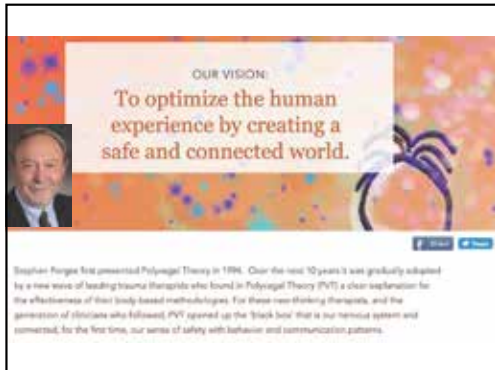


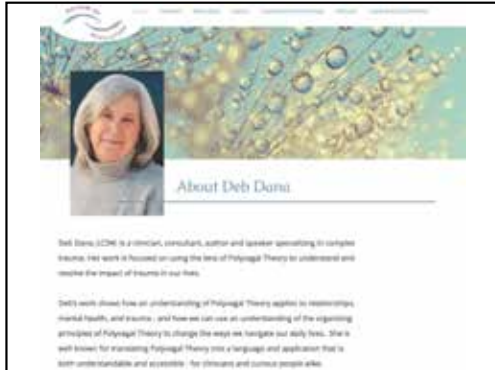
Handout for the Therapro webinar ***Applying Polyvagal Theory in Classrooms and Clinics***
presented by presented by Dr. Debra Em Wilson - October 5, 2021

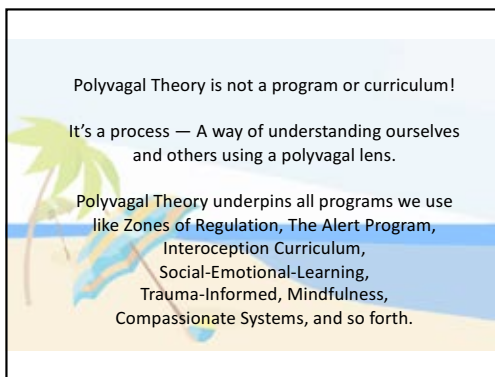


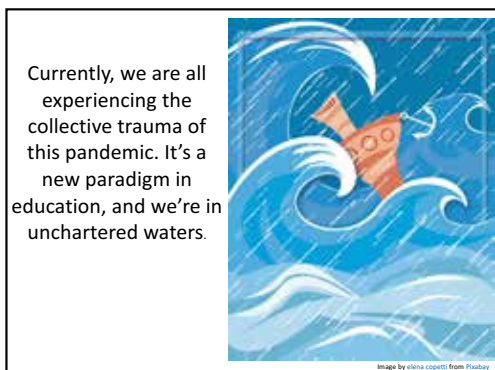




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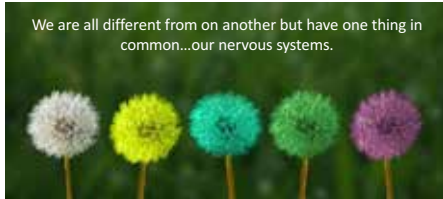




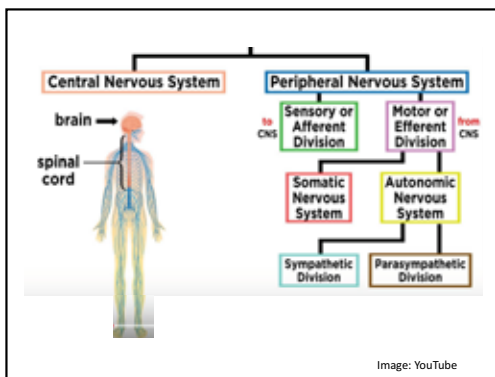





How will this experience provide the opportunity for education to enter the transformative paradigm? Transformation comes one nervous system at a time beginning with each of us befriending our own nervous systems before helping others befriend theirs.



We are all different from one another but have one thing in common...our nervous systems.





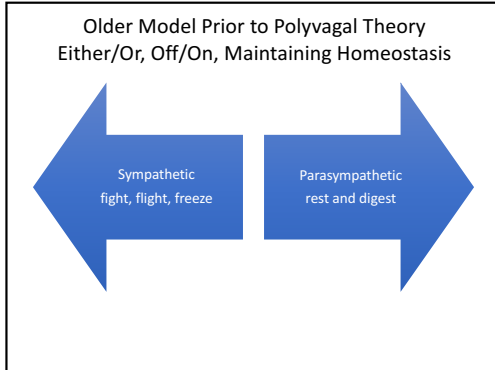
VAGUS NERVE

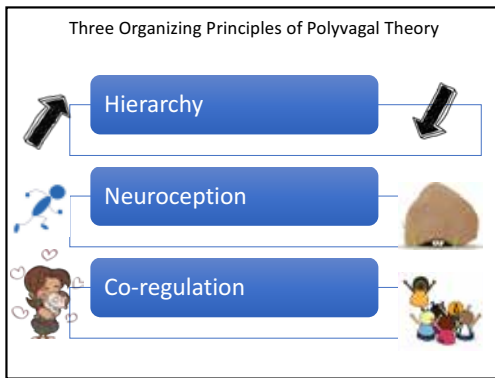
The vagus nerve is the **longest and most complex of the 12 pairs of cranial nerves** that emanate from the brain. It transmits information to or from the surface of the brain to tissues and organs elsewhere in the body.

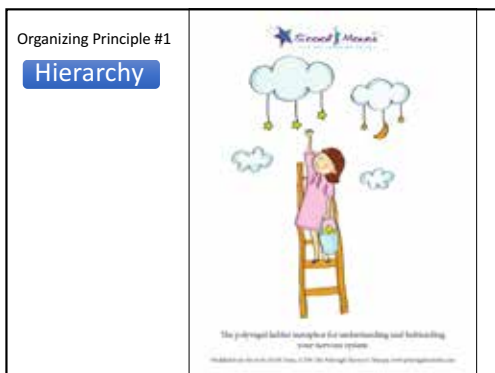
The vagus nerve functions contribute to the autonomic nervous system, which consists of the **parasympathetic and sympathetic parts**. The nerve is responsible for certain sensory activities and motor information for movement within the body. Vagus means generally "to wander" in Latin, aptly describing this nerve.

Image Source: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1377373/>

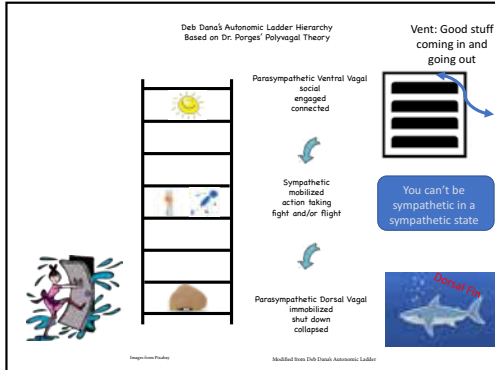
Vagus nerve: Function, stimulation, and further research https://www.medicinenet.com/vagus_nerve/article.htm

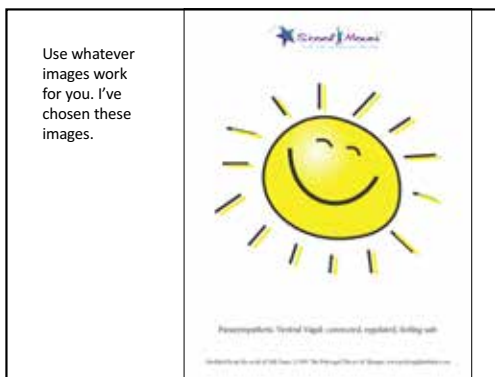






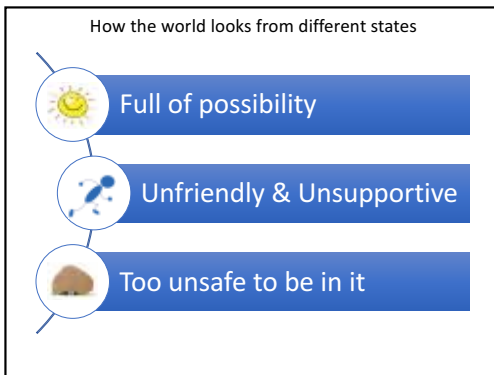
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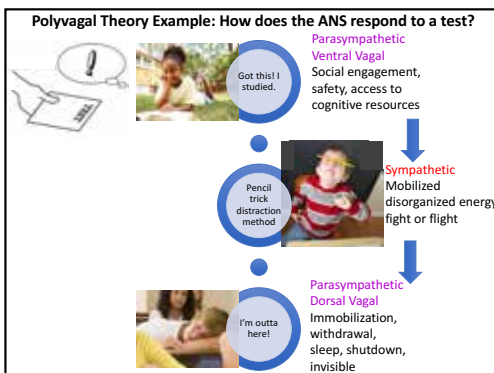












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Observe & Befriend

Where are you on your Autonomic Ladder throughout the day?

Where are your students on their Autonomic Ladder throughout the day?

We are never just in one place on the ladder. We move up and down throughout the day, and so do our students. Being in ventral at all times is unlikely and unrealistic.

Debi Dana's Autonomic Ladder Hierarchy
Based on Dr. Porges' Polyvagal Theory

Parasympathetic Ventral Vagal: social, engaged, connected

Sympathetic: mobilized, action taking, fight and/or flight

Parasympathetic Dorsal Vagal: immobilized, shut down, collapsed

Images from Pankaj

Modified from Debi Dana's Autonomic Ladder

Download

Where am I Right Now Check-In Quadrant Map

Morning
What does my nervous system lead right now in this moment?

Noon
What does my nervous system lead right now in this moment?

Afternoon
What does my nervous system lead right now in this moment?

Evening
What does my nervous system lead right now in this moment?

Images from Pankaj

Activity 1: Quadrant Map modified from the work of Debi Dana

Where am I Right Now Check-In Quadrant Map Example

Morning
What does my nervous system lead right now in this moment?
Ventral Vagal: A sunny day of some blood coffee with a new bagel, prepared an amazing lesson and can't wait to teach it!

Noon
What does my nervous system lead right now in this moment?
Sympathetic: Students have been kept up today. On going for a 15 minute walk around the school on my lunch break to get some fresh air and find some ventral vagal energy.

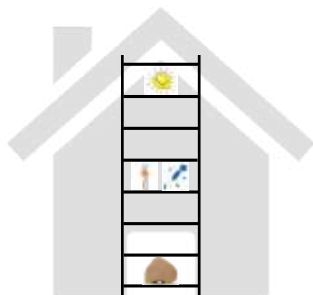
Afternoon
What does my nervous system lead right now in this moment?
Ventral Vagal: The students settled down after lunch. We teaching this is over. I'm excited to take my daughter shopping for a new bagel and spend some time with her.

Evening
What does my nervous system lead right now in this moment?
Sympathetic: Found out unexpected company is arriving tomorrow. So much to do! I need my family to chip in and help.

Images from Pankaj



Where is your home away from your ventral home?



Intertwined or Blended States

Debi Dand's Autonomic Ladder Hierarchy
Based on Dr. Porges' Polyvagal Theory



Parsympathetic Ventral Vagal
social
engaged
connected

Ventral and Sympathetic: PLAY

Sympathetic and Dorsal: FREEZE

Sympathetic
mobilized
action taking
fight and/or flight

Ventral and Dorsal: STILLNESS
WITHOUT SHUTTING DOWN
(the most difficult state to access)

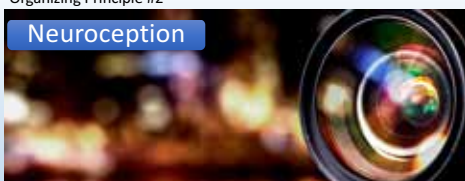
Parsympathetic Dorsal Vagal
immobilized
shut down
collapsed

Image from Porges

Modified from Debi Dand's Autonomic Ladder

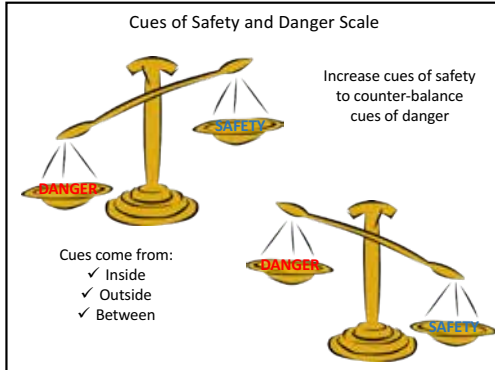
Organizing Principle #2

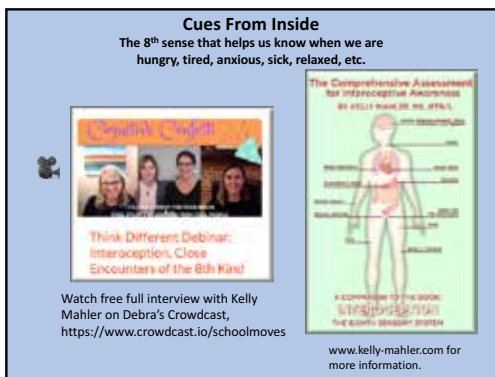
Neuroception

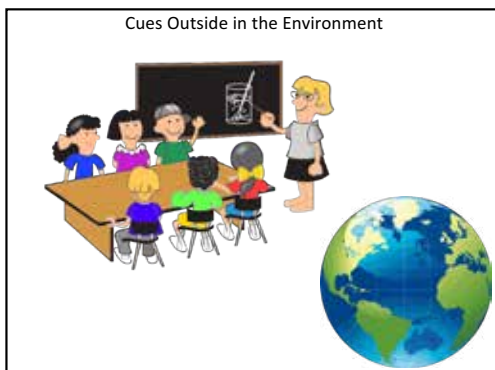


Your built-in bodyguard: Neuroception

- Tracks messages from inside the body while tracking elements from the external environment
- On the lookout for cues of danger and opportunities for connection and safety
- Beneath level of consciousness, directs movement toward and away from people, places, and experiences







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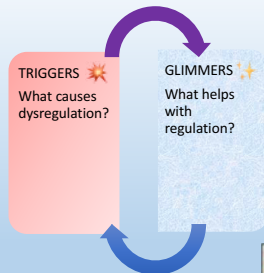


Cues Between Relationships With Others





People sitting in a slumped posture remember more negative events, and those sitting in an upright posture remember more positive events.
(Research by Riskind as cited in Dana, 2018).

What changes our parasympathetic and sympathetic responses?



From: Dana, D. (2018). *The Polyvagal Theory in Therapy*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
Watch a free full hour interview with Deb Dana on Crowdcast <https://www.crowdcast.io/schoolmoves>



Environmental Pathways: Cues of Safety & Danger

Location	Cues of Safety	Cues of Danger
bus	earphones music seat in front	no reserved space; random seating
classroom in morning	schedule for day	substitute; unplanned day
recess	directed plan for play	no plan; free for all
lunch	eating at end of table	no designated place to eat
PE	spot to stand on & activity plan	random activity
computer lab	assigned seating on end	random seating
after school care	Planned activity; quiet space	random activity; no option for quieting

From the work of Deb Dana, MEd, PhD, The Polyvagal Theory in Therapy




Ventral Anchors: What tethers us to ventral through these uncharted waters?



Discover and write down your anchors



Sighs are a natural language of the heart.
-Thomas Shadwell

 Ventral Vagal Anchor Map

WHO	WHAT
WHERE	WHEN

Who: List the people in your life who make you feel safe and welcome. Pets included.
You can include your life in spiritual places or people who are no longer alive.
What: List the small things you do to yourself, alone, or bring joy in the moment.
Where: List the physical spaces around you where you feel ventral-legal energy and safety in your home, community, or work place.
When: List the moments in your life when you've felt anchored to ventral-legal energy.

Image by Susan Davidson from Pixabay Activity 4 "Ventral Vagal Anchor Map" modified from the work of Deb Davis



What is one thing today that kept you at the top of your ladder? Draw or write in the box.

Do a collective activity at the end of the day where everyone shares their one thing.

Name _____

Organizing Principle #3

Co-regulation

There is a biological imperative for co-regulation.
Dr. Stephen Porges

We are always regulating with experiences and others we carry within us, with our outside environment, and the relationships between us and others. Think of it as **interactive regulation**.

This allows us to retune our nervous systems. We can loan our regulated nervous systems to others who need more regulation.

It's the micromoments that do most retuning.

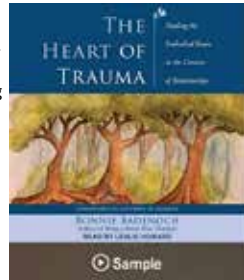
- ❖ A smile
- ❖ Another person picking up your dropped pencil
- ❖ Opening the door for someone
- ❖ Sitting quietly next to someone who is upset, not fixing
- ❖ Pausing to look out the window at nature
- ❖ Pausing to watch a three minute nature video
- ❖ A sigh
- ❖ A safe hug
- ❖ A little note expressing gratitude
- ❖ A happy face on a worksheet



Self-regulation is a myth.

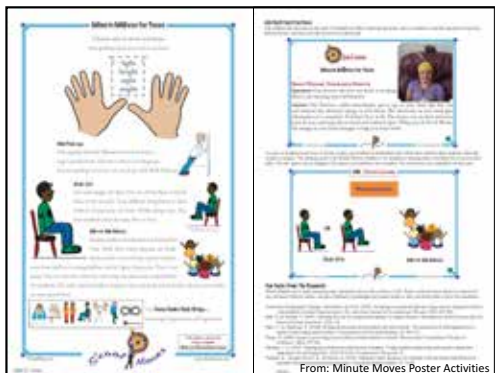
We are always regulating
with others and our
environment.

Bonnie Badenoch



Co-regulation with Others Through Minute Moves







Wall Push-up Video



Create opportunities for co-regulation
and connection



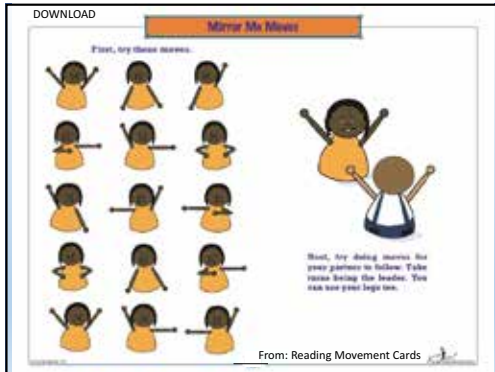
From: Foundation Moves Poster Activities

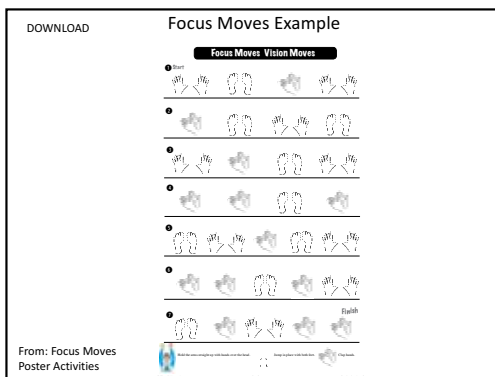
The Symbiotic Relationship Between Synchronized Movement
and Co-regulation

"A substantial body of research shows that behavioral synchrony—coordinating our actions, including our physical movements, so that they are like the actions of others—primes us for what we might call cognitive synchrony: multiple people thinking together efficiently and effectively."

"Synchrony sends a tangible signal to others that we are open to cooperation, as well as capable of cooperation. Synchronized movement acts as an invitation to work together, along with an assurance that such work will be productive."

From *The Extended Mind: The Power of Thinking Outside the Brain*
by Annie Murphy Paul









Power Up! Moves Example







Move Groove

1 cat	bat
2 sat	rat
3 hat	mat

From: Academic Coaching Manual

Power Up! Moves Example

Move Groove

	cat	bat	
	sat	rat	
	hat	mat	

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The Three C's of Polyvagal Theory

Choice

Context

Connection

The opposite of connection is loneliness.

"Loneliness is the great masquerader. It can appear as anger, sadness, and a host of distressing emotional states. It also can attach itself to other sources of those emotions, exacerbating the efforts of trauma and intensifying pain while preventing healing."

From the book Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World by Vivek H. Murthy, MD, 19th Surgeon General of the United States

Easing Loneliness Through Connection

- Service
- Helping others
- Working on a common goal

1


Research on trauma shows again and again...a child only needs one person who sees them to totally change the trajectory of their lives.

Will you be their one person?

4 Additional Ways to Connect

Join from our home page at www.schoolmoves.com

1. Sign up for our monthly newsletter
2. Subscribe to YouTube Debra Em TV
YouTube: School Moves or S'cool Moves
3. Free Monthly "Debinars"
Interviews with leaders in our fields and master classes
4. Free Mighty Network Private Discussion Community (no ads, no social media black hole, everyone sees every post)
<https://school-moves.mn.co/>





Together we can negotiate these uncharted waters and
bring ventral energy to

OURSELVES, FAMILIES, STUDENTS & STAFF

Thank you for
attending and for all
you do for children
every day!