

Stress and Trauma-Informed Care

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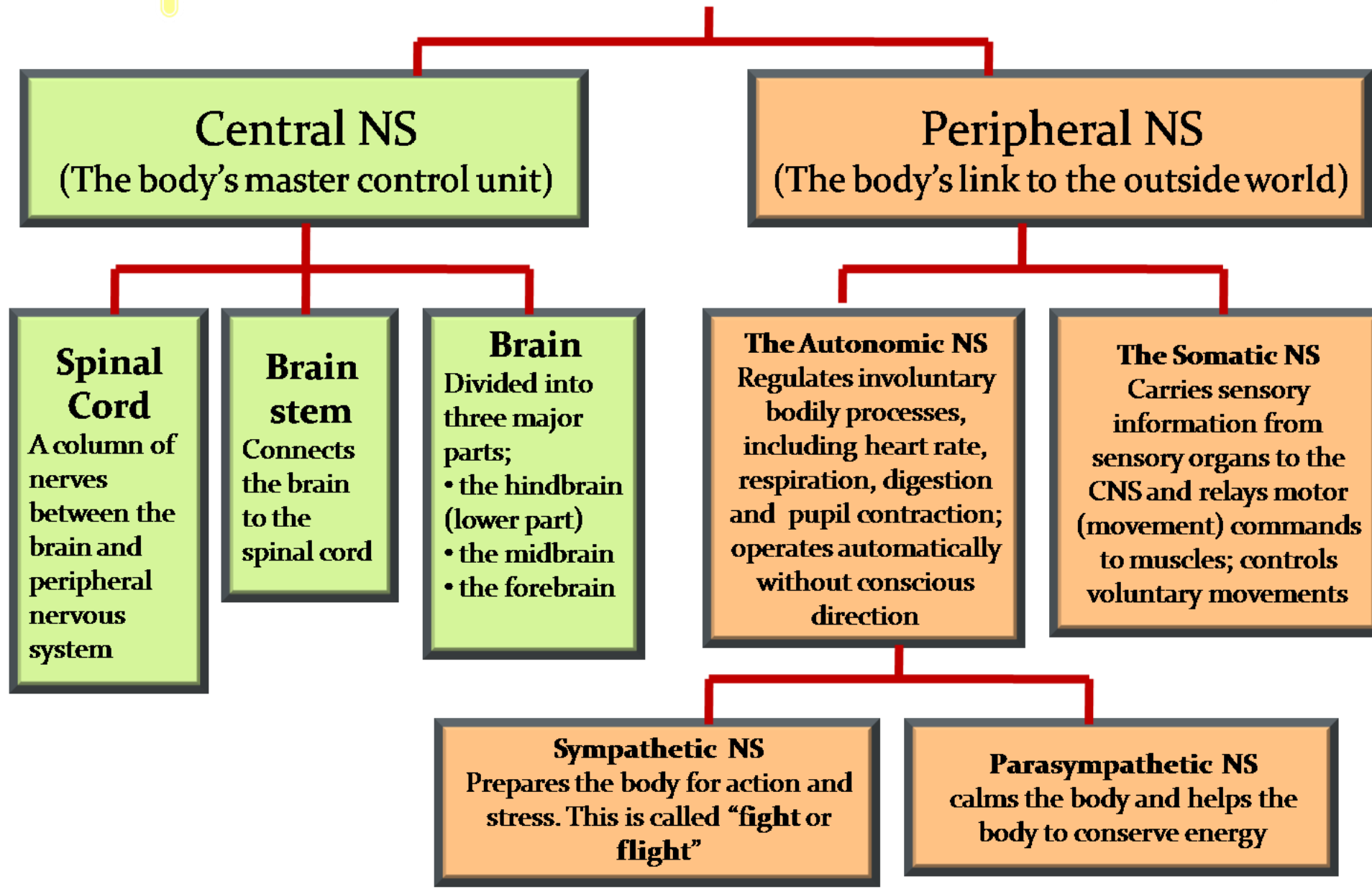


The Brain Story

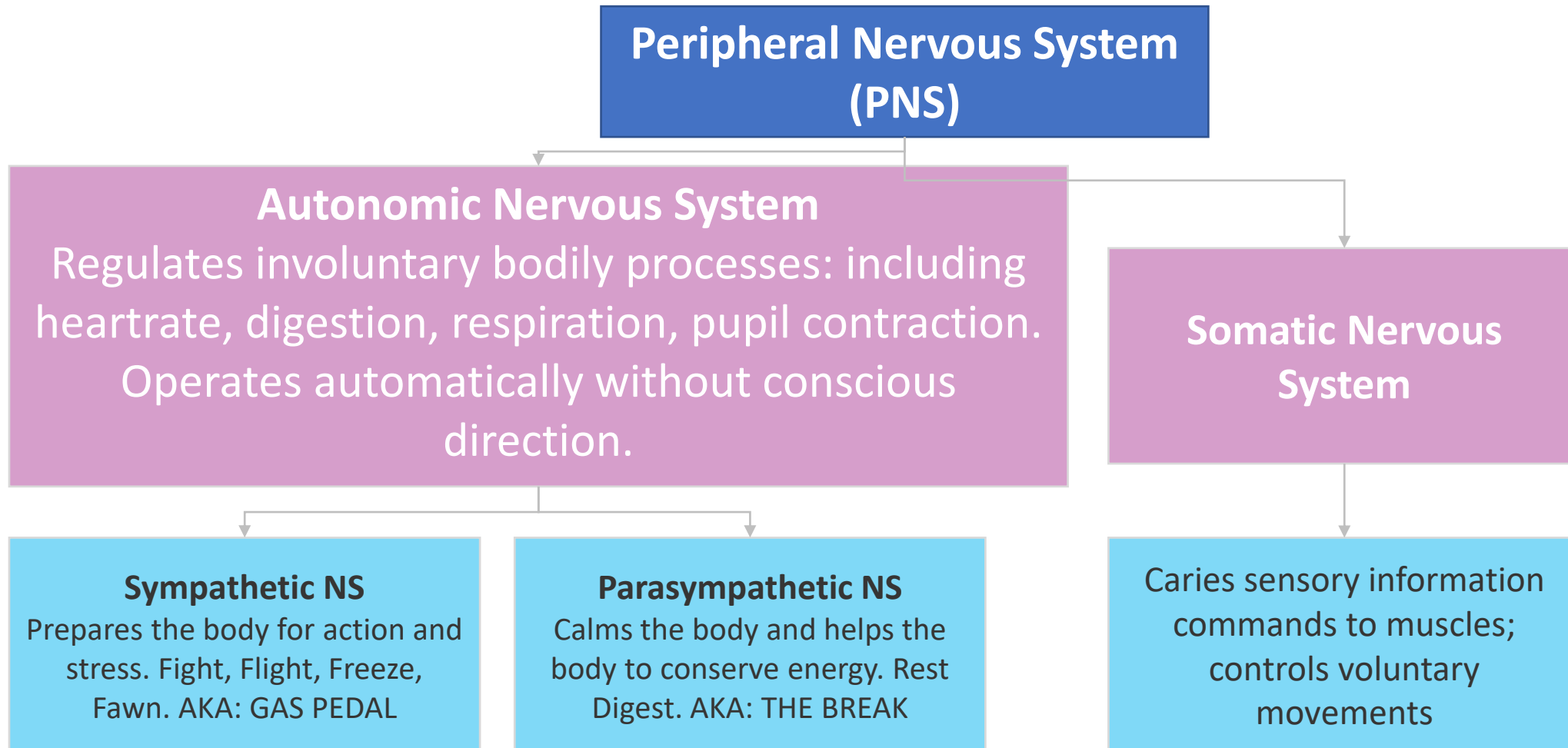
The Brain Story is a story about how experiences shape our brains. The development of a child's brain is a story about human relationships, because we depend on those around us for the experiences that build our brain architecture.



The Nervous System



THE Peripheral NERVOUS SYSTEM





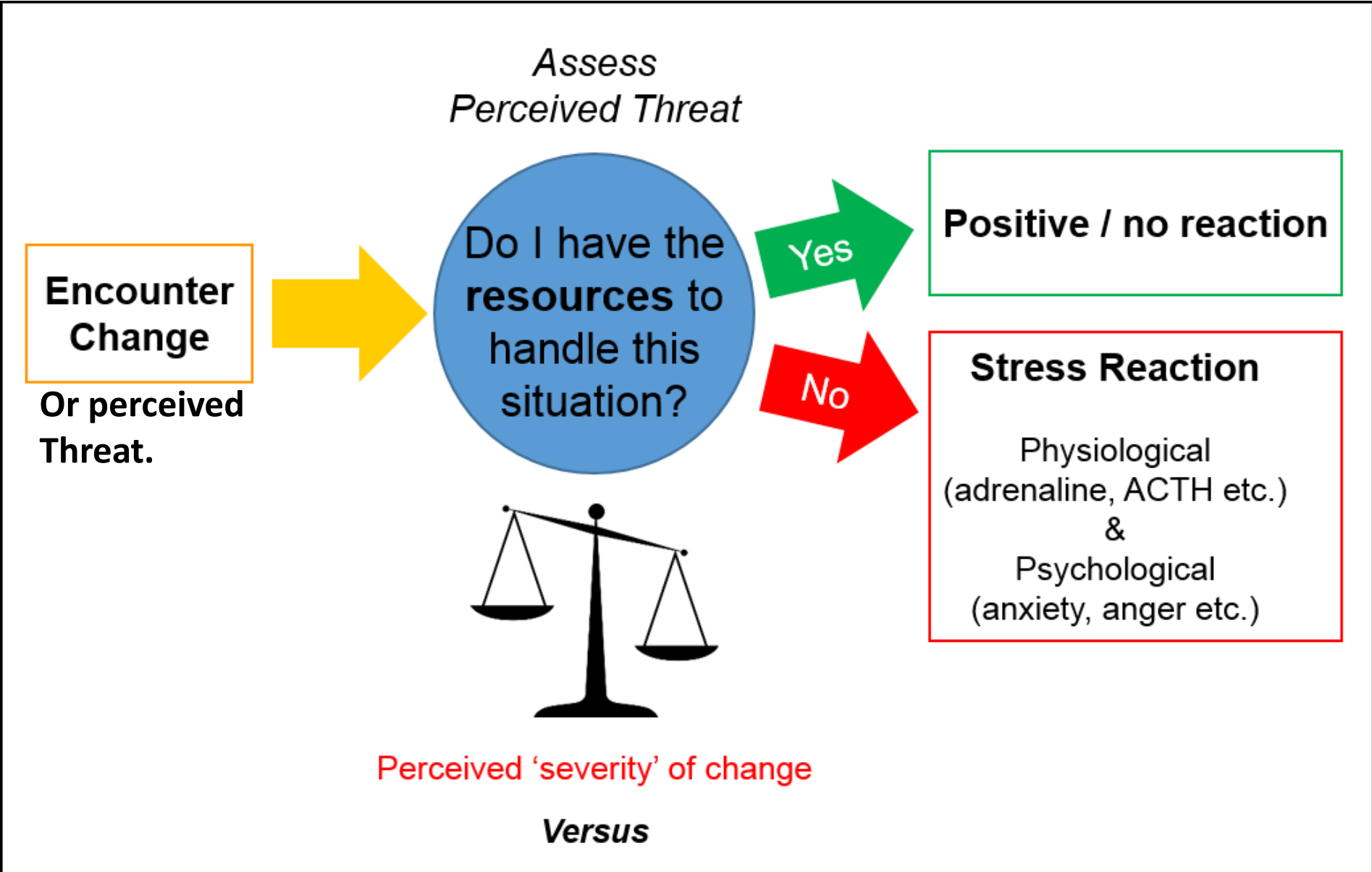
THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

Your nervous system is similar to the brake and gas pedal in a car.

- **The Gas Pedal:** Sympathetic Nervous System: Fight, Flight, Freeze, Fawn
- **The Break Pedal:** Parasympathetic Nervous System: Rest and Digest

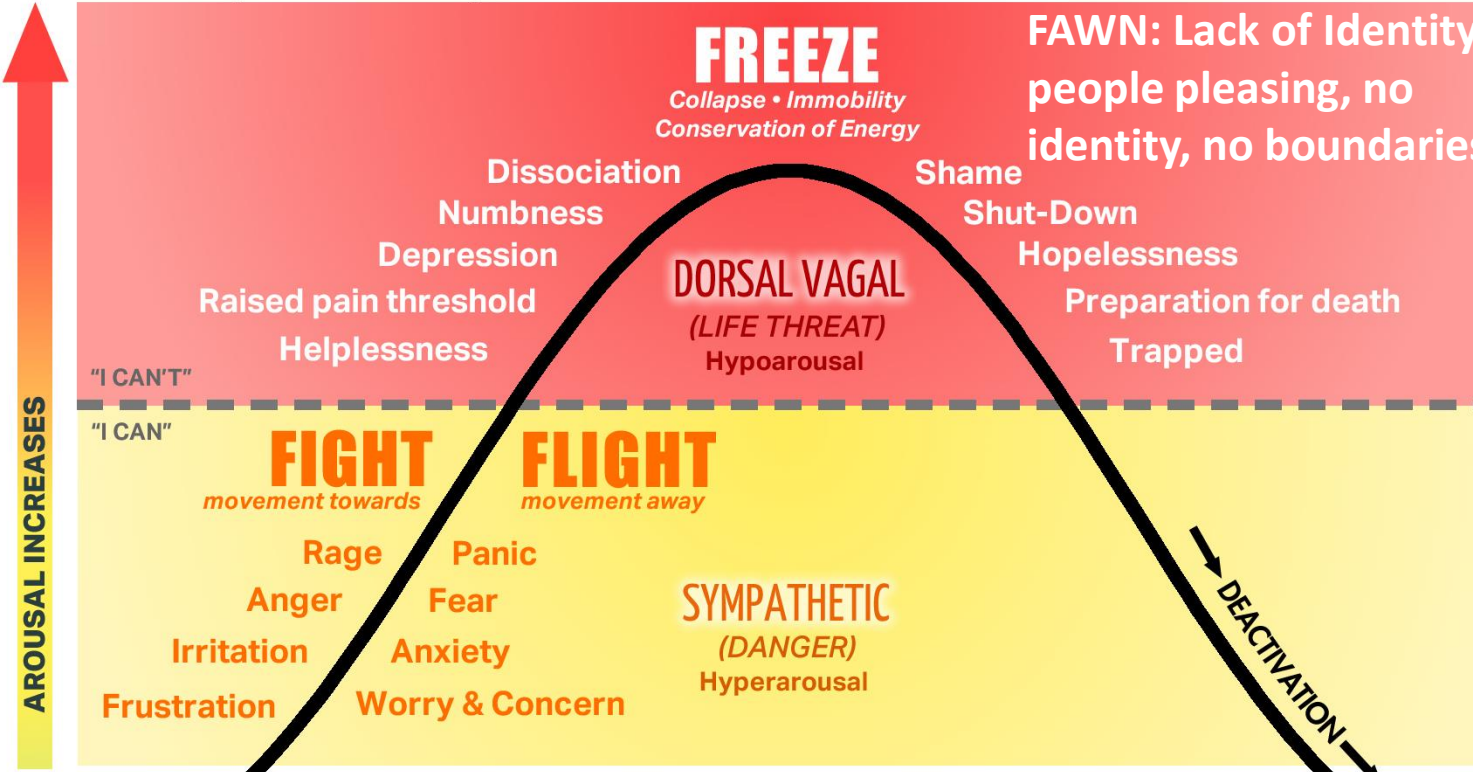
When they are balanced and doing their job properly, everything works well.

WHAT IS THE BALANCE?



POLYVAGAL CHART

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:



VVC is the beginning and end of stress response.
When VVC is dominant, SNS and DVC are in transient blends which promote healthy physiological functioning.

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



Connection & Curiosity

- Connection to ourselves and knowing our own personal mind, body, emotional and behavioural response to stress is at the root of managing stress.
- Becoming curious about the symptoms of stress and how they show up for ourselves is how we can prevent stress from having long term affects.