

FREE GUIDE

FLOURISHING BONDS

Nervous System Regulation Toolkit

For stressful times, overwhelm, shutdown, anxiety, or emotional exhaustion

PURPOSE

Build nervous system flexibility and increase your capacity to return to safety, connection, and regulation.

Anxious, overwhelmed, or angry

HYPERAROUSAL

- **Orienting:** Slowly look around. Notice 5 stable things, 3 neutral or pleasant things, and the exits or windows. Say: "Right now, I am here."
- **Physiological sigh:** Two inhales plus one long exhale. Repeat 3 to 5 times.
- **Wall push:** Push your hands against a wall for 10 to 20 seconds, then release.
- **Extended exhale:** Inhale for 4, exhale for 6 to 8.
- **Cross crawl:** March in place, touching each hand to the opposite knee.
- **Balance board:** Move in opposite directions, crossing over.
- **Bird dog:** On hands and knees, reach out the opposite arm and leg, touch them together in the middle, and reach out again. 5 times each side.
- **Bottom kickers:** Gently kick your heels toward your rear end.

Numb or shut down

FREEZE

- **Tiny movement:** Wiggle your toes, tap your thighs, roll your shoulders.
- **Rhythmic movement:** Walk, rock, dance, swing, or groom horses or other animals.
- **Cool water and movement:** Splash your face, then walk around.
- **Look around like an animal:** Move your head very, very slowly from right to left, left to right, up and down. Notice everything you see (marks on the walls, colors, objects, spider webs). Then find something positive, rest your eyes on it for a while, and breathe in the good feelings.
- **Shake:** Shake your body like an animal does. This releases stress.

Connection and daily care

EVERYDAY MAINTENANCE

- **Hum or sing:** 2 minutes, noticing the vibration.
- **Safe person visualization:** Recall a person, animal, or spiritual figure who brings a sense of safety.
- **Coregulation:** Sit with safe people, pets, or nature.

Reflective questions

- Which part of me is activated?
- What is this protecting?
- What would help me feel 5% safer?

Five minute nervous system reset

FIVE MINUTES, ANYWHERE

1	2	3	4
Orient	Physiological sigh	Hum	Move

One minute each. **Then ask:** what does my nervous system need right now? Activation, settling, or connection?

Regulation is not eliminating activation. It is increasing your ability to return to a regulated state.

Flourishing Bonds

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