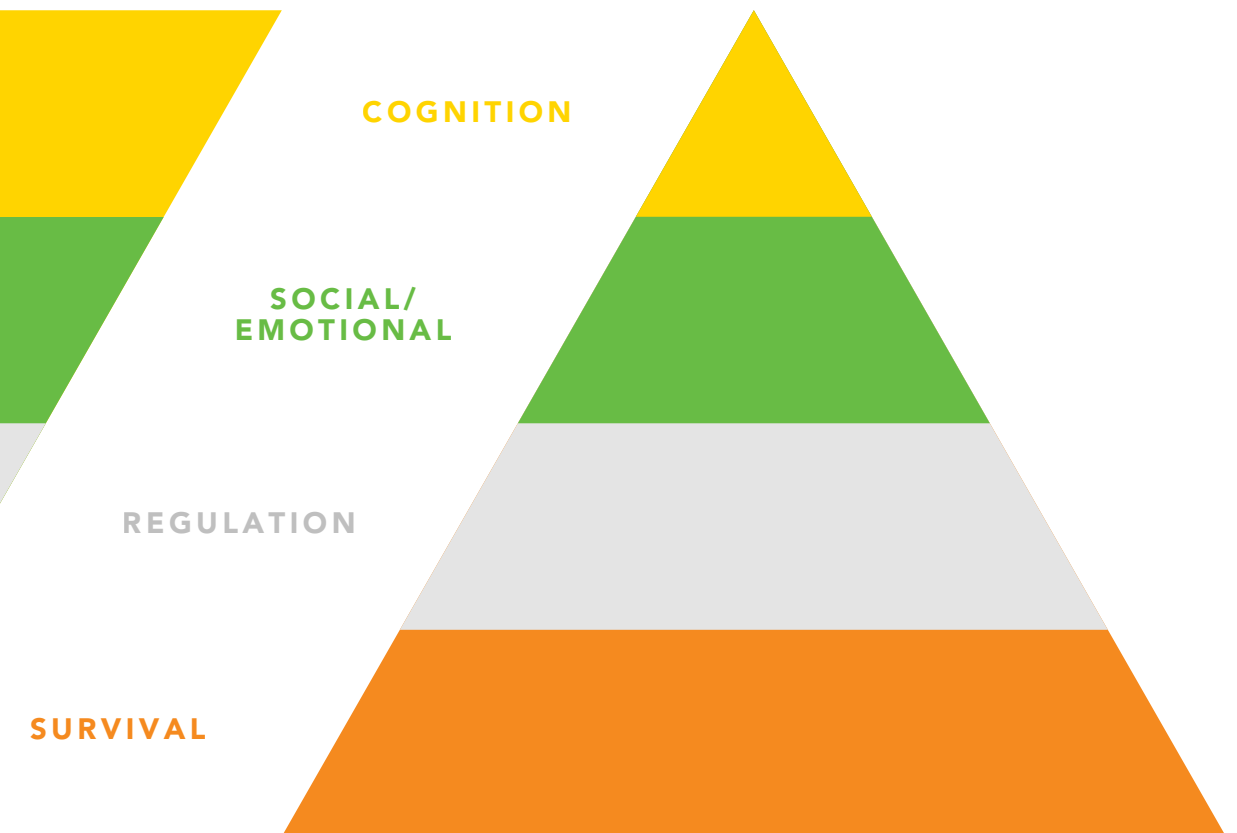
When a child's basic needs for love, food, shelter, and connection are met consistently and without confusion or disruption, the emotional center of the brain can adequately develop. Similarly, when a child is nurtured and there is adequate attunement to his or her emotions, stress responses, and social bonding, the executive center can fully develop. Poverty, homelessness, addiction, "walking on eggshells," and other stressors can profoundly alter resilience, affect, and learning.



DEVELOPMENTAL EASE



DEVELOPMENTAL STRESS



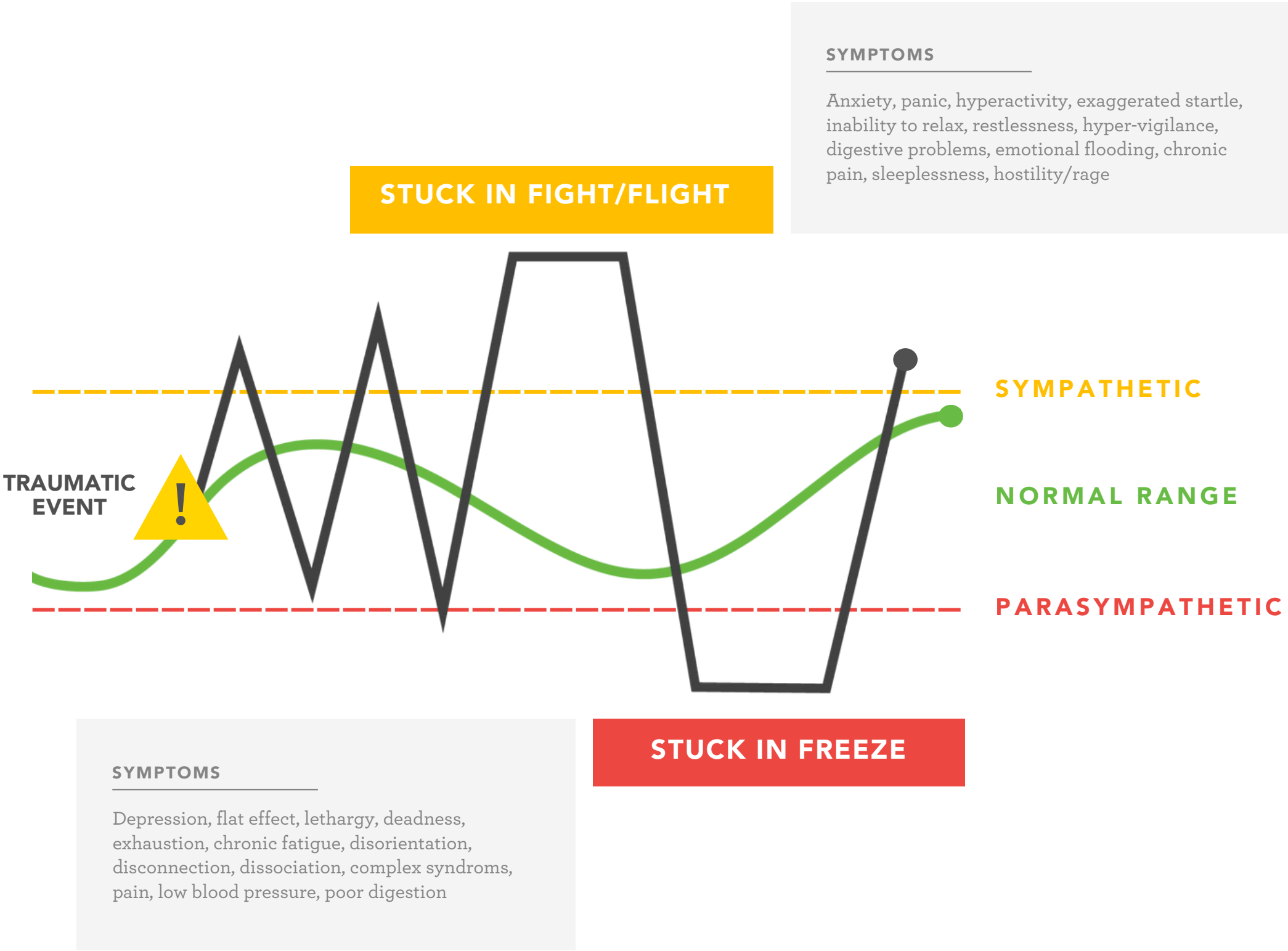
Based on Holt & Jordan, Ohio Department of Education

Trauma and Chronic Stress

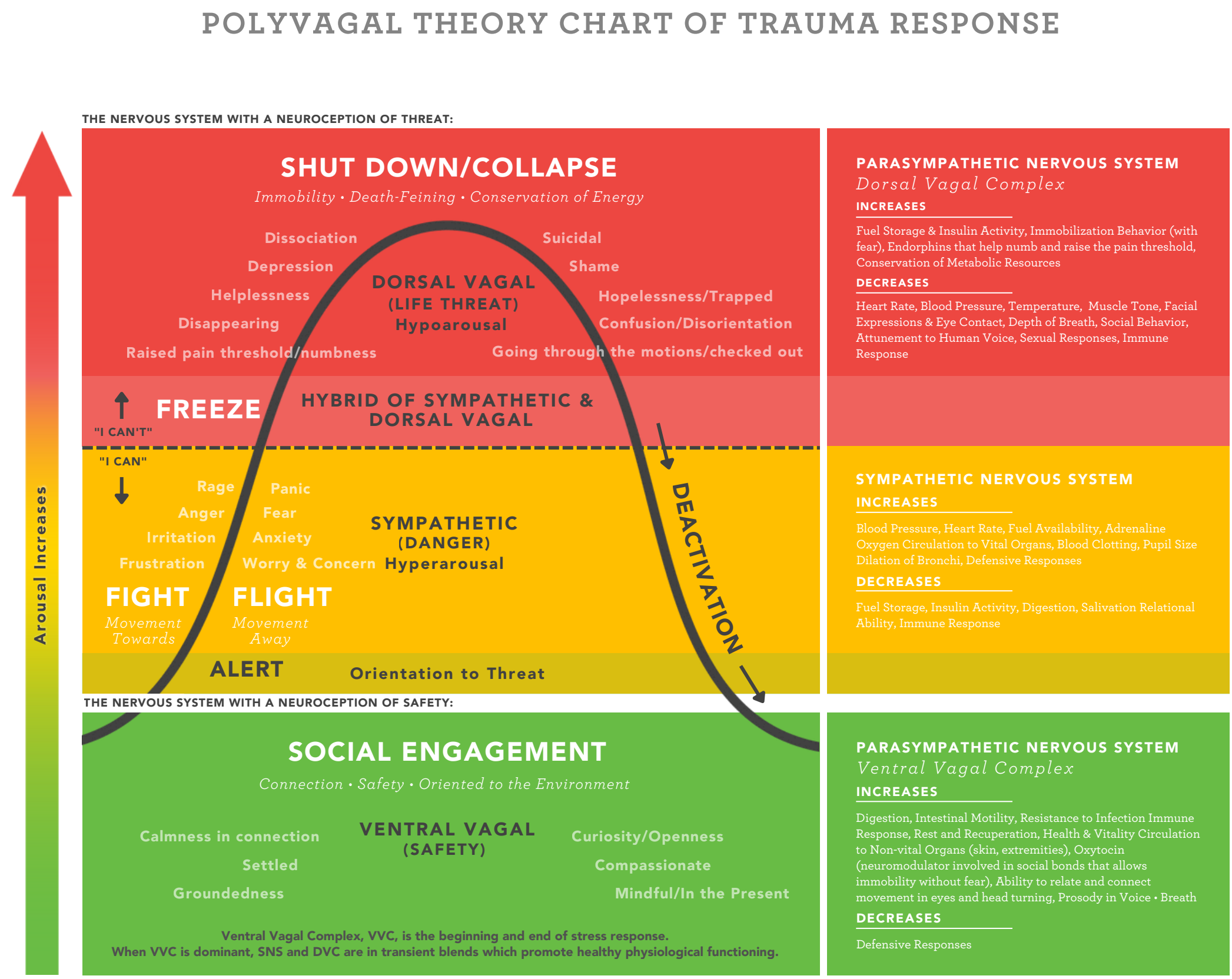
TRAUMA AND CHRONIC STRESS CREATE "STUCK" ENERGY

When our nervous system doesn't have the capacity or built-in pauses to rest, digest and integrate (both experience and information), we get "stuck" in either hyperarousal or hypoarousal, which is physiological and thus compromises our mental, physical, emotional, and spiritual health.

SYMPTOMS OF UN-DISCHARGED TRAUMATIC STRESS

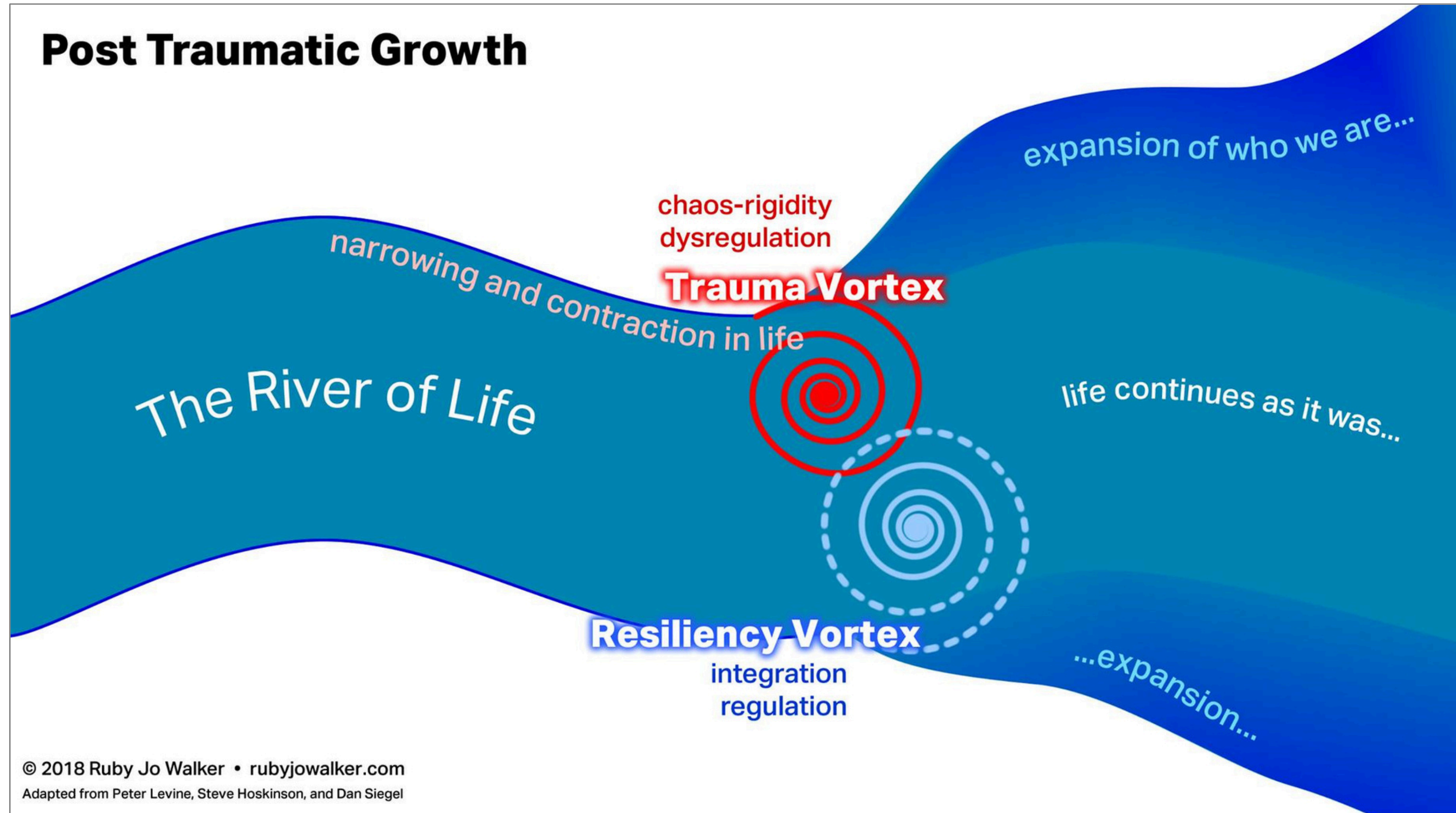


Physiology and Emotional Response of the Vagus Nerve Arousal Spectrum



Based on Ruby Jo Walker from Cheryl Sanders, Anthony "Twig" Wheeler, And Steven Porges.

Integration & Transformation





Mindfulness is. . .

“The awareness that emerges through paying attention on purpose, in the present moment, and nonjudgmentally to the unfolding of experience moment by moment.”

DR. JON KABAT-ZINN

83% of youth, 10-24, find making or enjoying music, dancing, or creating art helpful for their mental health and well-being.

The 2nd highest category, over spending time in nature (80%) and getting enough sleep (82%). Spending time with friends is most helpful (85%).

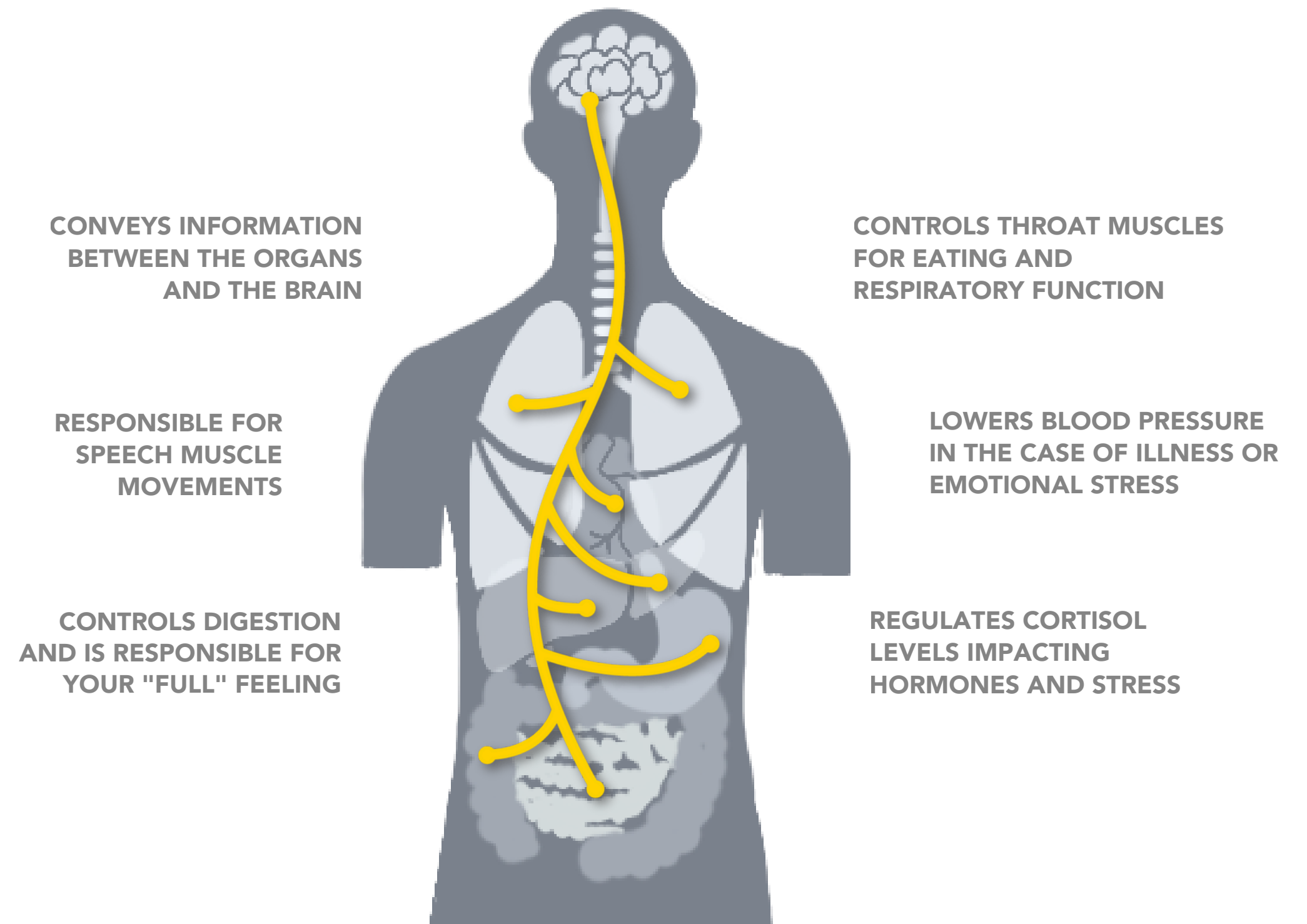
Surgo Health. (2024). The Youth Mental Health Tracker: Uplifting Youth Mental Health and Wellbeing from Crisis to Empowerment



Mindfulness' effect on the Nervous System

WHY MINDFULNESS AND MUSIC MATTER TO THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

The vagus nerve is a cranial nerve originating in our brain stem, and extends down into our chest and abdomen. It is part of the parasympathetic nervous system (PNS) carrying motor and sensory information, and supplies nerve endings to our heart, major blood vessels, airways, lungs, esophagus, stomach and intestines. It helps regulate your heart rate, blood pressure, gastrointestinal tract, and immune system, among other major functions that help balance the stress response. Toning it via activities that are calming, focusing, and soothing can have significant reflects on overall health and mental capacity.



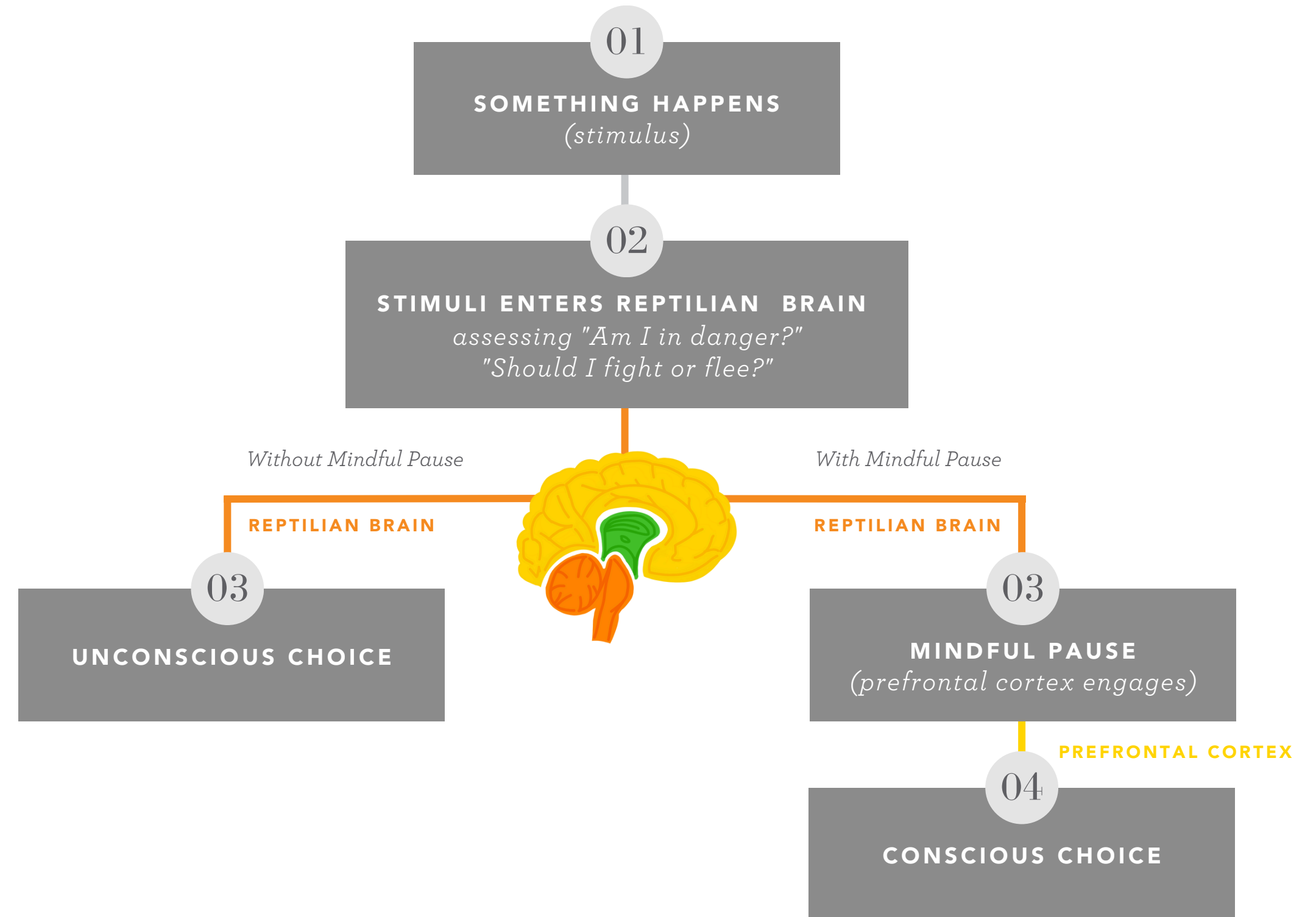
Based on Vieri Failli

The Impact of Mindful Meditation

MINDFUL MEDITATION, DONE REGULARLY, HAS HIGH IMPACT

Recent studies have found that school children taught the technique show:

- 24% INCREASE in positive social behaviors
- 24% DECREASE in aggression
- 15% IMPROVEMENT in math scores
- REDUCTION and prevention of depression-like symptoms
- IMPROVED classroom behavior (self-control, paying attention, respect for others)



Sources: Developmental Psychology; Mindfulness; Journal of Child and Family Studies

Our Programs For Schools



Daily audio and video mindfulness and music listening practice



Poetry listening, writing and publishing experience



Arts-integrated social-emotional curriculum for students and adults who support them



TRAINING & WORKSHOPS

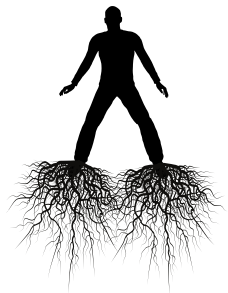
Bespoke arts & wellness experiences for both students & educators



HUMAN GLITTER JAR: WAKE UP THE ENERGY



Tools & Techniques



Grounding



Centering



Orienting

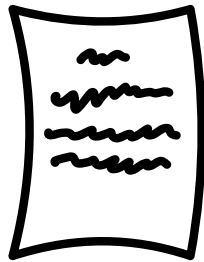


Nature as Medicine

Tools & Techniques



Music



Mindful Haiku



Journaling



Make/Create "The Artist's Way"

Embodiment of Wellness



Start of Day



En Route Routine



Exit or End of Day

Review



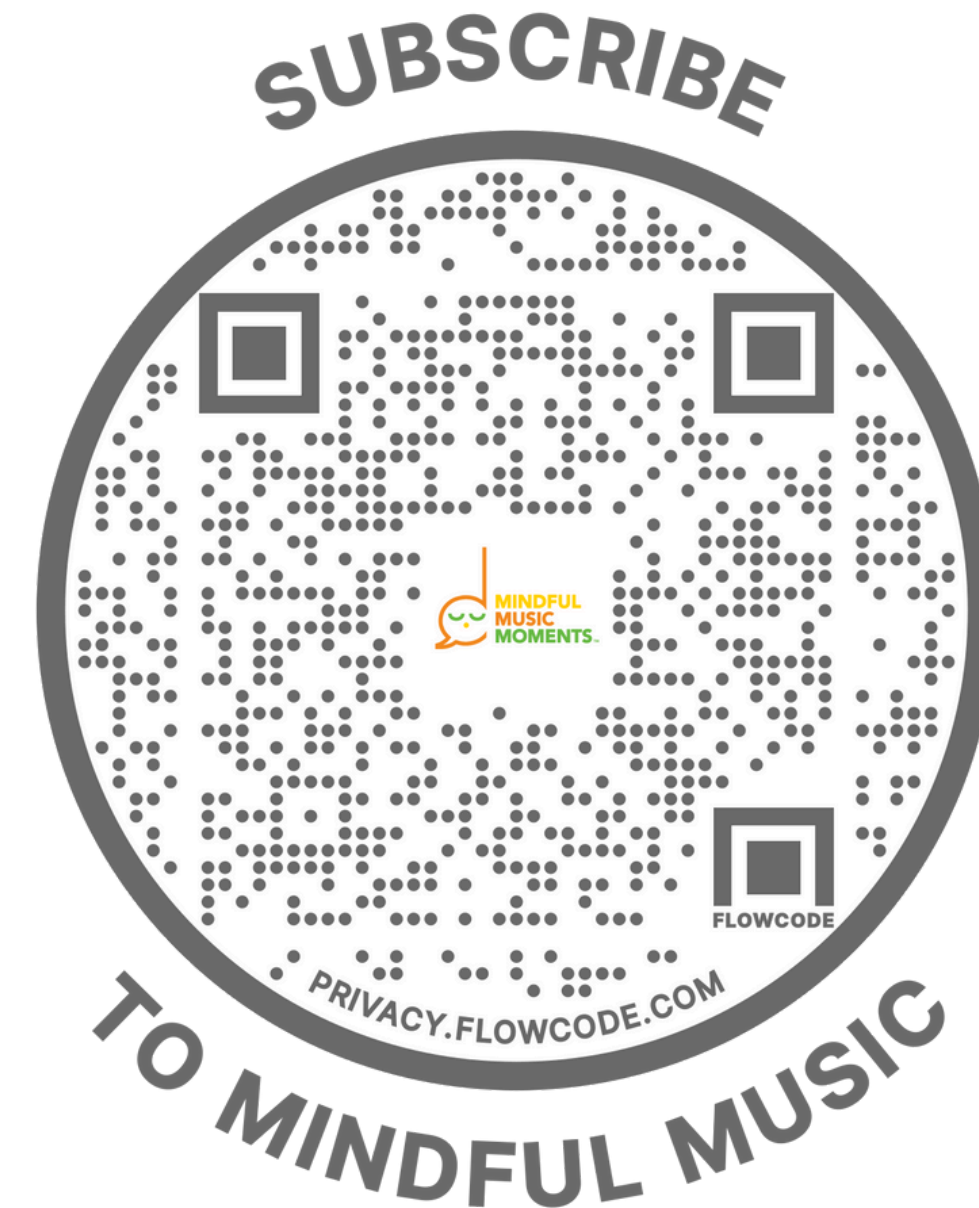
A Regulated Nervous System is ready to learn, connect and engage.



Mind-Body and Arts Integrative Programming creates a foundation for a safe, supportive learning environment where all can thrive.



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