



They're Not Freaking Out, They're Dysregulated: Understanding the Stress Response

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Objectives

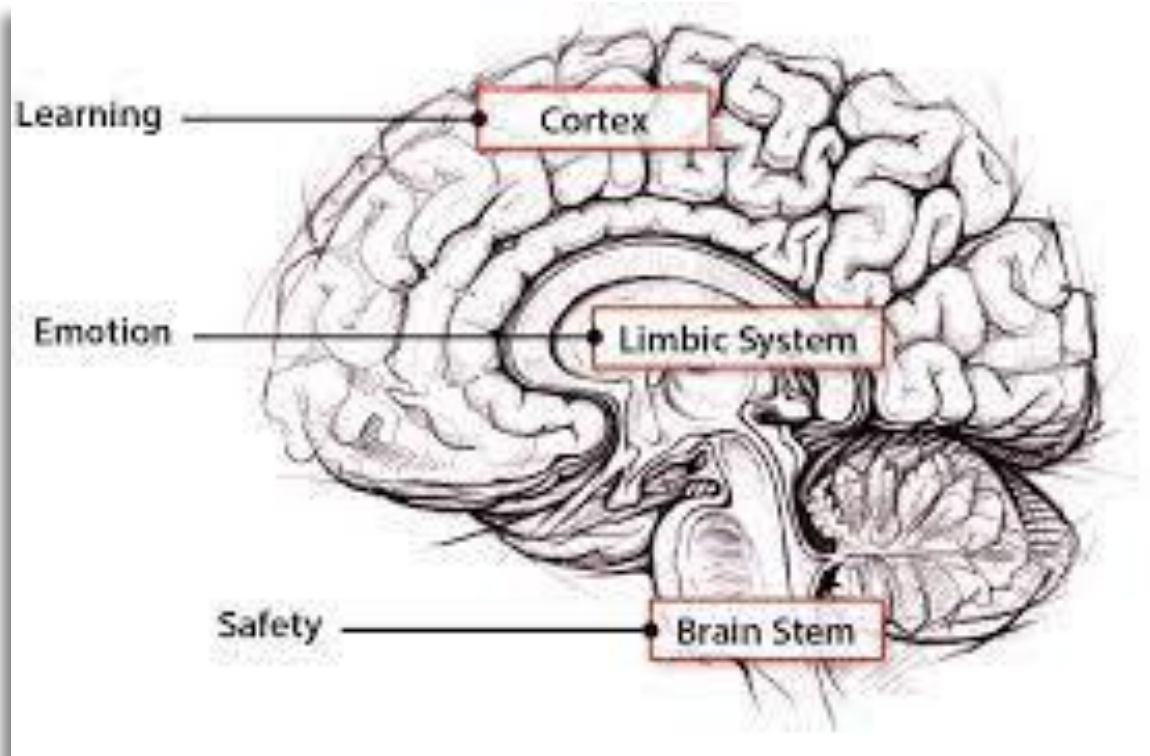
- Gain an understanding of the stress response
- Learn the difference between a regulated and dysregulated state along with the signs of dysregulation
- Learn how to promote regulation in ourselves and our child(ren)/students

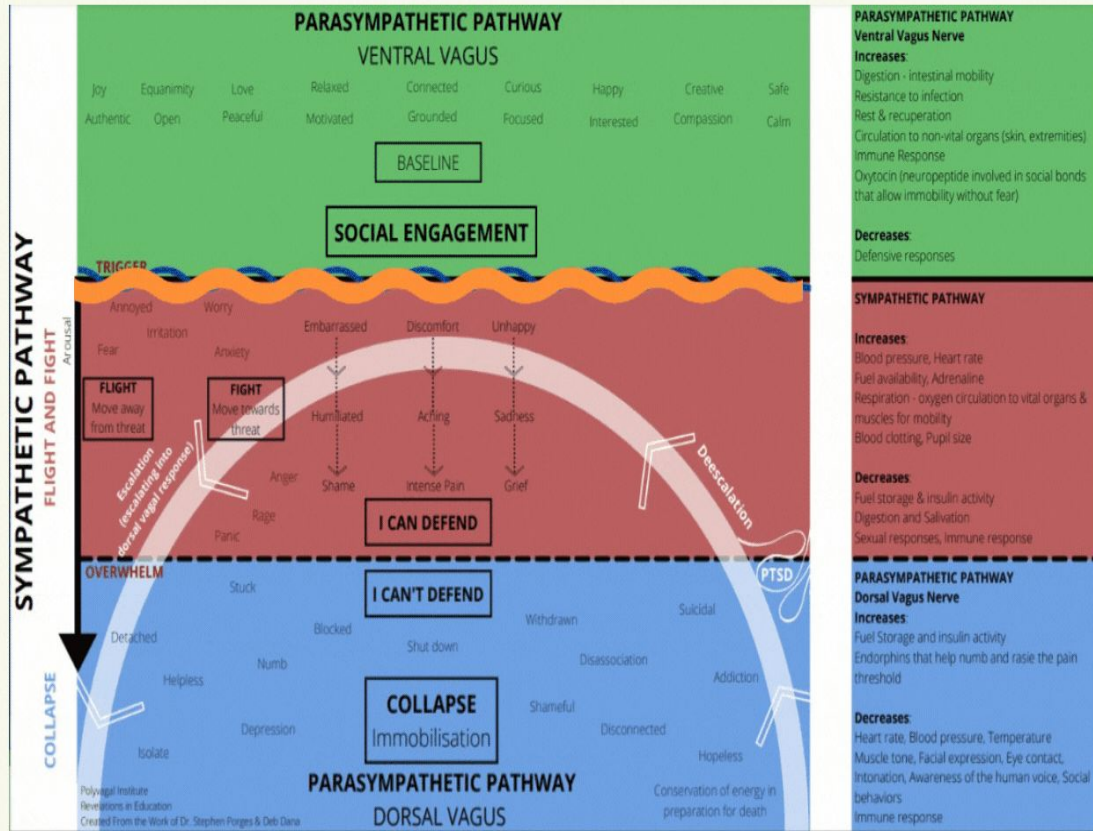


Stress Response Activation

- Occurs when the perception of a threat triggers physiological (body) and psychological (mind & emotion) changes
- Causes the body to prepare to:
 - **Fight**
 - **Flight**
 - **Freeze**
- Designed to protect us from danger







Emotional Regulation

the state you are in when you can effectively manage, identify and respond to your emotions and return to a balanced, calm state.



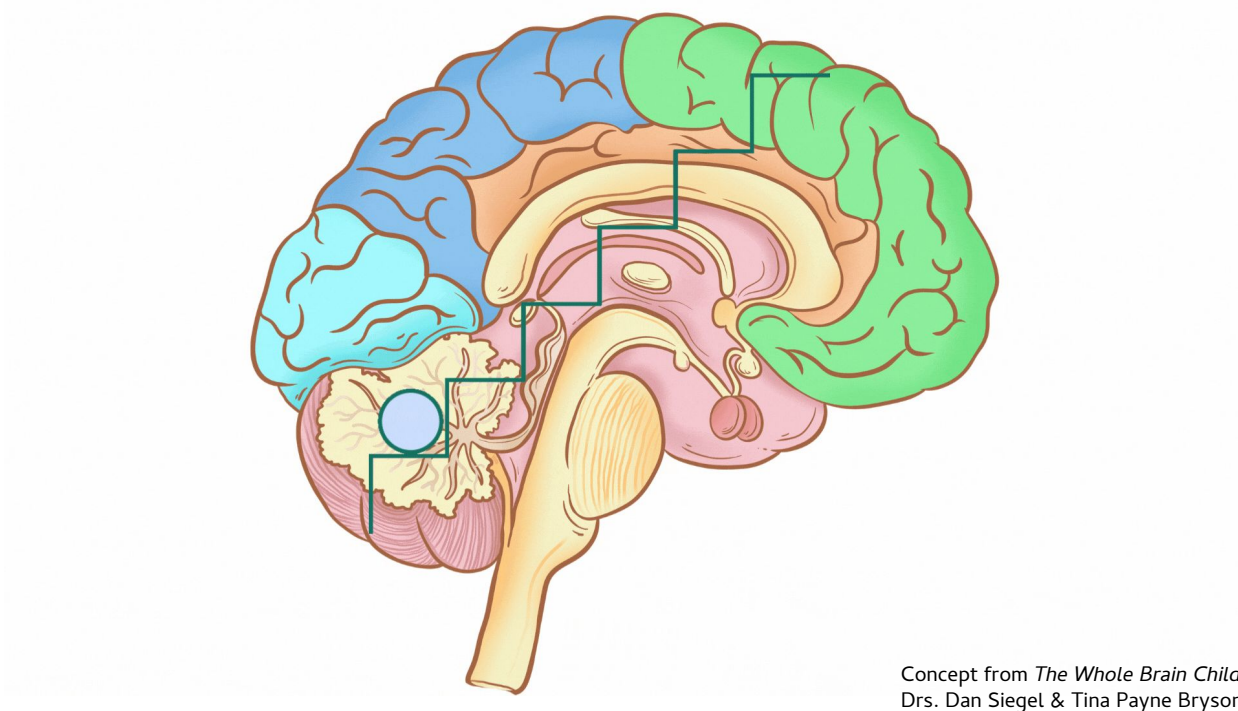
Emotional Dysregulation

the whole-body state you are in when you are unable to manage or tolerate certain emotions that become overwhelming and your brain responds to the presence of a potential threat

What can emotional dysregulation feel like?	What can emotional dysregulation look like?
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Increased heart rate• Tense muscles• Dizziness• More rapid breathing• Noise sensitivity• Dry mouth• Tightness in chest• Headache• Cold Hands• Diminished peripheral vision• Stomach discomfort <p>Ask: What does it feel like to you? What does it feel like for your students?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Pacing / Fidgeting / Tapping / Rocking• Dilated pupils• Visible sweating• Flushed face• Paleness• Clenched fists• Tightened jaw• Verbal aggression• Dilated pupils• Trembling• Physical aggression <p>Ask: What does it look like for you? What does it look like for your students?</p>



Upstairs & Downstairs Brain



Concept from *The Whole Brain Child*
Drs. Dan Siegel & Tina Payne Bryson

Stress Response Cycle

"...feelings don't vanish on their own. They don't heal themselves. If we don't express our emotions, they pile up like a debt that will eventually come due."

Marc Brackett, Ph.D.
Permission to Feel



Fight/Flight/Freeze in Action

FIGURE 2.1

What Flight, Fight, or Freeze Looks Like in the Classroom

Flight	Fight	Freeze
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Withdrawing• Fleeing the classroom• Skipping class• Daydreaming• Seeming to sleep• Avoiding others• Hiding or wandering• Becoming disengaged	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Acting out• Behaving aggressively• Acting silly• Exhibiting defiance• Being hyperactive• Arguing• Screaming/yelling	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Exhibiting numbness• Refusing to answer• Refusing to get needs met• Giving a blank look• Feeling unable to move or act

Stress Response Cycle

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Completing the Stress Response Cycle

FEEL IT
LEAN INTO IT
LEARN ABOUT IT



Movement



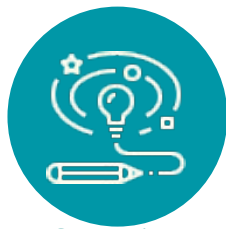
Breathing



Social
Interaction



Laughter



Creative
Expression



Affection



Crying



"It's Okay"



Stepping Away



Sources

Brackett, M. A. (2020). *Permission to feel: The power of emotional intelligence to achieve well-being and success*. Celadon Books.

Hall, P. (2016). *Fostering resilient learners*. ASCD.

Siegel, D. J., & Bryson, T. P. (2012). *The whole-brain child*. Constable & Robinson.

