

(If you don't have pen and paper handy, now is the time to get some)

Welcome to Whole Brain Relationships

Mile Hi
Church
July 2022

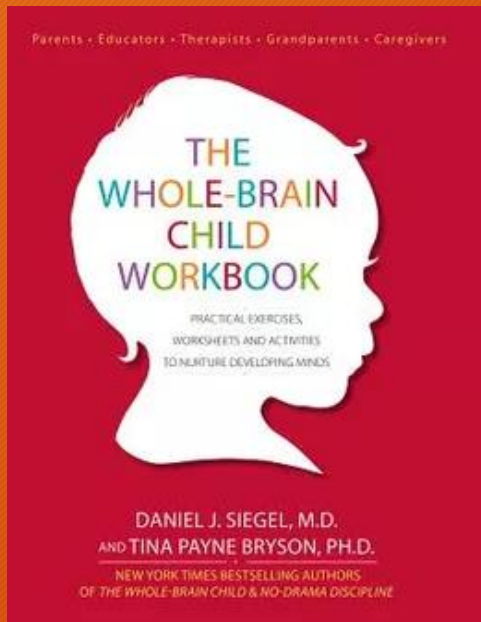
With Nick Lawrence, MA
Parent Educator
Family Resiliency Coach
Emotional Freedom Technique Practitioner



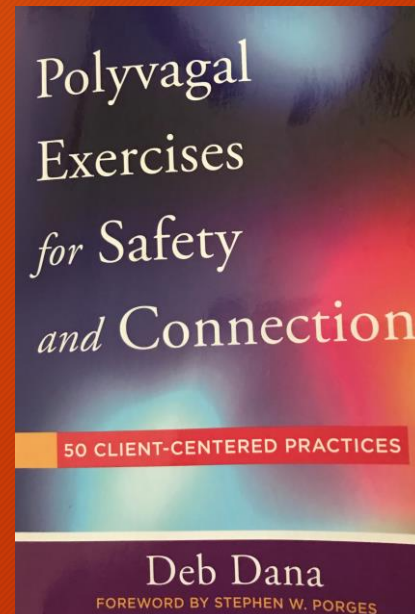
Or as I call it,
the MAGIC
WAND of
understanding
“Why people do
what they do”

This workshop is the intersection of:

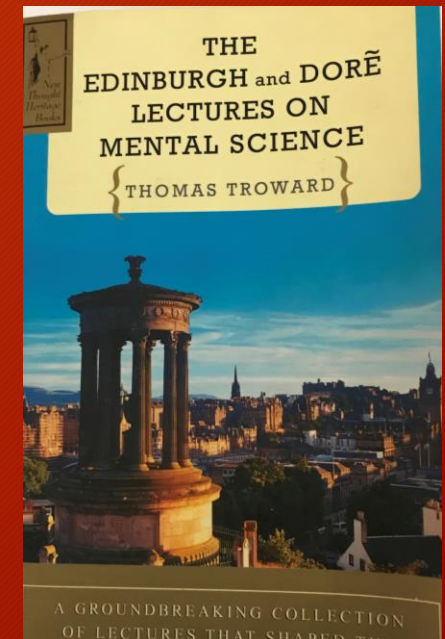
The Whole Brain Parenting Workbook by Dr. Daniel Siegel & Tina Bryson, PhD



Polyvagal Exercises for Safety and Connection by Deb Dana



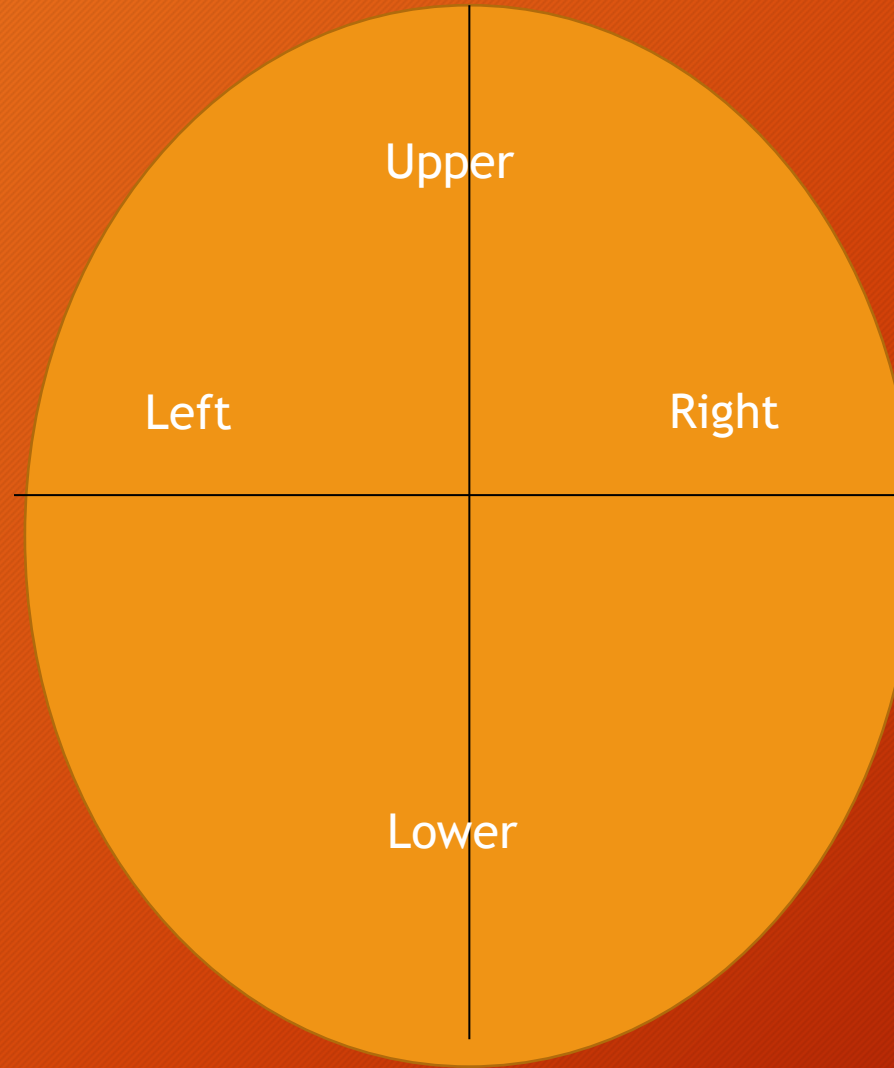
The Edinburgh and Dore Lectures on Mental Science by Thomas Troward



Today we will be....

- Learning two basic skills of Whole Brain Relationships (“Connect and Redirect” and “Name it to Tame it”)
- Connecting these skills to how our nervous system works and how it applies to relationships, focusing on Rest and Digest
- Recognizing the Indwelling of Spirit in our bodies, and noticing the relationship between our bodies and our Spirit
- Doing some self-reflection
- Thinking and writing about some of our relationship experiences (and hopefully get some good laughs!)
- Sharing our insights

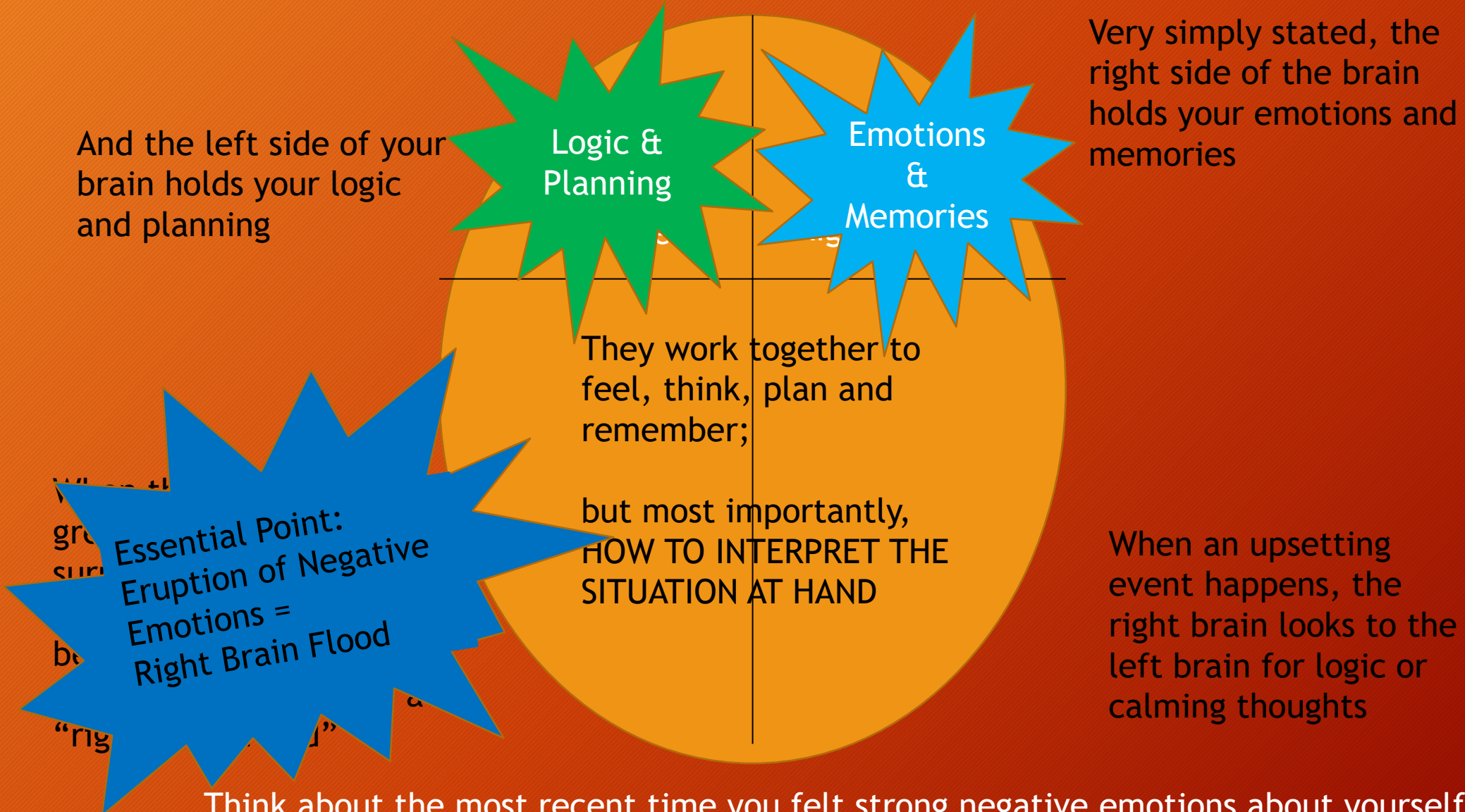
This is a representation of a human face/head; Our brain is above the horizontal line and demonstrates an upper and lower brain. The vertical line shows both our right and left brain as well as our brain stem.



Our brains are amazing and do so many things! Our right and left sides work together as do the upper and lower parts

Your job is to recognize what each part does and how to respond when a certain part has been activated!
How do you do this?
Notice what is happening!

For the two skills we will be learning, we will focus on the function and relationship between the right and left sides of the brain



Some of us have repeating patterns in our family or work relationships where fights or other discord happens with difficulty resolving issues.

Many people feel “invisible”, “ignored”, “uncared for” by their closest relatives! Even when the relative swears they love and care about them

We can even think, “She is just a hot-head”, or “He is just so needy,” **negatively defining** one of our family members (or friend, colleague or SELF!!!).

Human brains like repetition; in fact, this is how our beliefs are made! Over time, through our circumstances and conditions, we develop beliefs about our selves, others, and life itself, all showing up in the demonstrations in our lives.

We become used to emotional flooding as a “normalized event” or **expect** certain people to react in **predictable** ways, often exhibiting negative emotions. (**Remember this!!!)

This kind of patterning can cause shame, self-doubt and very troubling thoughts and experiences for the entire family; especially for the one “having the tantrum” (because they often get blamed for the entire event). Are any of you the “difficult one” in your family? Welcome to the club!!!

This is the perfect place to apply some of our CSL teachings on Demonstrations, Mental Equivalents and 5-step prayer!

What kind of fruit are we bearing in our most important relationships?

The FIRST concept and step is recognizing how often you and your family members go into

“Thrive” mode vs “Survive” mode

Take a moment to feel what each feels like

What would be the demonstrations if you were in THRIVE MODE?

What would be the demonstrations if you were in SURVIVE MODE?

Let's all step into Thrive mode by placing your feet flat on the floor and breathing in through your nose to the count of 3 and exhaling through your mouth, like you are blowing through a straw, to the count of 6

Imagine your chest is like a balloon filling with helium on the breath in, then pause, and then let the balloon go, letting it fly around the room until it is completely out of air, then pause and breath in again

Now this next time as you breathe in, you hear the sound of your feet crunching on a forest path, and your nostrils are filled with the scent of the pine trees surrounding you. You see an opening and the vivid blue/green color of a lake expanding before you. You reach the edge of the lake, with trees all around and mountains in the distance. You are filled with awe and deeply appreciating the bounty of nature all around you

With your mind's eye, do an internal body scan and notice the qualities of how you feel inside

We are looking for qualities, for example, if you feel "Happy" try to describe the feeling tone in qualities, like "Light" or "Energized" or "Buoyant"

Take a moment to write down what it feels like for you to be in THRIVE mode

Many people report things like:

A strong sense of freedom

Lightness of Being

Energized

Bubbly inside

Calm

Centered

Now bring that sense of THRIVE mode with you and imagine you are at home or at work, full of THRIVE, and in the background, you hear an argument or confrontation from a close colleague or loved one. Notice what is happening inside of you. Not only are they intense and loud, they are coming closer to you. You know they are headed right to you. Notice how your inner sensations change, if at all, as you know you are soon going to be in the middle of this event. They are doing what they do that gets under your skin.

Take a moment to write down what it feels like for you to be near or in SURVIVE mode

Many people report things like:

Feeling trapped

Tightness in the chest

Heaviness

Shorter breathing/ shortness of breath

Yucky pit-in-the-stomach feeling

My question to you is this: did we actually go to the forest? No

Did an all-out tantrum just happen? I hope not!

Our THOUGHTS affected our FEELINGS which STIMULATED our AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM (ANS), starting with our Vagus Nerve!

How we *respond* is the demonstration of where our ANS is in any given moment

Essential noticing: How do you typically respond to your people when they are upset (i.e., their right-brain is FLOODED?) Write this down.

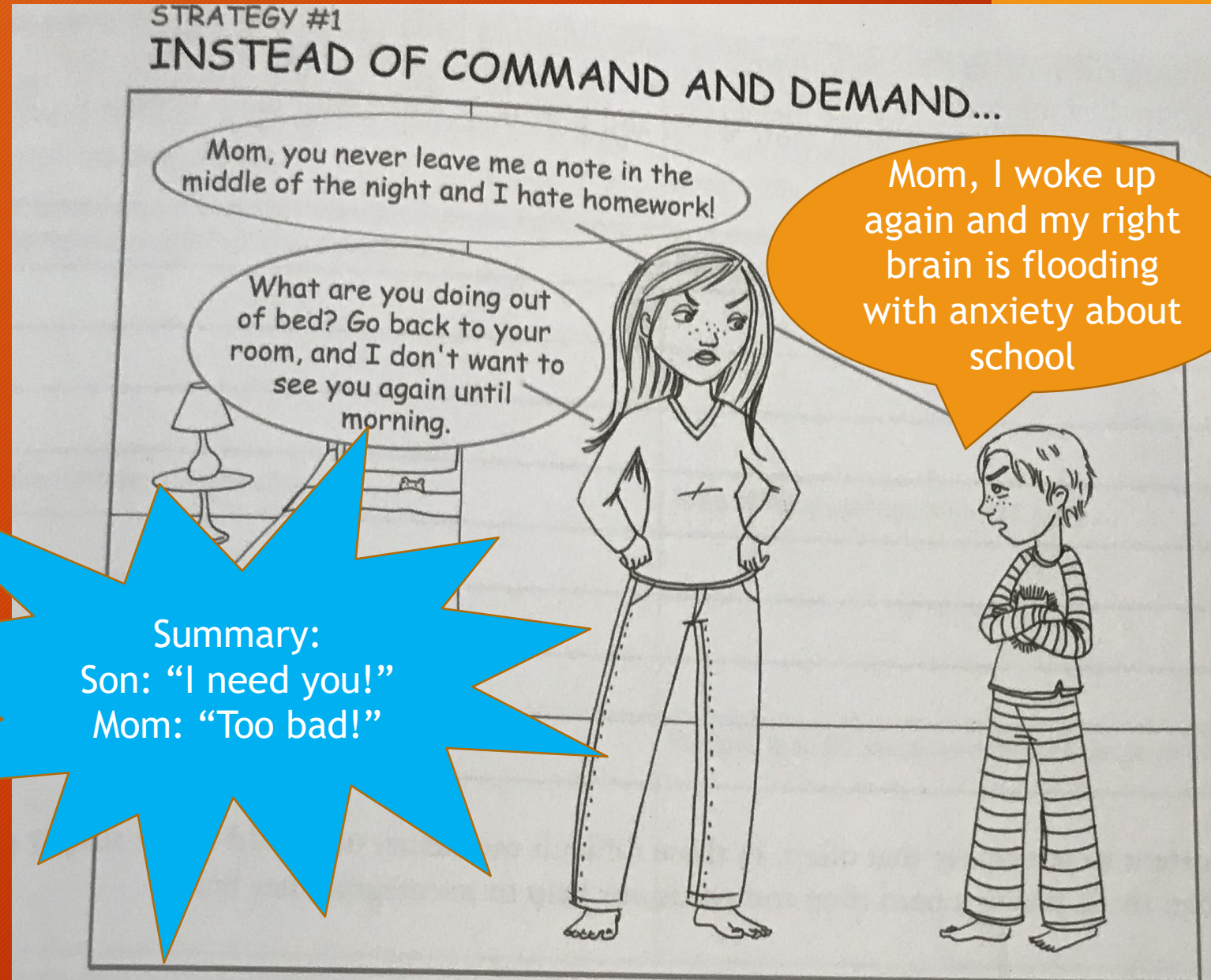
Because we often see “tantrums” and other intense outbursts as “annoying”, “immature”, or other judgmental opinions, we often respond to right brain floods with our left-brain and just focus on facts and solutions.

Instead, we must view the eruption of negative emotions as a **call for help** because the person has actually lost connection with their own ability to apply logic to their situation. This can be *really scary and unnerving* for the upset person. This is when our compassion is needed most.

Whole Brain Strategy #1: Look through the lens of Thrive vs Survive

Instead of Command and Demand

If you don't think about the call for help you might think he is calling you a bad parent or pointing out one of your flaws. This can really hurt. If you get defensive you are missing the point (and are going into Survive mode)



Try Connect and Redirect

Notice how she doesn't take the bait but **validates** his feelings and concerns.

Validation= Connection
"I get frustrated too"

Once you connect, the upset person can be redirected

Eruptions respond to connection and floods recede the fastest when connection is achieved



Recall a time you were upset and went to someone for support. Did you receive connection or redirection? Jonny

Apply this to your life. In the second cartoon, the mom uses her left brain, logic, to notice her son is having a right brain flood, then uses her right brain to connect followed by her left brain to redirect. In the first cartoon, both of them were heading into in a right brain flood.

I am bad

I feel bad

Why do I feel so bad? Oh! My right brain is flooding, no wonder I feel bad!

What if we apply each of these to the mother and child?

(The) “I am” (is) fine, but my human brain needs time to reset; I know I will feel better soon!

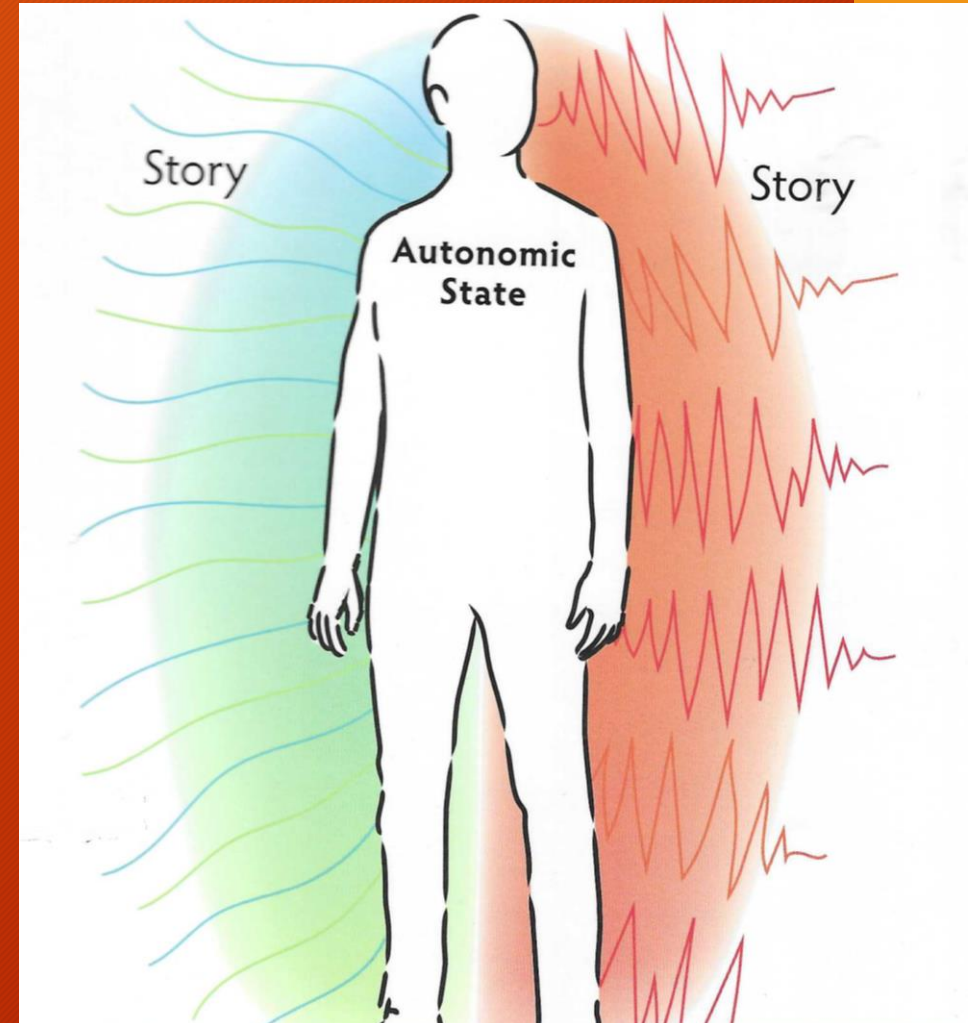
Each statement creates a belief system that our subconscious will play out in our lives; noticing our deep reactions to stress or negative emotions help us redirect our thinking and helps us change our demonstrations, because our deepest beliefs about love and life are able to change as we shift perspective

The Polyvagal Theory defines the ways our nervous system reacts to inner and outer sensations and messages without the thinking part of the brain.

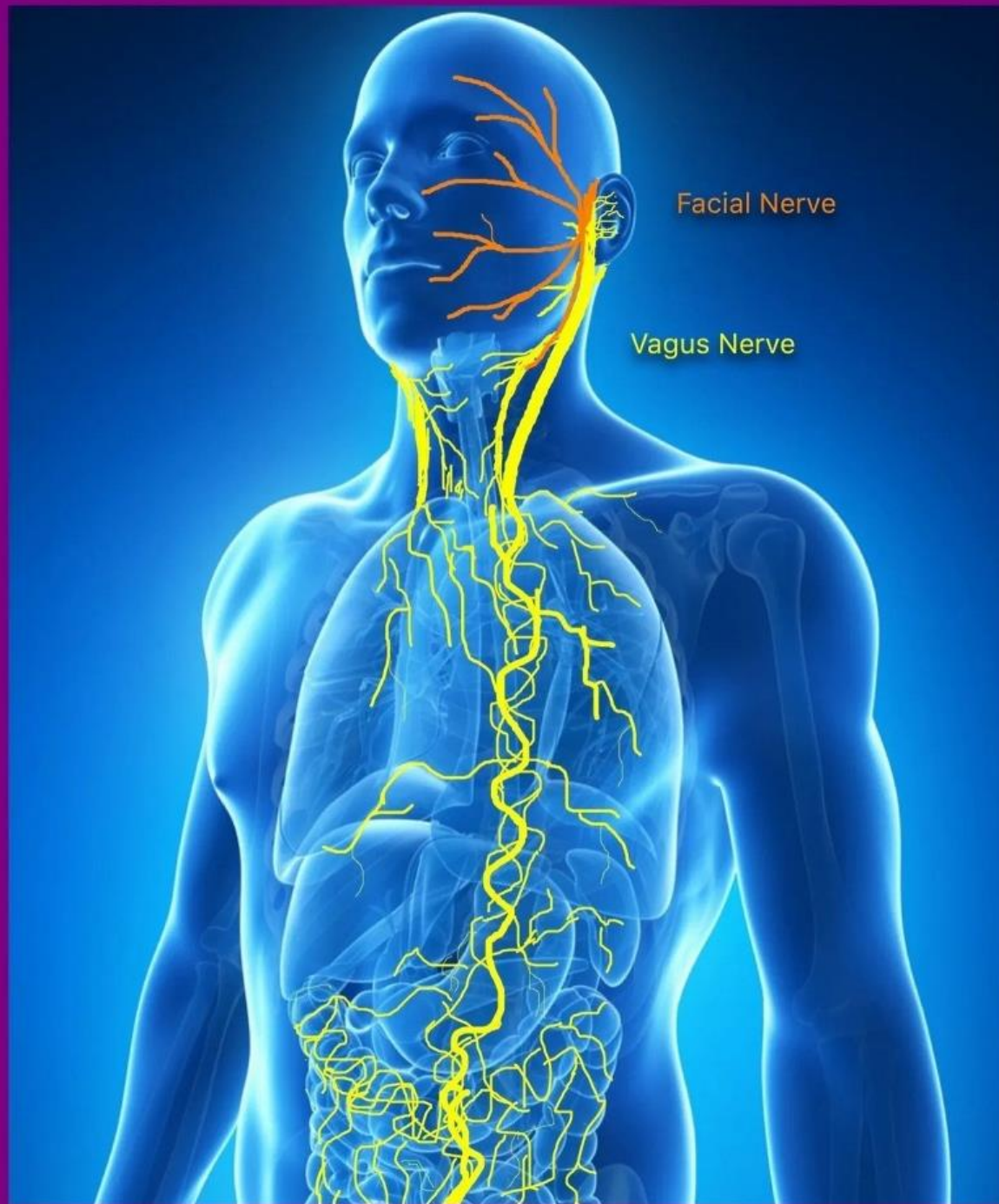
The word “Vagal” comes from the Vagus Nerve

It greatly impacts the human body and is the chief influencer of the Gut-Brain axis (how neural information influences body responses).

Look at this picture; compare it to the meditation exercise we did and to the cartoon we analyzed



The Vagus Nerve



Troward discusses how the Vagus nerve is where the nerves change their coating and go from indwelling mind information to human physical expression; i.e. the intersection of mind and body

Involuntary

“Steady Freddy”

God Brain

Longevity

Digestion

Repair

Breathing

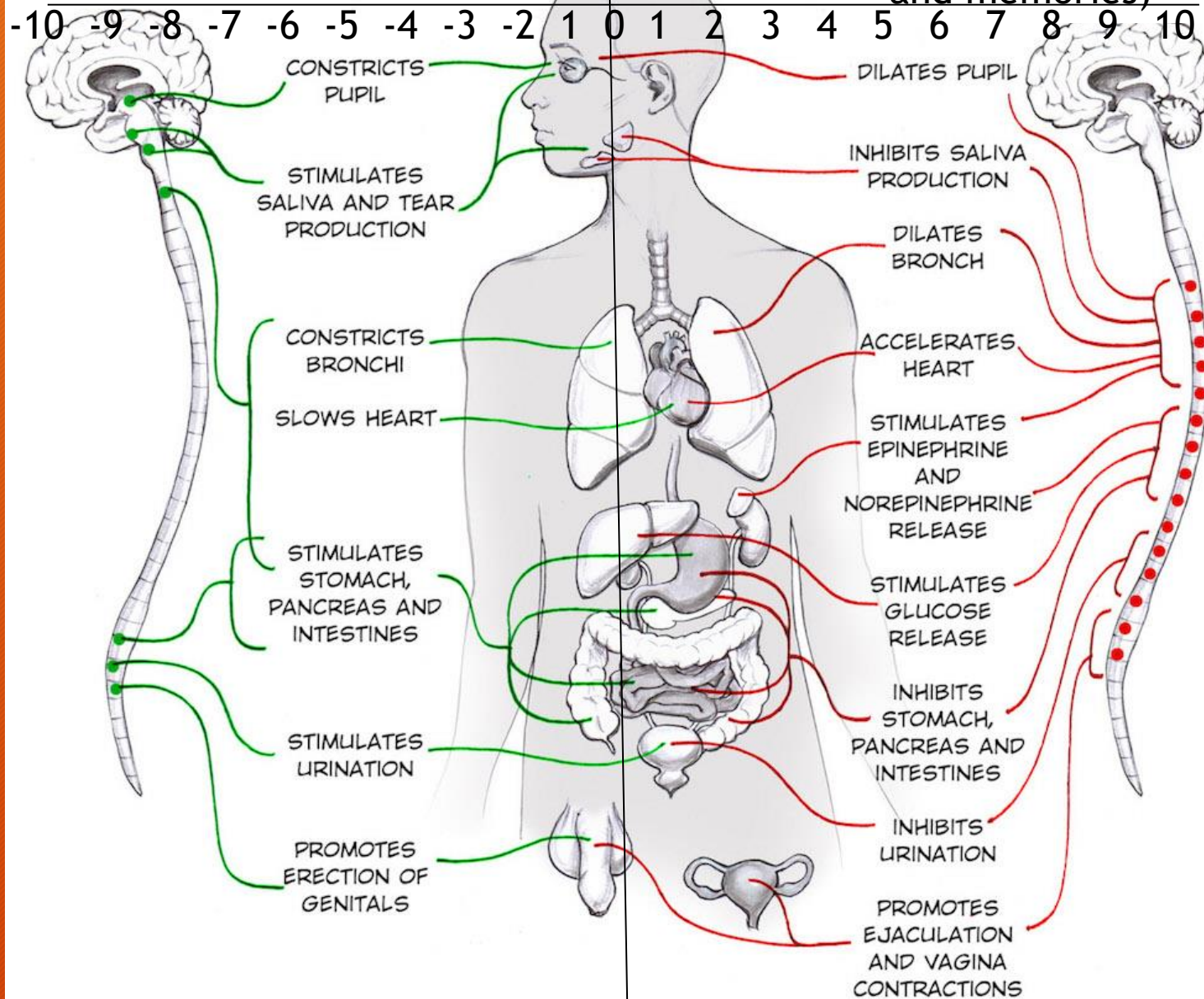
Heart Beating

The Buddha in
Repose

Our intended
State of Being

3-6 breathing!

Rest and Digest
(Left brain= logic
and planning)



Voluntary

Midnight,
Noon, Dusk
and Dawn

“Once in a While”

Human Brain

Quick bursts of
intense energy to
deal with danger or
perceived danger;
not intended as a
State of Being

Give
yourself a
range

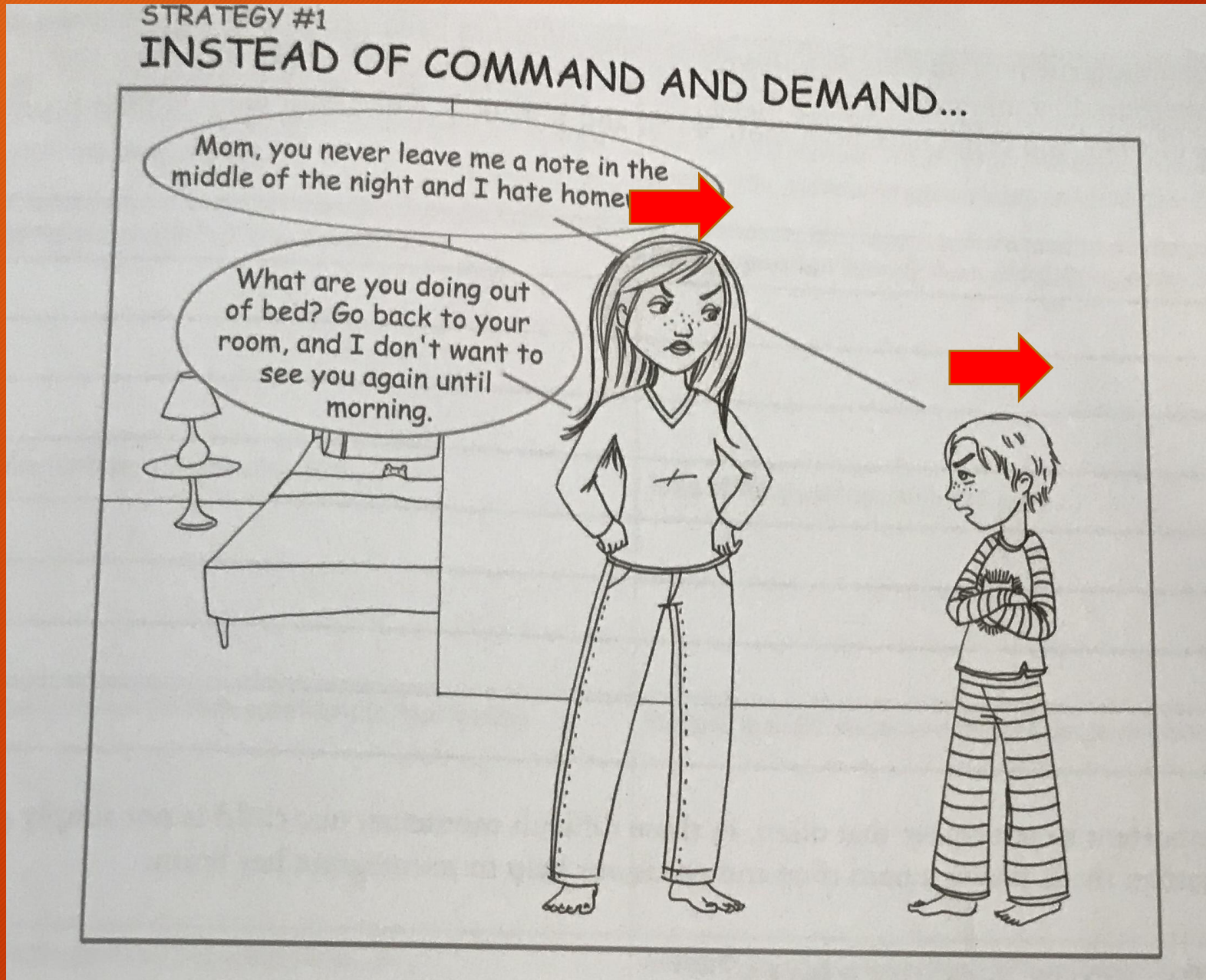
The FACT IS when you are in THRIVE MODE so is everyone else!

BUTwhen you are in SURVIVE MODE, SO IS EVERYONE ELSE!!!

Whole Brain Strategy #1

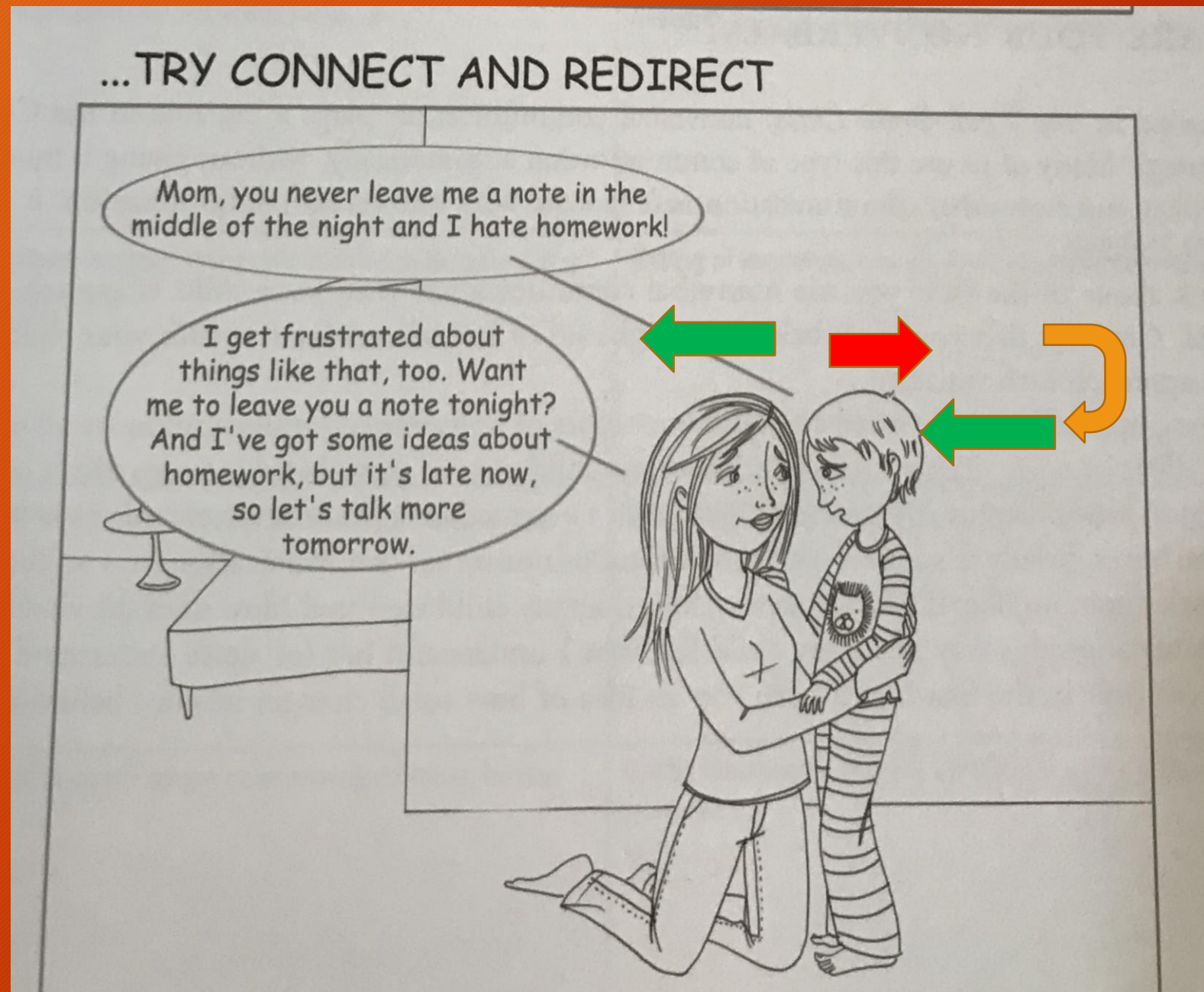
Instead of Command and Demand

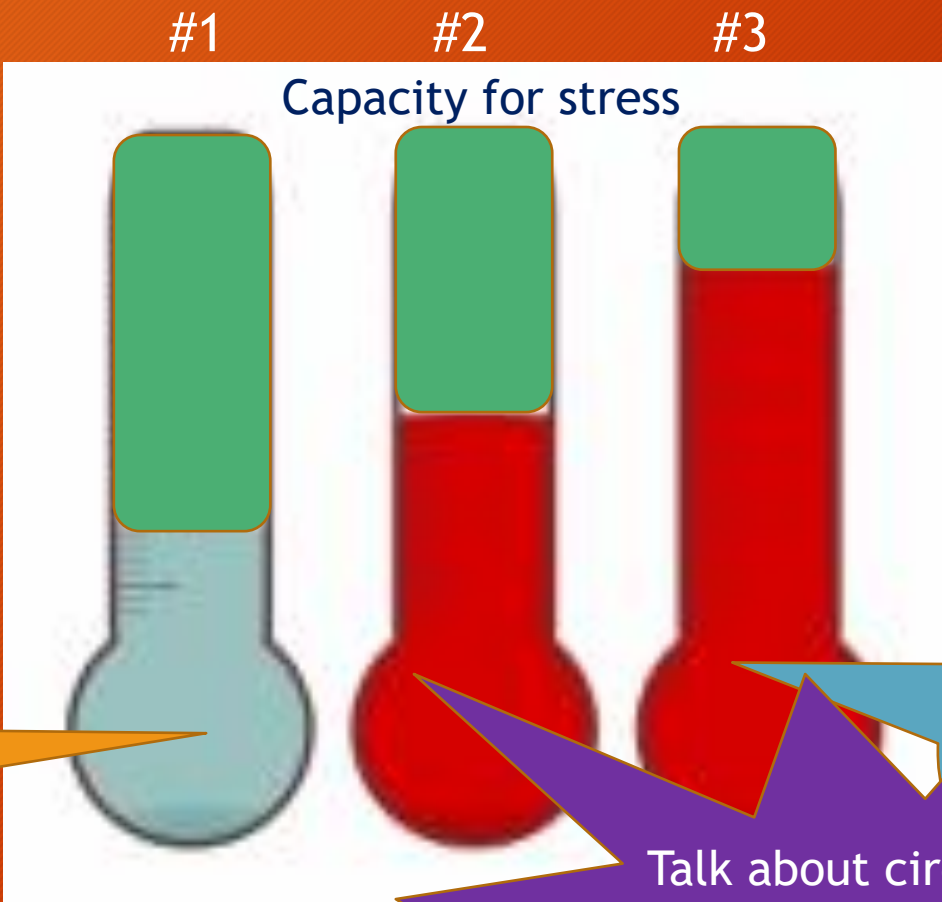
Where are each of them on the number line, 0 to +10, on their way toward Fight, flight or freeze?



Try Connect and Redirect

Where are each of them on the number line, 0 to -10, on their way to Rest and Digest?





Baby #3's turn
into adult #3's
with little
capacity for
anyone's stress
including their
own!

I have value.
My longings and
discontents are
important. Life
is FOR me

Why do babies cry?
Are we taught to cry?
What we learn about crying...

I'm not ok!
Oh good, you
are here!
I'm ok!!!
Crying is a
great tool!

I'm not ok!
I'm not ok!
I'm not ok!
Are you
there?
I'm
CRYING!!

Talk about circumstances
and conditioning
impacting our point of
view about life!

this is
useful

I have no
value. My
longings and
discontents are
important.
I AM NOT

Co-regulation

Now to be really good at Whole Brain Relationships, you must first focus on your own reactions, i.e., your own thinking when under stress. This is the MAGIC WAND I mentioned on the introduction page of today's workshop: noticing your own reactions

This is where Whole Brain Relationships meets CSL principles and practices and the most current understanding of the human nervous system. We are spiritual beings managing human nervous systems!

Our thinking about negative emotions, i.e. *“Stop acting like a baby!”* (Criticism) is the link to changing our frustrating experiences into ones of compassion and love.

This is the cry for help and we need to respond by NOTICING, “Wow! My person is really upset!” EVERY HUMAN GETS UPSET!

When we have a right brain flood, we are operating in Fight or Flight, which is part of the Autonomic Nervous System and something that Thomas Troward discusses in detail as the location of the intersection of the God Brain and Human Brain (p.96)

If we get mad at someone who is in Fight or Flight, we are joining them in Fight or Flight instead of helping them return to our natural State of Being of Rest and Digest

Whole Brain Strategy #2

INSTEAD OF DISMISS AND DENY...



Ever have someone escalate and get more upset when you were trying to help them feel better?

It is likely that you went into Dismiss and Deny in attempt to distract them or point out how illogical the situation is

1. Connect
2. Redirect

Even though Mom is not escalating herself, she is missing the connection

Name it to Tame it!

1. Connect: "That can hurt!!"
2. Name it to Tame it

It is tempting to brush things off when they seem small to us

You can tell if you are connecting by how the upset person is responding

If they are starting to calm down, your connection is working

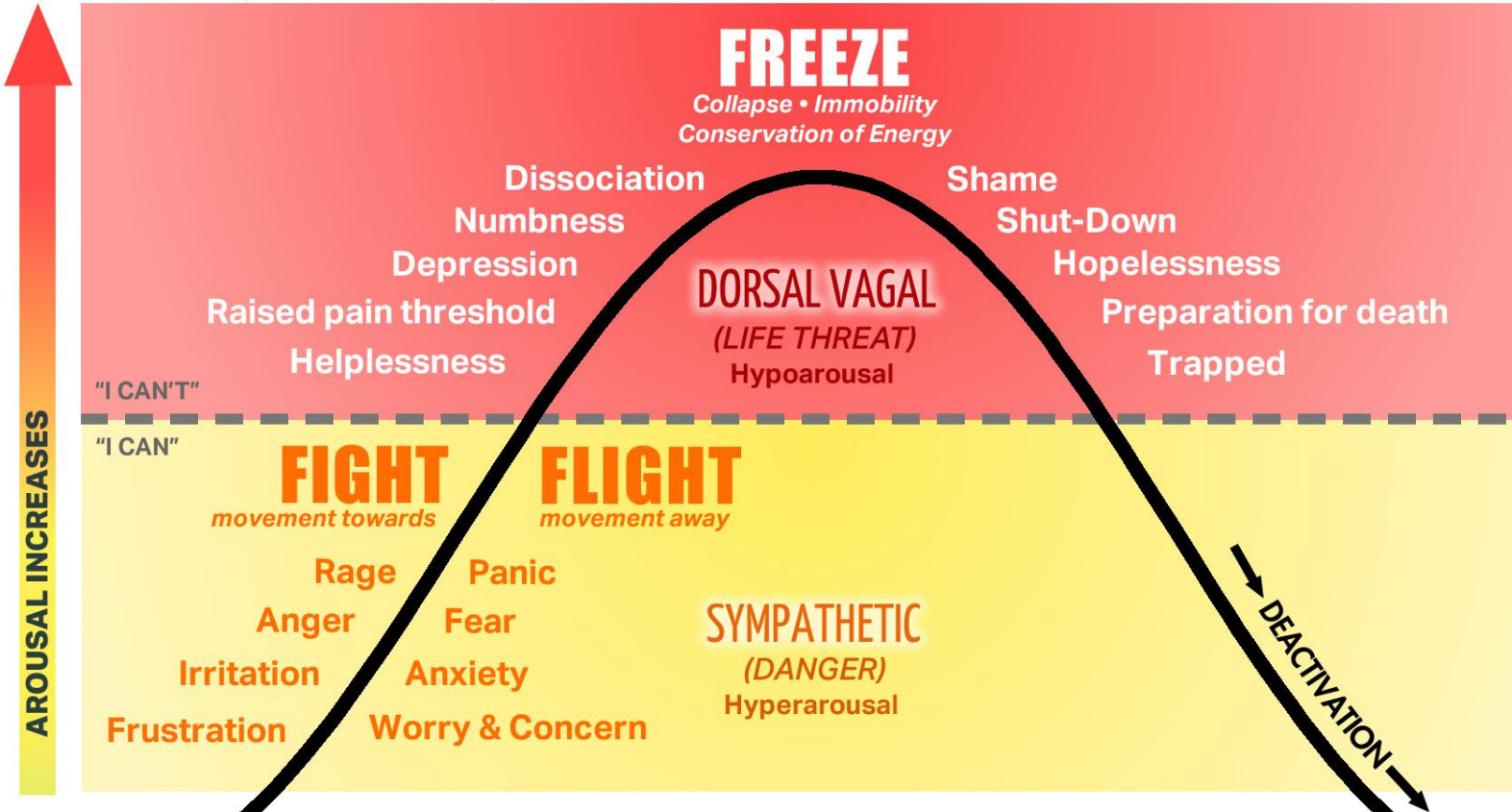
If they escalate, check your own number line state to be sure you aren't as or more upset than they are!



POLYVAGAL CHART

Name it to Tame it!

The nervous system with a neuroception of threat:



PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

DORSAL VAGAL COMPLEX

Increases

Fuel storage & insulin activity • Immobilization behavior (with fear)
Endorphins that help numb and raise the pain threshold
Conservation of metabolic resources

Decreases

Heart Rate • Blood Pressure • Temperature • Muscle Tone
Facial Expressions & Eye Contact • Depth of Breath • Social Behavior
Attunement to Human Voice • Sexual Responses • Immune Response

SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

Increases

Blood Pressure • Heart Rate • Fuel Availability • Adrenaline
Oxygen Circulation to Vital Organs • Blood Clotting • Pupil Size
Dilation of Bronchi • Defensive Responses

Decreases

Fuel Storage • Insulin Activity • Digestion • Salivation
Relational Ability • Immune Response

The nervous system with a neuroception of safety:



PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

VENTRAL VAGAL COMPLEX

Increases

Digestion • Intestinal Motility • Resistance to Infection
Immune Response • Rest and Recuperation • Health & Vitality
Circulation to non-vital organs (skin, extremities)
Oxytocin (neuromodulator involved in social bonds that allows immobility without fear) • Ability to Relate and Connect
Movement in eyes and head turning • Prosody in voice • Breath

Decreases

Defensive Responses

“Steady Freddy”

God Brain

Longevity

Digestion

Repair

Breathing

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The Buddha in
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Our intended
State of Being

Rest and Digest
(Left brain= logic
and planning)

AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

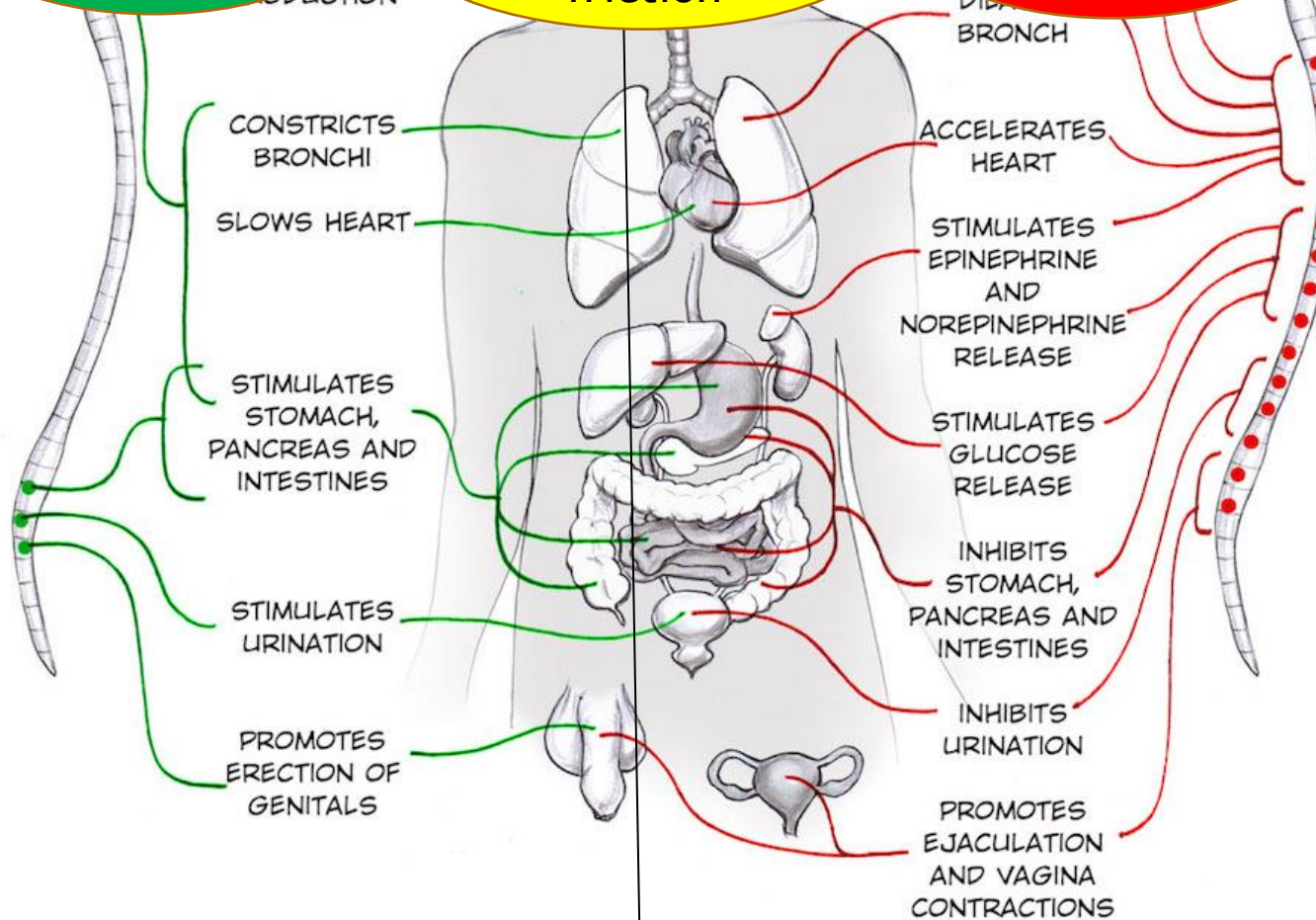
Fight, flight or
freeze (Right
brain= emotions
and memories)



Connection

Moving toward
connection or
friction

Friction/
Shut Down



“Once in a While”

Human Brain

Quick bursts of
intense energy to
deal with danger or
perceived danger;
not intended as a
State of Being

“Steady Freddy”

God Brain

Longevity

Digestion

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Our intended
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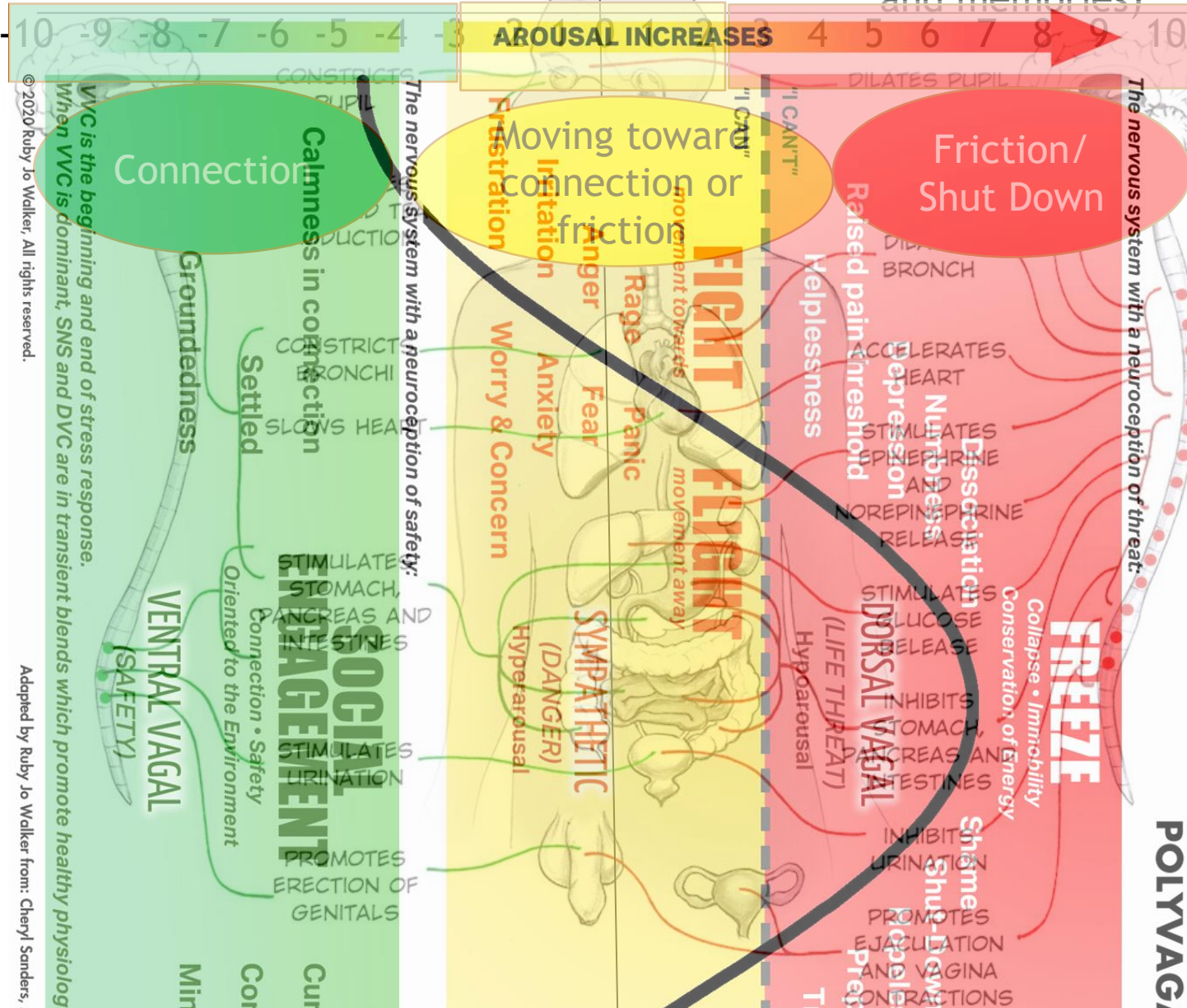
Rest and Digest
(Left brain= logic
and planning)

AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

Fight, flight or
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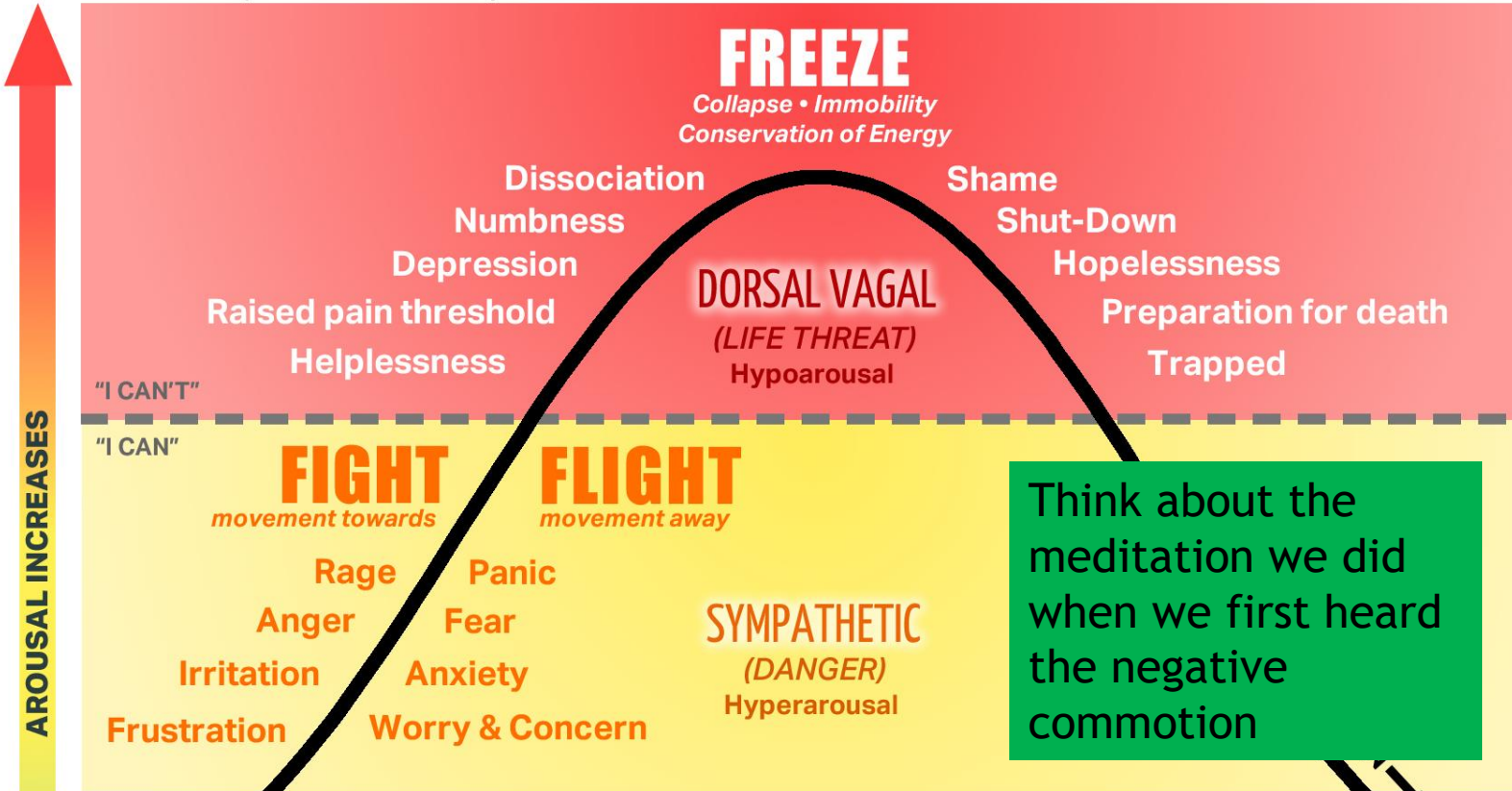
Everyone moves up
and down this line
everyday but some
people stay or even
live in
Fight/Flight/Freeze

Our internal
resources are not
meant for this

POLYVAGAL CHART

Name it to Tame it!

The nervous system with a neuroception of threat:



PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

DORSAL VAGAL COMPLEX

Increases

Fuel storage & insulin activity • Immobilization behavior (with fear)
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Decreases

Heart Rate • Blood Pressure • Temperature • Muscle Tone
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SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

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Blood Pressure • Heart Rate • Fuel Availability • Adrenaline
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The nervous system with a neuroception of safety:



PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

VENTRAL VAGAL COMPLEX

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Digestion • Intestinal Motility • Resistance to Infection
Immune Response • Rest and Recuperation • Health & Vitality
Circulation to non-vital organs (skin, extremities)
Oxytocin (neuromodulator involved in social bonds that allows immobility without fear) • Ability to Relate and Connect
Movement in eyes and head turning • Prosody in voice • Breath

Decreases

Defensive Responses

Thank you for attending!
Summary

Skills:

- Connect and Redirect
- Name it to Tame it

Awareness of:

- Where are you at any given time on the Autonomic Nervous System Number Line?
- Where are you when you wake up?
- What happens during the day that ratchets you up to the right?
- When and how do you come back to Rest and Digest, if at all?
- Use chart to better notice what feeling states you are in to Connect with God and Redirect yourself into Rest and Digest

Practice:

- Set a limit for yourself on how far to the right (into FFF) you are willing to go
- Notice when you are past that point and focus on returning to Rest and Digest
- Utilize 3-6 breathing to move from FFF to Rest and Digest
 - Focus on things that bring you joy while doing this breathwork
 - Joy is the most direct route to Rest and Digest
 - We will end the workshop with a few rounds of 3-6 breathing