

VAGUS NERVE

An Introduction

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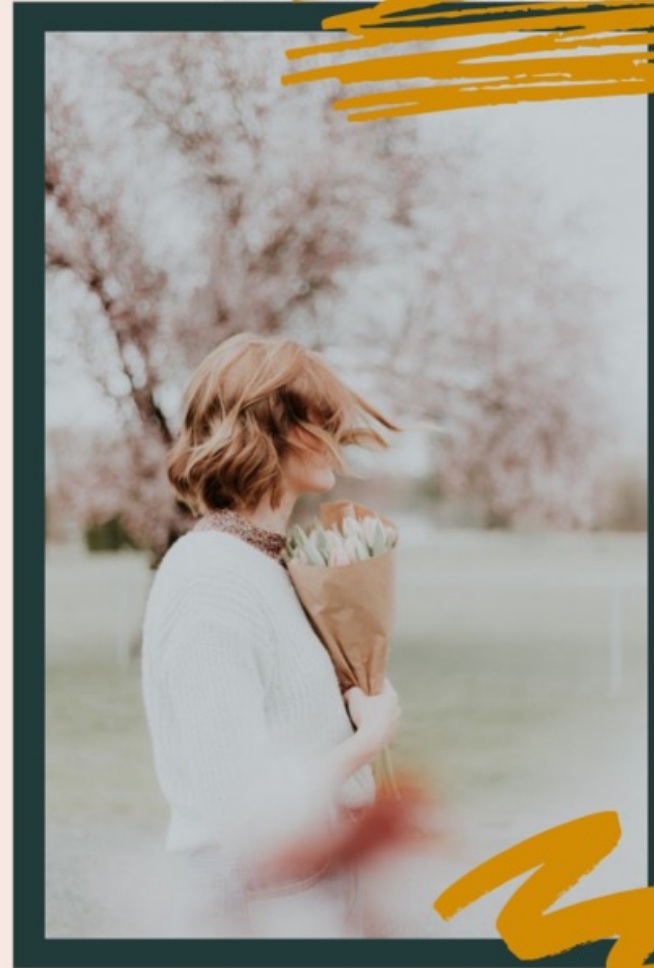
Mind, Body,
Spirit,
Relationships
All
Connected

- **Sensorimotor psychotherapy**¹: A comprehensive therapy that uses the body as both a source of information and intervention targets.
- Practitioners of **somatic therapy** view the mind and body as intrinsically linked. They also believe that trauma and other chronic negative emotions can get trapped inside our bodies and affect our mental health even further.

how the body holds memory

"Traumatic symptoms are not caused by the "triggering" event itself. They stem from the frozen residue of energy that had not been resolved or discharged; this residue remains trapped in the nervous system where it can wreck havoc on our bodies and spirits."

{Peter Levine}



the body stores trauma of
our lives in muscular
rigidity, thereby keeping
us stuck in the past.

When we release the tension
in the body and align
ourselves with gravity, we
take a new stand in life. this
allows us to be at ease with
ourselves and in harmony in
our relationship to others
and to our planet.

-joseph heller



Somatic psychotherapy

Therapeutic approach which engages the body awareness as a powerful tool and intervention in therapy.

Uses body awareness, movement, here and now grounding

Teaches calming skills through co-regulation and self-regulation of nervous system

Supports staying curious about body sensations, thoughts and awarenesses in and around the self

Nervous System- Internal alarm system

receive general sensory information
(pressure, temperature, pain and
vibration)

receive specific information from senses

integrate sensory and bodily information
and processes

generate responses

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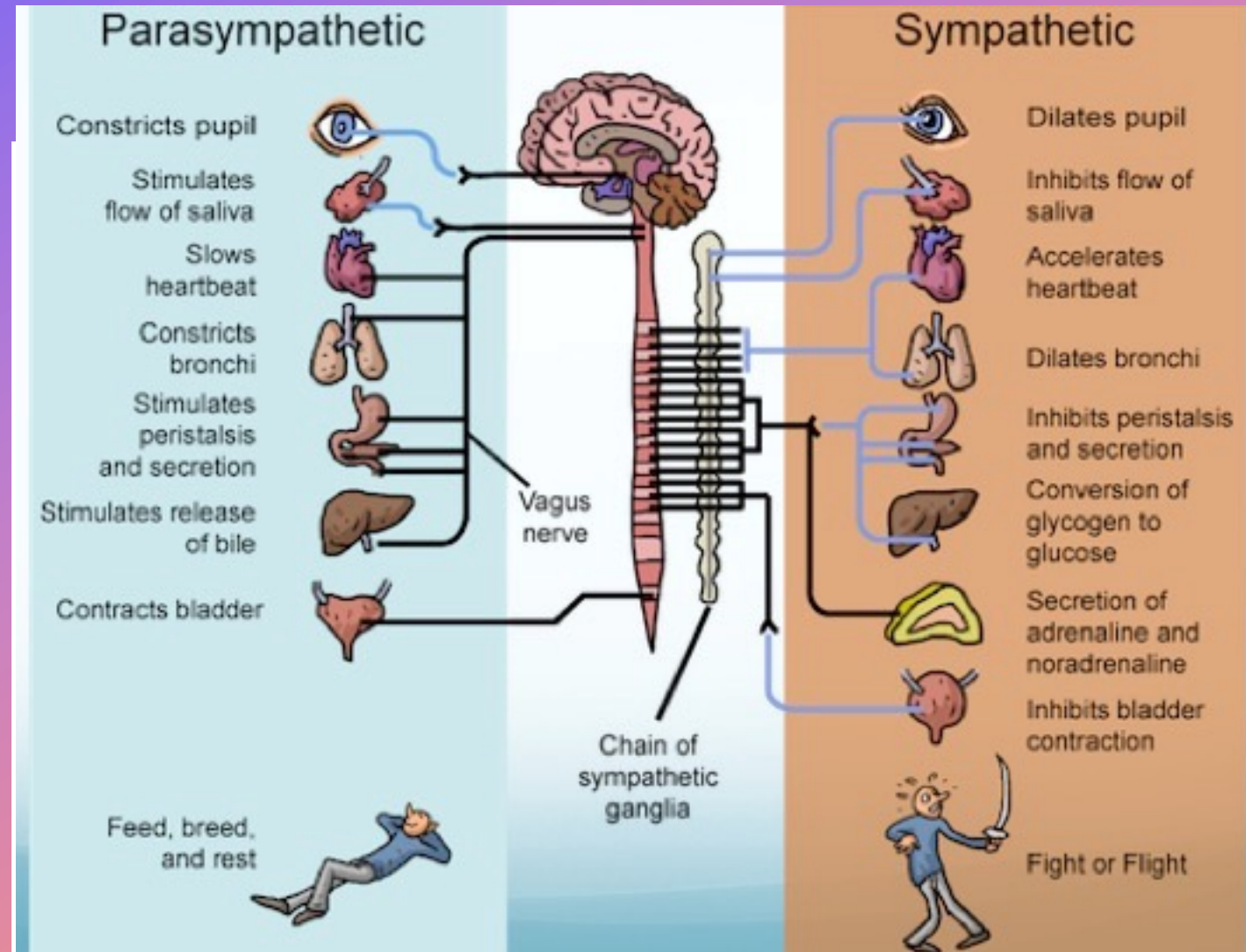
Branches of the Nervous System

Enteric System
regulates the gut

Sympathetic System
flight, fight, freeze and fawn

Parasympathetic System
regulates rest and digest

VAGUS NERVES ARE IN BOTH PARASYMPATHETIC AND SYMPATHETIC



Vagus Nerve

80% of information comes through organs to the brain through the vagus nerve

Impacts nearly every organ in the body

Prevents inflammation, controls breathing, strengthens memory, controls heart rate, relays information from face to the brain, impacts creativity, higher cognitive functions and decision making.

Ventral (right) side of vagus nerve

Facial muscles

Inner ear

Heart

Lungs

All parts connected to Social Engagement.

Myelinated (moves quickly)

Dorsal Vagus (left side of body)

Abdomen and lower organs

Guts (gut knowing)

Liver, Kidneys, Gallbladder, Pancreas

Not myelinated



Vagus Nerve controls wellness vs disease

When damaged or low vagal tone

Diabetes

Weight management and appetite

Gastroparesis, Leaky Gut Syndrome, Food Sensitivities

Difficulty swallowing

Parkinson's

Cardiovascular disease

Anxiety, Depression, ADHD, Sleep Problems

And more

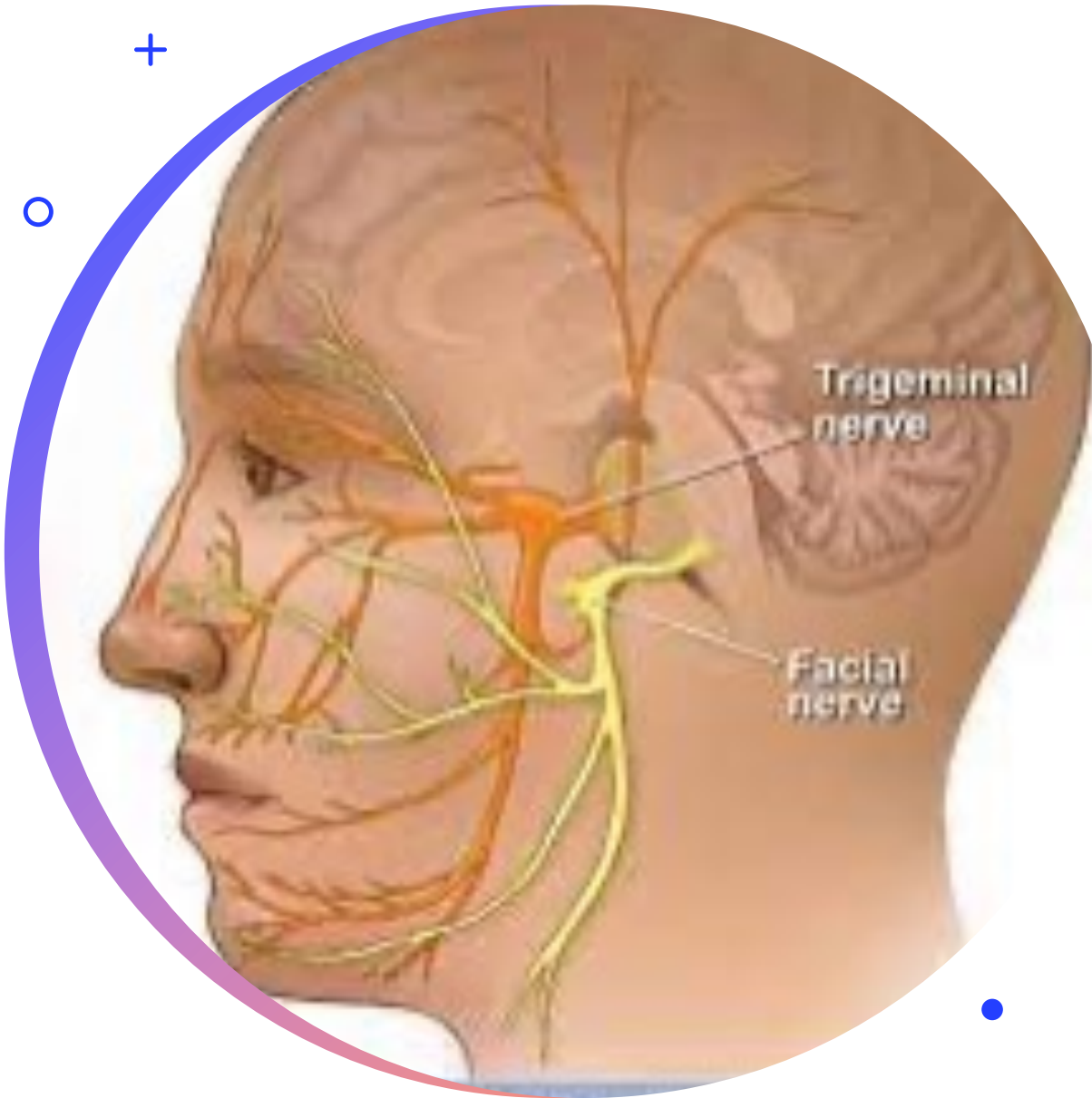
Polyvagal Theory: Stephen Porges

There is a 3rd System: The Social Nerve System

We are hard wired to be in groups and to be socially engaged. We use the face, eyes, ears to make those connections

We seek balance and to be harmonious inside and outside

When socially isolated more likely to go into fight, flight, freeze or fawn



FACIAL VAGUS NERVES

- Always aware in social situations of what feels safe or doesn't feel safe

Increasing Vagal
Tone:
Stimulate
Parasympathetic
Nervous System

Cold Exposure

Singing, Humming, Chanting, Gargling

Deep Slow Breathing Practice

Laughter and Socializing

Omega-3 Fatty Acid

Meditation, Yoga, and Exercise

Massage

Social Media

- <https://vm.tiktok.com/ZM8Cuwwra/>