

# POLYVAGAL THEORY

**Too Much Energy**

FIGHT OR FLIGHT

**Survival Mode**

**SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM**  
(MOBILIZATION)

**HYPERAROUSAL**

- can't register consequences

RAGE  
PANIC  
FEAR

yelling • defensive • pacing • hyperalert  
run away • uncomfortable

**I DON'T CARE**

## ↑ **DYSREGULATION** ↓

**Optimal Energy**

COMMUNICATION | CONNECTION

SAFE

**Self-Control**

**PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM:**  
VENTRAL VAGAL  
(SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT & CONNECTION)

**WINDOW of TOLERANCE**  
(REGULATION)

- consider consequences
- focus
- logic
- reason
- problem solve
- curious

FEEL FEELINGS  
LOVE • JOY • PEACE  
PATIENCE • KINDNESS  
GENTLENESS

aware of:  
self • time • space • others

**RELATIONSHIPS**

**RESILIENCE**

## ↓ **DYSREGULATION**

**Lack of Energy**

FREEZE

**Survival Mode**

**PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM:**  
DORSAL VAGAL  
(IMMOBILIZATION)

**HYPOAROUSAL**

- blank
- check-out
- trance
- long pause
- feel far away

FLAT AFFECT  
NO FEELING  
NUMB

exhausted • slow • tired • enduring

**DISSOCIATION**

**I GIVE UP**

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