

Yoga Techniques for a Balanced Nervous System

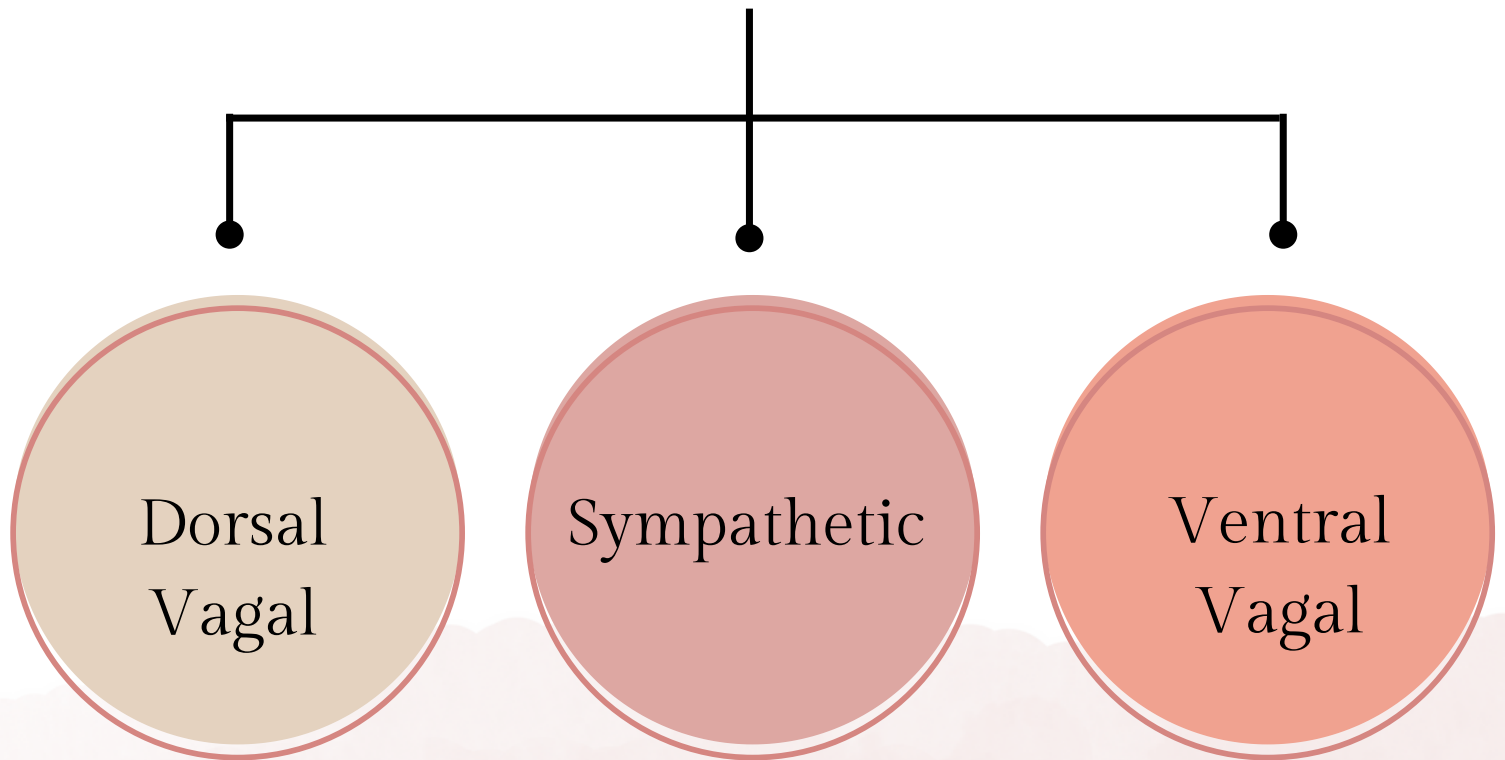
NERVOUS SYSTEM RECAP:

Most of us have learned that the autonomic nervous system gives us "fight or flight" vs "rest and digest" responses to our experiences.

However, our nervous system is actually composed of many more states beyond just "rest and digest" versus "fight or flight". These nervous system responses are adaptive, functional, and exist because of our own system's loving desire to protect us!

See the graphic on the following page for a breakdown of our nervous system according to the polyvagal theory.

The Polyvagal Theory



Dorsal Vagal

Sympathetic

Ventral Vagal

The Shutdown mode

- Vagus Nerve immobilizes you
- Freeze response
- Faint response
- Feelings of: stuck, hopeless, trapped, disconnected

The Fight or Flight Mode(s)

- Vagus Nerve mobilizes you with a "threat" response
- Feelings of: fear, anxiety, stress, panic, anger, irritability, frustration

The Connection Mode

- Vagus Nerve is at a healthy tone, sending signals of safety to your nervous system
- Feelings of: presence, calm, joy, peace, compassion, play and engagement with others

To facilitate a "safe" parasympathetic response, try these tools to down-regulate your nervous system. The goal is to slow down without shutting down.

Honeybee breath:

Sit comfortably

Cover ears with hands, gently

Exhale with a slight humming sound

Repeat- however long you choose

Restorative Yoga Sequence:

*increase your use of blocks and bolsters

Child's pose

Legs up the wall

Fish pose

Forward-fold with rag-doll

Supported bridge pose

Broken bridge pose

Thread the needle

To facilitate a "safe" sympathetic response, try these tools to up-regulate your nervous system. The goal is to gently mobilize yourself, becoming un-"stuck".

Breath of Fire:

Sit comfortably, spine tall

Inhale through nose

Exhale effortfully through nose

Keep equal inhales and exhales, with minimal pauses between

Gradually increase speed as comfortable

Energizing Yoga Sequence:

Chair pose

Chair pose twist, R/L

High plank

Dolphin pose

Locust pose

Gate pose, R/L

Bridge pose

NEW YEAR RESET RECAP:

Aim to always embrace Shavasana at the end of a physical practice- this can help bring you “full circle”, resembling a healthy and complete response to stress, releasing and letting go of the challenge.

In all practices, focus on..

-safety

-choice

-how it feels > how it looks

-your breath

-non-judgement and non-competition, invite
"play" into your practice

-tune into the signals your body sends you

NEW YEAR RESET RECAP:

Thank you for your download!

If you would like additional support in caring for your nervous system through the lens of yoga and/or health coaching, let's connect.

Wishing you well,
Jess