



TREASURE KEEPERS

Befriend your Body & Brain

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INTRODUCTION

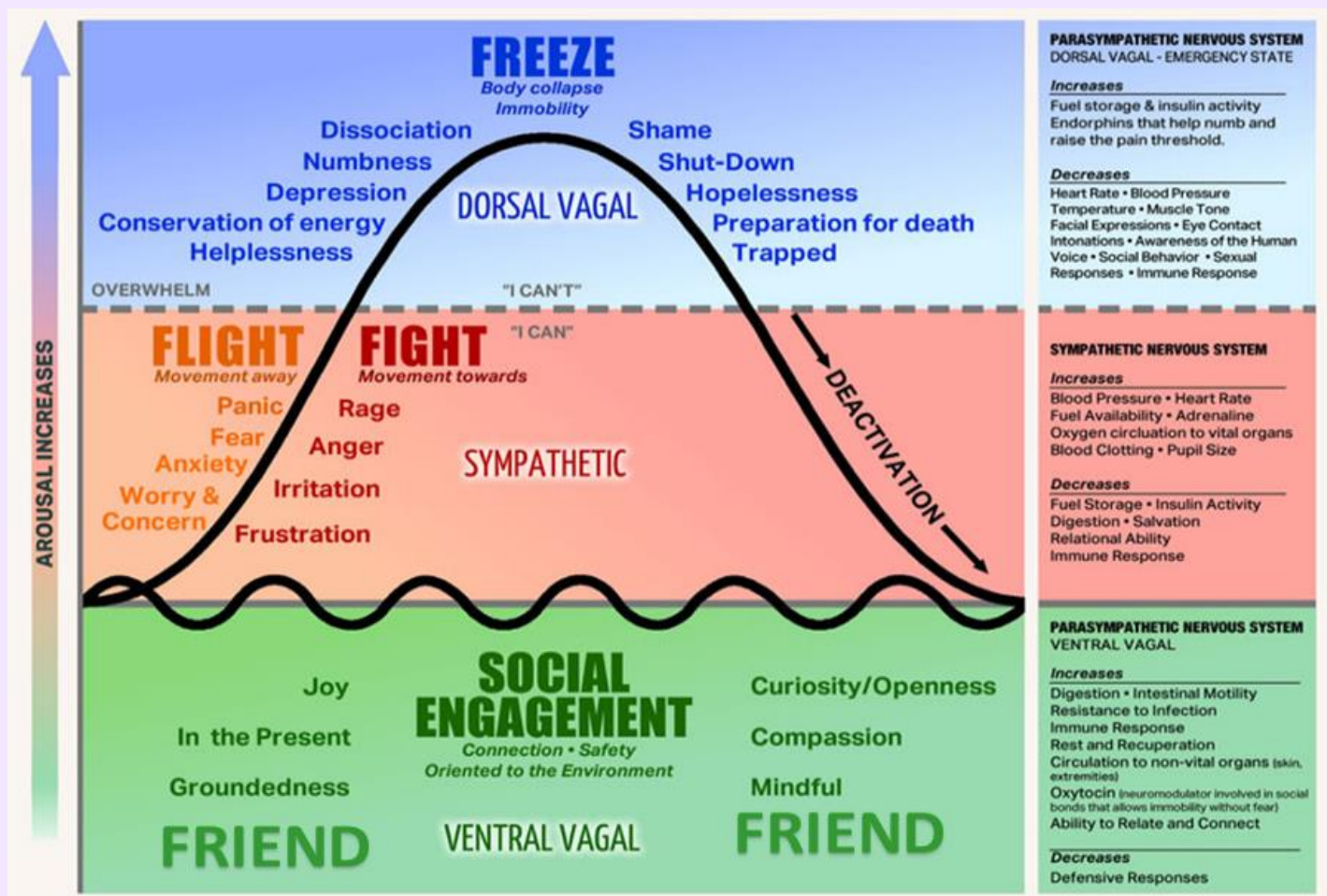
There are 3 essential nervous system states that it is important to have self-awareness about:

FRIEND
FIGHT/FLIGHT
FREEZE

It is essential to befriend your brain, body and nervous system to figure out what state you are in and what you need at any given time.

Knowing what state you are in helps you to adjust what you do to create optimal wellbeing.

The chart below shows how stress impacts on the state that you are in: (Based on the Polyvagal Theory, Stephen Porges 2011).



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with others, learning, healthy relationships), through fight/flight and then if you cannot resolve your stress through fight/flight you drop into 'Freeze'.

So when you see someone in 'freeze' they may outwardly look calm – but actually their stress is so high that their body and brain have decided they cannot survive it so they have dropped into a state of shutdown to be able to cope with what they believe is imminent death.

Regulation is about being in 'just the right place' for whatever it is you are doing. Whether this is being calm and ready to sleep; coherent & alert for optimal performance or being able to motivate/energise yourself into an excited or driven state.

The better regulated we are, the better our mind, body and relationships function.....

QUICK GUIDE TO IDENTIFYING NERVOUS SYSTEM STATE

				
<u>FRIEND</u>	<u>FIGHT</u>	<u>FIGHT</u>	<u>FREEZE</u>	<u>FAINT (SUBMIT)</u>
Joyful Playful Curious Open	Rage Anger Irritation Frustration	Panic Fear Anxiety Worry	Dissociation Numbness Shut-down Prepare for death	Depression Conserve energy Shame
Engaged	Move towards others	Can't cope with free play	Trapped	Unhappy
Calmly talkative	Controlling, demanding	Hyperactive	Bored	Low mood
Present	Inflexible	Silly	Scanning the room	Fidgety
Compassionate	Lie or blaming	Manic	Tired	Not drawing unnecessary attention
Mindful	Shouting	Running away, escaping, hiding	Talking about something else	Helpless
Empathic	Immature	Clumsy, Bumping into people	Not moving to where you have been asked	Not asking questions
Grounded	Disruptive	Cannot follow rules	Confused	Yes/No/fine answers
Can relate to others	Poor concentration	Not doing as asked	Distracted	Hopeless
Connected	Disrespectful	Lonely	Scanning the room	Quiet
Good digestion	Noisy	Keeping super busy	Not listening	Passive
Good sleep	Confrontational	Baby talk/silly voices	Daydreaming	Compliant
Hopeful	Needing to get to house/car/park/room first	Dry mouth, pupils large	Alone	Withdrawn
Express emotions	Heart rate up	Breath rate up	Muscles floppy	Eye contact low
Body healthy	Hot & bothered	Immune system decreased/suspended	Temperature low	Immune system increases/unchecked (can cause inflammatory problems)
Good immune response				

QUICK CLICK TO NERVOUS SYSTEM STATE CHANGE IDEAS



FRIEND

BREATHING TECHNIQUES
BREATHING TO HELP YOU REMAIN OR MOVE INTO FRIEND STATE
COHERENT BREATHING
LONG EXHALE
QUICK CALM BREATH
BUBBLE BREATH
SQUARE BREATH
FRIEND GAMES
NURTURE GAMES
POSITIVE MOOD
STRUCTURE & SAFETY GAMES
CONNECTION GAMES
BASIC TECHNIQUE

Food to help the friend state



FIGHT/FLIGHT

ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR FIGHT

ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR FLIGHT

CHALLENGE GAMES
BREATH WORK: LION'S BREATH
MOVEMENT ACTIVITY FOR FIGHT/FLIGHT

FOOD TO DOWN REGULATE



FREEZE/FAINT (SUBMIT)

COAXING OUT OF FREEZE

FOOD TO UPREGULATE

FRIEND STATE

Here are some ideas to help you and your young person get into a 'Friend' state.

It could involve 'climbing up the ladder' from Freeze, through fight/flight before you can reach the 'friend state'.

Morning/Daytime Ideas

- *Gently* waking them a few minutes earlier than usual by opening their curtains and gently stroking them. Then leave them for a few more minutes to continue waking up in their own time.
- Putting a relaxing track on as your child is waking up in their room. This could be nature sounds or uplifting music.
- Try to spend (minimum) 3 minutes sitting on the sofa as a family to help your child feel safe and secure before you separate.
- Choose a couple of [breathing exercises](#) to do together. Square breathing, heart coherent breathing and bubble breathing are good.

For Friend state/ connection and relationship:

- [See Nuture Games](#) section.

To help children get going/upregulate out of 'freeze':

- See ['freeze' games](#) section to help move from Freeze to Friend state.

To help children move out of fight/flight

- See ["fight/flight games"](#) section to help move from Flight/fight to Friend state.

For managing separating

- Consider whether you need to make contact (telephone, text) during the school day (or any day they are not with you).
- This could include putting notes in school lunch boxes/in coat pockets/in book bags for example.
- Write on their arms a loving message in washable felt tip pen.

Evening Ideas

It is recommended that there is a predictable and consistent evening routine for evenings with a wind down without electronics for at least 2 hours.

For Friend state/Relaxation

- Have a warm bath (not too hot) with relaxing aroma (lavender, camomile, rose, baby bedtime fragrances). Keep bath to around 15 mins so doesn't become activating.
- Practice breathing techniques – Long exhale with natural breath in. See other techniques below.
- Play a relaxation track/you tube relaxation nature sounds. Remain in the room for a few minutes and then gently withdraw whilst leaving track playing
- Spray relaxing aroma on pillow (lavender, camomile, rose, baby bedtime fragrances)
- Give a massage. This can be done over the clothes or on hands
- Play a nurture game
- Co-Sleep with your Young person
- Try the Rosenberg 'Basic Technique'

BREATH TECHNIQUES

BREATHING TO HELP YOU REMAIN OR MOVE INTO FRIEND STATE:



Coherent Breathing

If you practice this technique for 5 minutes a day you will become:

- More Positive.
- More Confident.
- Calm, yet energized.
- Focused and more able to think and learn (the part of the brain you need for this is switched on through this breathing technique).
- More able to manage your mood and emotions.
- More balanced.
- You give yourself a 'brain bootcamp' and are working out the vagus nerve and helping it to get thicker. When this nerve is thick and strong then you can respond better, and more flexibly to stress.

The Theory in a nutshell

- When the brain and heart are out of sync, our nervous system signals are chaotic.
- We tend to get frustrated, anxious or angry more easily.
- It's like driving a car with one foot on the accelerator and the other on the brake. It's a jerky ride, we waste petrol and the car wears out faster.
- With coherent breathing on the other hand you do not go into a relaxed (parasympathetic dominated) condition but rather a neutral condition between the stressed and relaxed states.
- Despite not changing you into a deeply relaxed condition coherent breathing does nevertheless end stress responses in your system so you will feel calmer.

More Theory (for grownups who are interested!)

- The coherent breathing state is a more fluid condition than deep relaxation in that as you inhale you become slightly sympathetic biased (set off the fight/flight system) and as you exhale you become slightly parasympathetic biased (rest and digest system).

- You swing slightly backwards and forwards between the two states like a pendulum.
- The state you achieve with coherent breathing is also more fluid in that you could quickly respond from this position going either more sympathetic/active/energized position; or more parasympathetic/calm/restful position.
- This means you are more able to flexibly respond to the demands that are placed in front of you in the moment.

Basic Technique

- Always practice sitting upright, preferably with your feet firmly planted on the ground.
- You can close your eyes (helps you to focus on body sensations) or put your eyes down and look at a comfortable point on the ground.
- Only breathe in a comfortable amount. Just breath in naturally. **DO NOT TAKE A DEEP BREATH IN.** When you breath in too hard or force the in-breath you send a signal to your brain that you are not safe.

Heart Breathing (aged 3-6)

1. Begin by putting your attention on the area around your heart – the center of your chest. Model this by putting your hand over your heart area.
2. Now pretend to breathe in and out of your heart. Take three slow breaths. **Count 3 in and 3 out.**
3. Think of someone or something that makes you feel happy, like your mum or dad or a special place that you visit such as a park. Feel that happy feeling in your heart and shine it to someone or something special. Let the child experience the feeling for a few seconds.

Heart focused breathing (aged 7-11).

1. Bring your attention to the area of your heart. Take a moment and keep your focus there for practice.
2. Breathe slowly and easily. Imagine the air flowing in and out of your heart area for a count of **3 in and 3 out.**
3. Carry on breathing like this whilst you bring into your mind and body positive memories and pictures. This might be things you love, you are grateful for, your best holiday or daytrips, stroking a pet....

Heart Coherence Breathing (aged 11-15)

1. Shift your attention to the area of your heart. Take a moment and keep your focus there for practice.
2. Breathe slowly and easily. Imagine the air flowing in and out of your heart area for a count of **3 in and 3 out.**
3. Carry on breathing like this whilst you bring into your mind and body positive memories and pictures. This might be things you love, you are grateful for, your best holiday or daytrips, stroking a pet....

Heart Coherence Breathing (15-Adult)

1. Shift your attention to the area of your heart. Take a moment and keep your focus there for practice.
2. Breathe slowly and easily. Imagine the air flowing in and out of your heart area for a count of **6 in and 6 out.**
3. Carry on breathing like this whilst you bring into your mind and body positive memories and pictures. This might be things you love, you are grateful for, your best holiday or daytrips, stroking a pet....

Long Exhale

- Take a NATURAL breath in (not a deep breath in as this activates the fight/flight system). Then a long breath out. Try to make the noise 'Haa' or the Darth Vader sound as you breathe out (also known as 'ocean breath/oujii breath').

BREATHING TO HELP YOU MOVE OUT OF FIGHT/FLIGHT/FREEZE



Quick Calm Breathing (for when you are stressed/flooded/ in fight-flight or freeze)

3 part breath. Direct not to take a deep breath but a natural comfortable breath in.

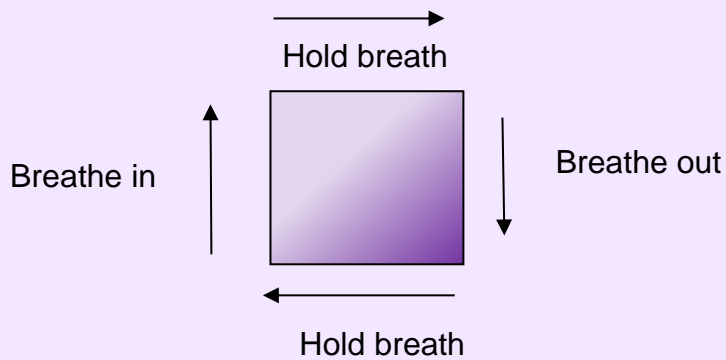
“take a sip in, a little more, a little more and exhale”. Exhale should be long and smooth



Bubble breathing imagine you are blowing through a bubble wand. Make sure your breath is slow and long. Blow out all of your worries and watch them pop in the air.



Square Breathing draw a square in the air in front of you. As you draw upward breathe in, as you draw across hold your breath, as you draw down breathe out, as you draw across hold your breath. Repeat as needed.



FRIEND GAMES

All of these games will help your young person move into 'Friend' State.

These games are best offered before you begin any homework (school days) and with a snack of regulating food (jam on toast is a good regulating food!).

Many of these games are influenced by 'Theraplay' ©.

Nurture Games:

- **Walk barefoot together**
- **Develop a song/ritual around being together**, separating and coming back together. Include a transitional object if helpful (spray your perfume, draw something on child's arm).
- **Create a nature collection/bingo** gather a variety of nature objects (using a bingo style list) and create a collage (shells, pebbles, twigs, leaves etc).
- **Eat ice-cream together!**
- **Create rituals** ('taco Tuesday').
- **Painting lotion or powder on hands and feet to make a print.**
- **Hiding a powder touch** on the child for the adult to find and rub in.
- **Responsive caregiving** is the key so noticing child's facial and bodily cues, acknowledging feelings, making attuned responses that mirror her reactions.
- **Feeding the child** whilst you cradle them in your arms.
- **Blowing bubbles** back and forth until they pop.
- **Caring for hurts.** Notice all scratches, bruises.
- **Decorate child** using play doh or foil or streamers to make rings, necklaces, bracelets etc.
- **Face painting** . removing after is another opportunity for nurture.
- **Paint hand and feet prints**
- **Guess the Goodies:** The adult prepares for this in advance by placing eight or ten little goodies in an envelope or cup so that they can be kept hidden from the child. These might include m&ms, raisins, a little pretzel, a grape, a piece of apple, other candies or goodies - only ones that the child likes! The treats need to be the right size for the child's age, e.g., big grapes should be cut in half for very young children. Then the adult and child sit either knee to knee, or for younger children, with the child in the adult's lap, so that they can see each other comfortably. Adult says, "I've got some delicious goodies in this envelope. I want you to close your eyes. I'll put one of these in your mouth and you see if you can guess what it is. Then you can eat it! After I put the goodie in your mouth, you can open your eyes while you guess what it is." The adult seeks eye contact throughout and gives ample hints if the child does not recognize the treat. Afterward, the adult might ask which ones the child likes best.

Continued....

- **Thumb wrestling**

- **Cotton wool ball hockey.** Put a pillow between you and blow cotton balls to and forth trying to get it off pillow or under each others arms. Or cooperate and blow hard enough to keep ball still between you.
- **Hello goodbye game.** Sit child on lap and pull them forward to say hello and move them back to say goodbye.
- **Sticky nose.** Put a sticker on your nose and get child to take it off. Or put a cotton wool ball on your nose with lotion and get child to blow it off.
- **Blow me over.** Hold hands and sit on lap. Fall back when the child 'blows you over'. Then do this to the child.
- **Hide the cotton ball** somewhere on the child. Or get child to hide it and the parent to find it,
- **Hand clapping game.** A sailor went to see. Miss Mary Mack.
- **Special kisses.** Butterfly kiss. Parent places cheek to cheek and flutters eyelashes. Elephant kiss: place fists together and kiss down to the child. Eskimo kiss. Rub noses.
- **Make a tunnel of pillows.** Get the child to crawl through and get to you.
- **Put a donut on your finger** and see how many bites it takes before the ring is broken
- **Manicure or pedicure**
- **Apply temporary/ glitter tattoos**
- **Trace messages** on back or body and child has to guess what they are.

To help create a positive mood:

- Positive Affirmations
- Short visualisation/ create a 'safe space' image. Make sure to include all of the senses in the imagery.
- Talk about how you used your affirmation that day.

Structure and Safety Games:

- **Beanbag game.** Put on head and then tilt head until it drops into the hands of the other person.
- **Jump into the arms** of the other from a sofa or from pillows.
- **Patty cake** hand clapping games.
- **Play doh** squeeze by putting your own hands around the hands of the child and then saying 'squeeze' and pressing both sets of hands into the playdoh. Make hand, finger, footprints in playdoh.
- **Pop the bubble.** Have the child pop it with a body part (finger, ear).
- **Run to mummy and daddy** under the blanket.
- **Drawing** around hands, feet or bodies.
- **Measuring,** height, length of arms, feet, hands and keep a record for comparisons. Measure surprising things like the child's smile, length of ears, how high they can jump.
- **Fish and Chips.** You say 'fish' and the child has to reply 'chips' in the same way. Repeat by varying intonation, loudness.
- **Follow the leader**
- **Funny ways to cross the room**
- **'What's the time Mr wolf'**
- **Eye signals.** Hold hands and face each other. Use your eyes to indicate direction and number of steps to take (wink twice with left eye for two steps forward left).
- **3 legged walking**

- **Toilet paper bust out.** Wrap the child in toilet paper (or just arms or legs) and have them break out of the wrapping on a signal.
- **Please Mother may I.** child needs to ask this before they respond to the commands (take 3 steps forward). Aim is to get to parent for a hug.
- **Newspaper punch.** Hold up a newspaper page and let your child punch through it!

Connection Games

- **Eyeblinking (or Staring) Contest** Child and parent sit cross-legged, touching knees. Adult puts his hands on the child's shoulders; child puts his hands on Dad's arms. Adult says, "When I say Go [or "3" or "pumpkins," etc.], we have to look into each other's eyes. The last person to blink wins, and the winner gets the prize: he can give the other guy a hug or a tickle."
- **Watch the scene.** Set a timer for 5 minutes and ask your child to sit quietly and watch and listen to what you and your partner are saying. After 5 minutes ask your child to recount what words were said and what the faces showed her. Praise your child for accurately conveying what she saw (such as did you see daddy's face when I said something that surprised him?),
- **Blanket pass.** Use a blanket and put a ball on it. Each person takes in turns to choose who they want to pass it to. Everyone cooperates to lift and lower their part of the blanket
- **Hide and seek.** Do this with your child and get another adult to find you.
- **Pass the funny face.** Everyone takes a turn to make a funny face and pass it round the circle
- **Pass the gentle touch round the circle.** Everyone adds to this and tries to remember the sequence of touches (beep nose, pat on back).
- **Who's toes did I touch?** All sit under a blanket with feet intertwined. The person who is 'it' touches the lumpy blanket and has to guess whose toes she has touched.

The Basic Technique: Stanley Rosenberg

- This simple exercise repositions the 1st and 2nd cervical (neck) vertebrae
- It increases mobility in the neck and the entire spine and thus increases blood flow to the brain stem
- The brain stem is where the nerves needed for optimal function and wellbeing are.
- It takes just 2 minutes!
- Easy to do and takes just 2 minutes to complete. Before and after doing the exercises evaluate the freedom of movement of your head and neck as described below. Evaluating the movement again after doing the exercise will show you if there is an improvement in the range of movement or a reduction in the level of pain or discomfort.

Steps:

1. Rotate your head to the right as far as it goes comfortably.
2. Come back to centre, pause and then rotate to the left in the same way.
3. Notice how far you rotate to each side and whether there is any pain or stiffness.

The Exercise:

1. Lying comfortably on your back - interlock your fingers and place them under your head, with the weight of your head resting comfortably on your fingers. You should feel the hardness of your skull with your fingers and feel the bones of your fingers on the back of your head
2. Keeping your head in place, look to the right - moving only your eyes as far as you comfortably can. Do NOT turn your head - just move your eyes. Keep looking to the right.

3. After 30-60 seconds you are likely to swallow, yawn or sigh. This is a sign of relaxation in the autonomic nervous system.
4. When this happens bring your eyes back to centre. If it didn't happen - no worries - it is likely to happen next time you do the exercise.
5. Bring your eyes back to centre after about 60 seconds
6. Repeat on the left

5. Take your hands away and slowly sit or stand up. If you become dizzy when you sit or stand up it is probably because you relaxed when lying down and your blood pressure dropped. This is a normal reaction and it usually takes a minute or two for your blood pressure to adjust back to normal

6. Evaluate what you have experienced. Is there an improvement in the mobility of your neck? Has your breathing changed? Do you notice anything else?

FIGHT/FLIGHT STATE



These games will help to discharge trauma, tension and stress.

It is likely to be helpful to follow on with a regulating, soothing activity/game from the 'Friend' section afterward.

Activity Games/Ideas for fight:

- Tell your young person that you love them despite how they have behaved
- Offer chewy foods
- Create a task that makes the young person feel special/important
- Push against the wall when sitting in a seated position. Push with your arms and your legs. Like you are sitting on a chair.
- Roll the young person up in a blanket like they are a 'sausage roll'.
- Punch bag
- Kick on the bed
- Run
- Have a tantrum
- Rip up a phone book
- Shout
- Swear
- Scream
- Grunt
- Make any noise that releases tension.
- Write an upsetting thought/big feeling on a balloon and pop it or set it free.
- For older young people try the 'Calm Harm' app – lots of different kinds of safe tension release activities.

- Use touchpoint solutions to bring down the physical experience of stress and help with processing <https://www.touchpointeurope.com/>
- **Build a den/womb /safe space** that is enclosed and put pillows, blankets and cushions inside.

Activity Games/Ideas for flight:

- **Keep your young person close by**
- **Hang upside down** on a sofa
- Use [breathing techniques](#)
- **Offer crunchy foods** (carrot/crisps/rice cake/biscuit)
- **Hang from monkey bars**
- **Use heavy blankets/weighted blankets**
- **Create a safe place** where they can hide.
- **Give lots of patient reminders** if your young person 'forgets' instructions/things.
- **Play hide and seek** take turns being the 'hider' or 'seeker'.

Challenge games

Challenge games are good for building confidence and having fun, as well as releasing tension.

Tips

- **Attune yourself to the needs of the emotionally immature child** underneath
- **You might gently challenge** the child if you are sure they can have their limits stretched and will still succeed.
- **Activities should focus on cooperation** rather than competition

Game Ideas:

- **Crawling race**
- **Tunnels (or Bridges):** This is best done where there is about 10 or 12 feet of open floor space. Adult makes a bridge (or tunnel) in the middle of the area by making an arch with her body (hands and feet or knees on the floor). Adult tells the child to get on hands and knees in a corner or side of the room, facing the adult. The adult says, "When I say Go, you start crawling as fast as you can. I'm going to count to five, and when I get to five, the tunnel is going to fall down – if you are in it, you will get it, so crawl as fast as you can!" The adult makes it so that the child can get through the tunnels a few times before it falls down, by decreasing the number of counts: "Now see if you can get through in just three counts. Go!" When the tunnel falls down, the adult gives a few hugs or little tickles.
- **Karate chop** on toilet paper which is held by you.
- **Magic carpet ride.** Pull around on a blanket when they hold eye contact.
- **Seed/Grape spitting contest.** Try to spit your seed/Grape near to each other's seed/Grape.
- **Newspaper punch.** Punch through sheet when given a signal
- **Newspaper toss.** Rolled up balls thrown through parents arms held out in a ring.
- **Balance things** on the child's head or body and walk across room
- **Balloon balance.** Hold balloon between you and then walk across the room without dropping it.
- **Make you laugh game.** Have to keep a straight face.
- **Blanket swing.** Put child in blanket and gently swing them with a soft landing at the end.

- **Cotton wool ball/marshmallow/newspaper fight.** In teams throw balls at other team, trying to get rid of everything on your side. Set up a shield of pillows and throw from behind it.

Breath work for Fight/Flight



- **Lion's Breath.**
 1. Breathe in while keeping the tongue against hard palate and try to relax the shoulders.
 2. While exhaling, open the mouth, stretch all the muscles of face and protrude the tongue as far as possible and make "haaa" sounds like a lion's roar.
 3. The mouth should be opened as wide as possible and tongue stuck out as far as possible
 4. Practice Lions Breath for 3-4 rounds.
 5. In the end, bring the tongue back into the mouth and relax your throat and facial muscles.
 6. Take a few relaxed breaths.

Movement activity for Fight/Flight

- **Neck Stretch & Circles.** This is good for helping with restoration after a fight/flight experience of for people who hold daily tension/trauma/stress.
 1. Gentle lean your head over to the right toward the right shoulder.
 2. When your neck is as far over toward the right shoulder as is comfortable, look with your eyes only over to the right. Stay there for at least a minute
 3. Gently return your head to the centre
 4. Then repeat by gently leaning your head over to the left toward the left shoulder
 5. When your neck is as far over toward the left shoulder as is comfortable, look with your eyes only over to the left. Stay there for at least a minute
 6. Gently return your head to the centre
 7. Take a slow circle of your head.
 8. Then repeat the circle in the opposite direction
 9. Take a few relaxed breaths.

FREEZE STATE



- The key with these games is to take it **slow and steady**. Just being with the person in 'freeze' can be enough to give comfort. You don't need to do much else than sit beside when someone is very 'frozen'.
- Freeze is a protective state to be in where the person believes this is their only option left for survival.
- It is OK to spend a little time in this state but important not to get 'stuck' here.
- You are carefully trying to coax the tortoise from inside of its shell.

Ideas for coaxing out of Freeze

- **Sit next to. Be with**
- **Offer a hot chocolate or warm milk drink**
- **Remind your young person that they are SAFE in the here and now**

- **Watching a film together.** Snuggle in a blanket or a onesie!
- **Playing card game snap/pairs**
- **Playing board games**
- **Colouring with someone**
- **Offer a warm bath and a warm towel** (put the towel/dressing gown in the tumble-dryer and wrap them in this when they get out, use a scented dryer sheet).

Work up toward more slow movement games to move toward 'friend' (phase 1):

- **One sided hide and seek**- the child hides and adult seeks.
- **Be gently curious about 'where your young person has gone' and invite them back.**
- **Short walk outside**
- **Sitting in the garden/park/ beach** notice all the things moving around you
- **Hand clapping games** - 'Pat a cake'-
- **Play-doh** with someone.
- **Ring o Ring of roses.**
- **Swing your child by holding their hands** (2 adults needed).
- **Blanket Bounce.** Put small teddies/toys in a blanket. Adult and Young Person hold each end of the blanket and then bounce the teddies. Challenge to bounce as high as you can!

And then up to these movement games to move toward 'friend' (phase 2):

- **Spinning on a swing**
- **Rolling down a hill**
- **Digging in mud**
- **Go on a slide**
- **Cycling down a hill**

FOODS FOR THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

Food can help the nervous system but is best offered in the context and connection of a safe relationship.

Food to help the 'friend' state

- ♥ Offer something sweet because sweet foods are naturally occurring attachment foods.
- ♥ Sweet foods initiate the natural attachment hormones to allow us to begin to regulate in some subtle way and make small changes in our regulatory system. (but this doesn't last)
- ♥ You may also like to offer regulating foods such as a thick milkshake sucked through a thin straw. See below for ideas on regulating foods.

During the Daytime

- ♥ Throughout the day, make sure the Young Person gets plenty of snacks, leaving a basket of things that she can eat at any point during the day.
- ♥ Encourage foods like granola bars, raisins, apples, and bananas, which have a lot of natural sugar in them. This way, the Young Person can eat something sweet but healthy whenever she becomes overwhelmed and stressed.
- ♥ Encourage the Young Person to keep a sweet snack on them in a 'bum bag' around their waist, in a pocket or in a bag that they keep with them. This is so they know they always have access to food.
- ♥ You can also leave a food box in their room for them to eat if they want to at any time. The act of the Parent/Carer keeping this replenished is another way of keeping the Young Person in mind and in reducing fear around the feeling of being hungry.
- ♥ However, it is ideal if you agree that the Young Person will tell you and involve you when they want to eat rather than eating this alone. This is so that the relationship between you can become the source of comfort instead of the food over time.
- ♥ You may need to move toward this in smaller steps by having the box in the room at first and encouraging a conversation about body feelings after you have noticed the food has been eaten.
- ♥ You can consider having the food box accessible within the Parent/Carers bedroom so that you communicate that you want to support them with this.

- ♥ **Everyday mood to keep the mood stable** (tryptophan: serotonin making): bananas, bread, pasta, oily fish. To manufacture serotonin: bananas, avocados, fish, vegetables, baked potatoes, chicken & beef, B vitamin supplements
- ♥ **Foods to help with the production of serotonin** by helping the intestines: yogurts and probiotic supplements if milk tolerance is an issue
- ♥ **Foods containing tyrosine which helps make dopamine** (helps motivation and feeling pleasure); fish, meat, nuts, cheese. **Take fish oils** or eat oily fish
- ♥ **Eat regularly throughout the day** and eat carbohydrate foods in the evening to help regulate sleep

- ♥ **Whey.** Because it is naturally rich in L-tryptophan, not to mention a whole range of other healing amino acids and nutrients, whey is an excellent food for calming your nervous system naturally.

Tryptophan has been shown to assist in the production of serotonin, a neurotransmitter hormone that regulates endocrine, digestive, nervous system, and blood health. And since low levels of serotonin are linked to anxiety, depression, and other mental health problems, taking whey can help boost anabolic function.

Whey is also rich in L-glutamine, a non-essential amino acid that is the precursor to gamma-aminobutyric acid (GABA), a substance that helps regulate the nervous system and promote calmness.

So if you are not allergic to milk-based foods, taking a high-quality whey protein supplement such as Proventive, One World Whey, or Jay Robb is a great way to boost your overall nutritional intake and feed your body the nutrients it needs to maintain a healthy, well-functioning nervous system.

- ♥ **Sweet potatoes, yams.** A complex carbohydrate food that contains high levels of vitamin A, vitamin C, and B vitamins, sweet potatoes are another nutritionally-dense food that can help calm your nerves, eliminate stress, and even lower your blood pressure. Similarly, yams contain an array of nutrient compounds that feed the glandular system and promote respiratory, urinary, and nervous system health.
- ♥ **Bananas.** Many athletes eat bananas after a game or match because the fruit contains potassium, an electrolyte that helps the body stay hydrated. But bananas also contain magnesium, vitamin B6, and other nutrients that help boost production of digestion-enhancing mucous, as well as promote feelings of happiness and calm inside the body. Eating bananas also aids in the production of serotonin and melatonin, two hormones that regulate mood and sleeping patterns, and promote muscle relaxation and stress relief.
- ♥ **Green, herbal tea.** Sometimes the best way to take the edge off is to have a nice cup of warm herbal or green tea. Green tea in particular contains an amino acid known as L-theanine that enhances

mood by stimulating the production of alpha waves in the brain. L-theanine also helps reduce stress and promote relaxation naturally.

- ♥ **Dark chocolate** Similar to whey, dark chocolate and cacao contain L-tryptophan, the neurotransmitter responsible for relaxing the brain. But dark chocolate and cacao also contain magnesium, a mineral widely recognized for its ability to calm the nervous system. Millions of Americans unknowingly suffer from magnesium deficiency, and while eating chocolate is not the ideal way to correct this deficiency, adding a little extra dark chocolate or raw cacao into your diet can help calm your nerves and promote restfulness.

"Chocolate contains a neurotransmitter known as anandamide that has the ability to alter dopamine levels in the brain, causing a sense of peace and relaxation.," says Dr. Kristie Leong, M.D. "Chocolate is also rich in tryptophan, the precursor to the serotonin which appears to play a role in relieving stress and promoting a sense of calmness."

- ♥ **Brazil nuts.** Said to be nature's richest source of selenium, Brazil nuts are virtually unmatched in the nut world when it comes to relaxing the nervous system. According to a study out of the *University of Wales*, eating the equivalent of just three Brazil nuts daily can help significantly boost mood, promote feelings of calm, ease anxiety, and raise energy levels in as few as three months.
- ♥ **Spinach.** In order for your brain and nervous system to function as they should, your body needs a high input of fat-soluble vitamins that contribute to the building up of the fatty layers that protect your nerves from damage. And one such vitamin is vitamin K, which you can get in high amounts by eating spinach. Spinach also helps regulate the production of hormones in the nervous system to improve mood, sleeping patterns, and the body's response to physical activity and stress.

Foods to down regulate (calm)

Down Regulating (from Fight/Flight):

Sucking is a good way to create a feeling of comfort and restoration. The harder you suck the more regulating this might be for you.

The higher the stress experienced, the more hard work the tongue, lips and jaws need to do to create regulation. So chewy, crunchy foods are good to help with down-regulation (calming)

- ♥ **Foods that Comfort & Restore:** sucking a thick milkshake through a thin straw; sucking food against the roof of the mouth (chocolate/sweets), dipping biscuits into hot drink and sucking, sports bottles for water/juice, sweet, salty foods, warm spice (nutmeg)

- ♥ **Foods for Agitation & tension:** munch crunch food (crisps, nuts, raw vegetables, apples, biscuits, cereal)
- ♥ **Foods for Anger:** Chewy bars/ sweets, toast, meat
- ♥ **Drink camomile tea,** this contains a mild benzodiazepine! A calming chemical.
- ♥ **Drink warm milk** it is very soothing

Food to up-regulate (activate)

Up-Regulating (coming out of Freeze)

- ♥ **Foods for becoming more alert** (freeze individuals): citrus, mint sweets.
- ♥ **Eat hot curries/spicy foods**

ADD YOUR OWN IDEAS

Write in here what works for You and your Young Person:

