

Enhancing home life with regulation, rhythm and resilience

Megan Corcoran

28th March 2024

10am

career • KAFÉ



Acknowledgement of Country

Carer Kafe acknowledges the Wurundjeri People whose traditional lands we operate on within the Kulin Nation.

We respectfully acknowledge all Traditional Custodians of the lands and waterways where we work and live, and recognise their continuing connection to the land, water and community. We pay respect to Elders past, present and emerging.



WAGTAIL INSTITUTE WITH CARER KAFE

ENHANCING HOME LIFE WITH REGULATION, RHYTHM, AND RESILIENCE



grab some paper and
a pen or open doc on
your device.

Presented by Megan Corcoran

wagtailinstitute.com

Who is this?

MEGAN CORCORAN

DIRECTOR AT WAGTAIL INSTITUTE

Cares about wellbeing in complex settings.

Teacher, leader, facilitator + coach.

Bachelor of Ed, Masters in Applied Pos Psychology

Lecturer at Monash.

Boxing addict.

www.wagtailinstitute.com



VISION

The Wagtail Institute vision is for all children to have a safe and magical childhood with support from adults who believe in their future. We recognise there are many adults who did not have this experience, and we need to work together to heal and do better for the next generation.

www.wagtailinstitute.com

MISSION

For all adults to be equipped with trauma-informed wellbeing knowledge and skills so they can best support the young people in their care and stay well while they're doing this important work.



Disclaimer

This educational session is designed for informational purposes only and does not constitute therapy or counselling. As a trauma-informed wellbeing consulting service, Wagtail Institute provides training to enhance awareness and knowledge.

Participants are advised to seek professional support if needed, and this session should not be considered a substitute for such services.

CARE AND HOUSE KEEPING

- There are activities. Pause the video, complete the task, and then press play again!
- We will discuss trauma, stress and behaviour



LIFELINE

13 11 14

lifeline.org.au



BEYOND BLUE

1300 22 4636

beyondblue.org.au

**Which dog
represents
how you are
feeling
right now?**

www.wagtailinstitute.com

1



2



3



4



5



Check in

***DO YOU NEED
SOMETHING
BEFORE WE GET
STARTED?***



OUTCOMES

- Recognise the stress response in yourself and the children or young people in your care
- Learn effective rhythmic and regulation strategies
- Understand the importance of routine and structure for young people in care



AGENDA

**TRAUMA AND STRESS
RESPONSE**

**REGULATION
STRATEGIES**

**ESTABLISHING
ROUTINES**

Check in



***THINK ABOUT A TIME A
CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON
WAS STRESSED***

Reflect



***THINK ABOUT A TIME A
CHILD OR YOUNG PERSON
WAS STRESSED***

How did you know they were stressed?

What is trauma?

"Trauma is not what happened TO you, it is what happened INSIDE OF YOU as a result of what happened to you" (Gabor Mate)



What is trauma?

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"Trauma is in the nervous system, not in the event" (Peter Levine)



What is trauma?

"Trauma is not what happened TO you, it is what happened INSIDE OF YOU as a result of what happened to you" (Gabor Mate)

"Trauma is in the nervous system, not in the event" (Peter Levine)

"... These events leave us stuck in a state of helplessness and terror, and results in a change in how we perceive danger" (Bessel van der Kolk)



Quick Reflection

Write

What do these descriptions of trauma have in common?

What does this mean for me as a carer?

Early Childhood development

A time of learning how we relate to others

Brain is undergoing biggest period of
development "construction"

Learn self-regulation through co-
regulation

Our caregivers are our main teachers



Complex Childhood trauma

Repeated or ongoing abuse, neglect and exposure

Changes the brain development- we become wired
for survival

Attachment disorders

Unable to self-regulate

Our caregivers were unable to keep us safe- the
trauma impacts our relationships



What is behaviour?



COMMUNICATION

UNMET NEEDS

**CONNECTION + PROTECTION
SEEKING**

COMMUNICATING UNMET NEEDS

PHYSICAL

The needs of our physical body, our nervous system and our senses.

EMOTIONAL

Our need to understand, process and express our emotions, moods and feelings.

SAFETY

Our need to feel free from threat and harm. To feel physically and psychological safe in the environment.

SOCIAL

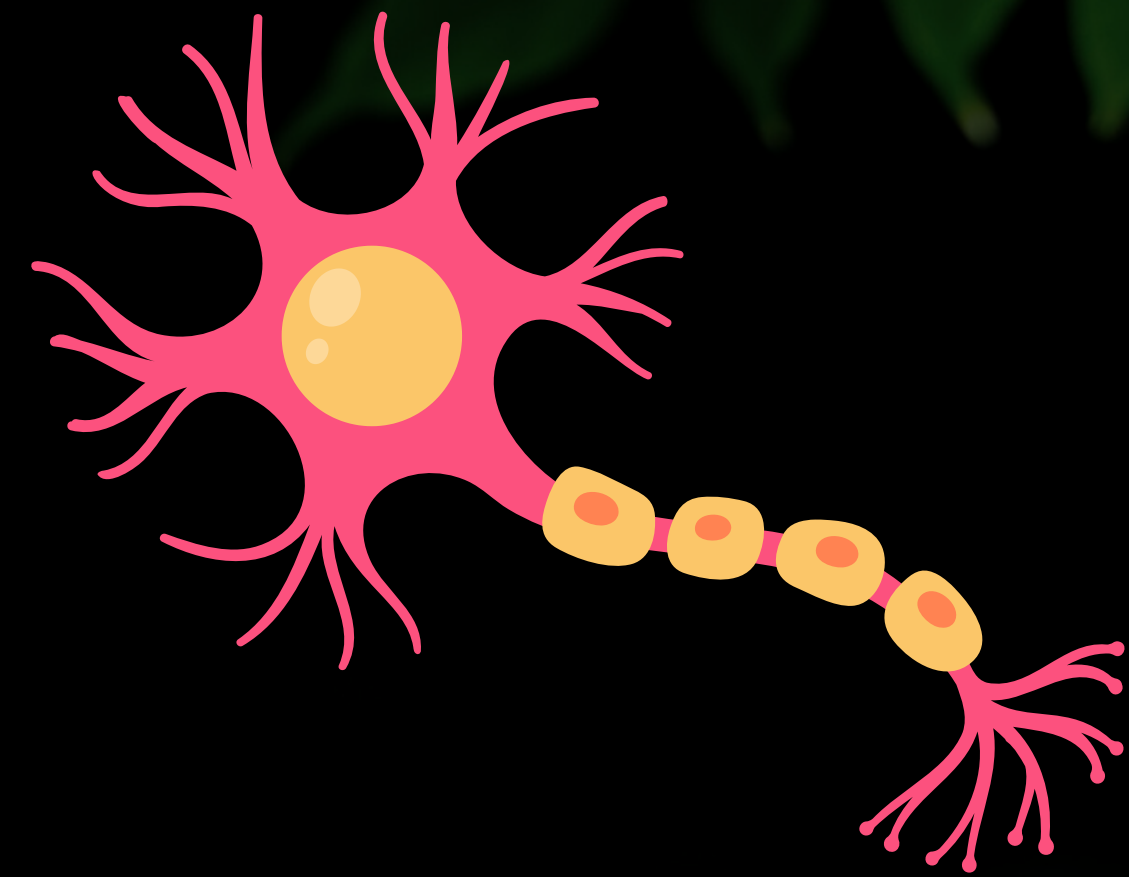
Our need for healthy and safe connection with others. Our need to resolve conflict and feel accepted.

"dysregulation"



"dysregulation"

INABILITY TO CONTROL OR
REGULATE ONES EMOTIONS,
BEHAVIOUR OR NERVOUS
SYSTEM



"dysregulation"

WHEN WE ARE NOT
REGULATED, OUR
SYMPATHETIC AND
PARASYMPATHETIC NERVOUS
SYSTEMS ARE IMBALANCED





"triggers"

ACTIONS OR EVENTS THAT
PROMPT PARTICULAR
BEHAVIOURS

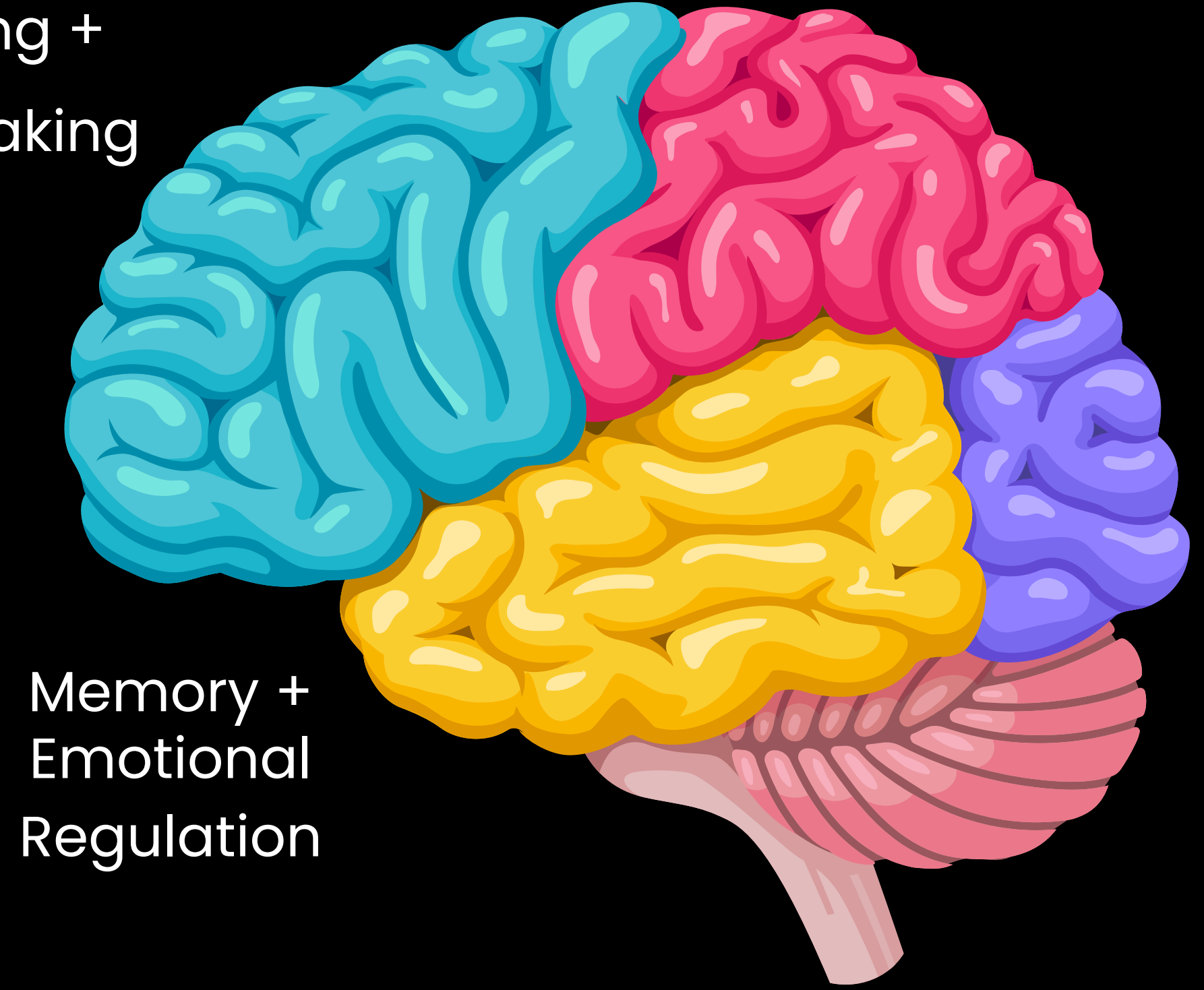
PERCEIVED THREATS

Quick Reflection

Brainstorm

Make a list of your triggers (or frustrations) that lead you to feel higher levels of stress

Higher order thinking +
Rational decision making

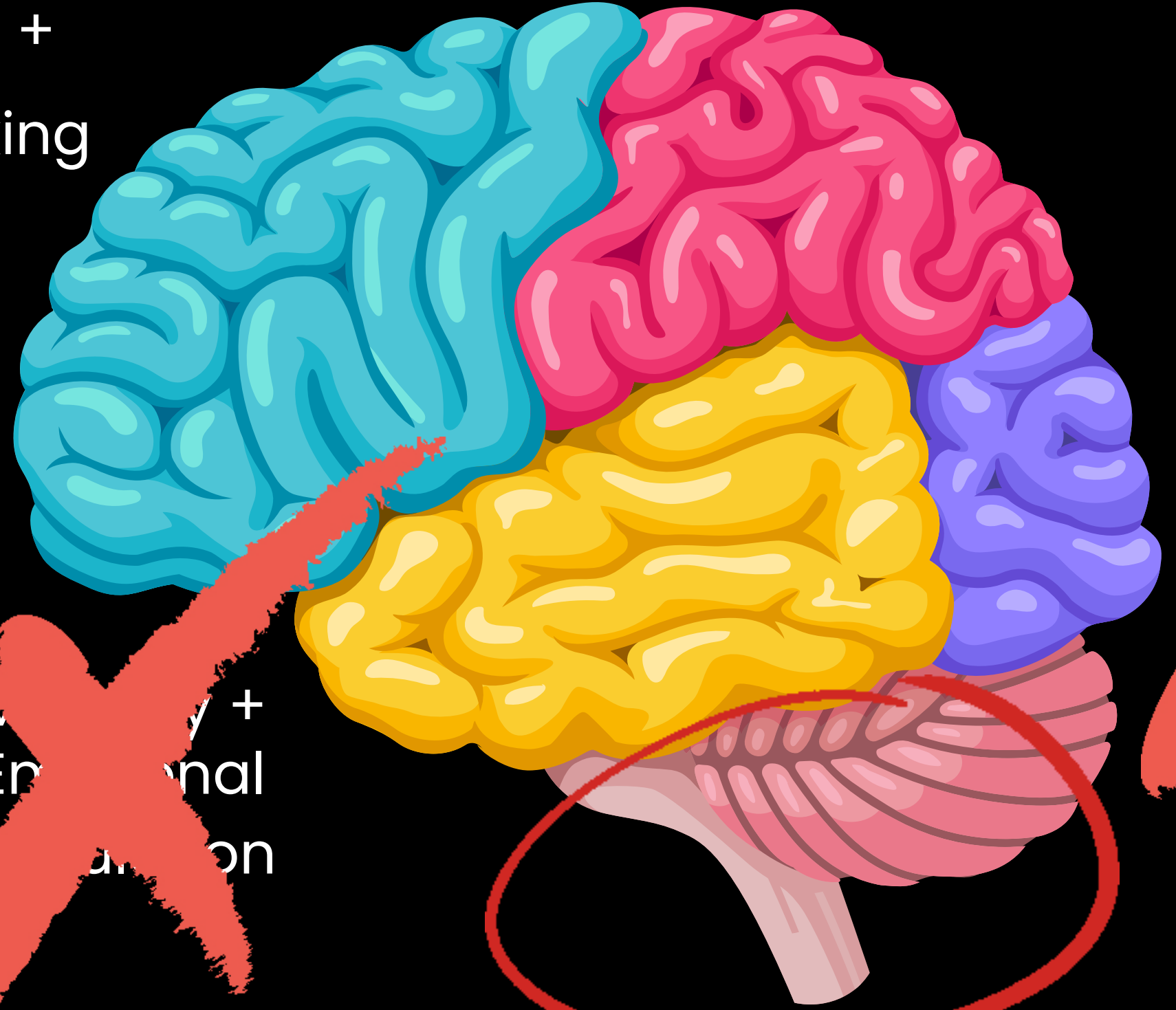


Memory +
Emotional
Regulation

Relationships

Survival, sensory input and nervous
system

Higher cognitive thinking +
Rational decision making



Relationships

Motivation +
Emotional
Reaction

Survival, sensory input and nervous
system

Quick Reflection

Option 1: Write

- What it feels like in your body when you are stressed
- What it looks like when you are stressed?

Option 2: Draw

Draw a picture that represents dysregulation in your body and your behaviour.

Pupils dilate

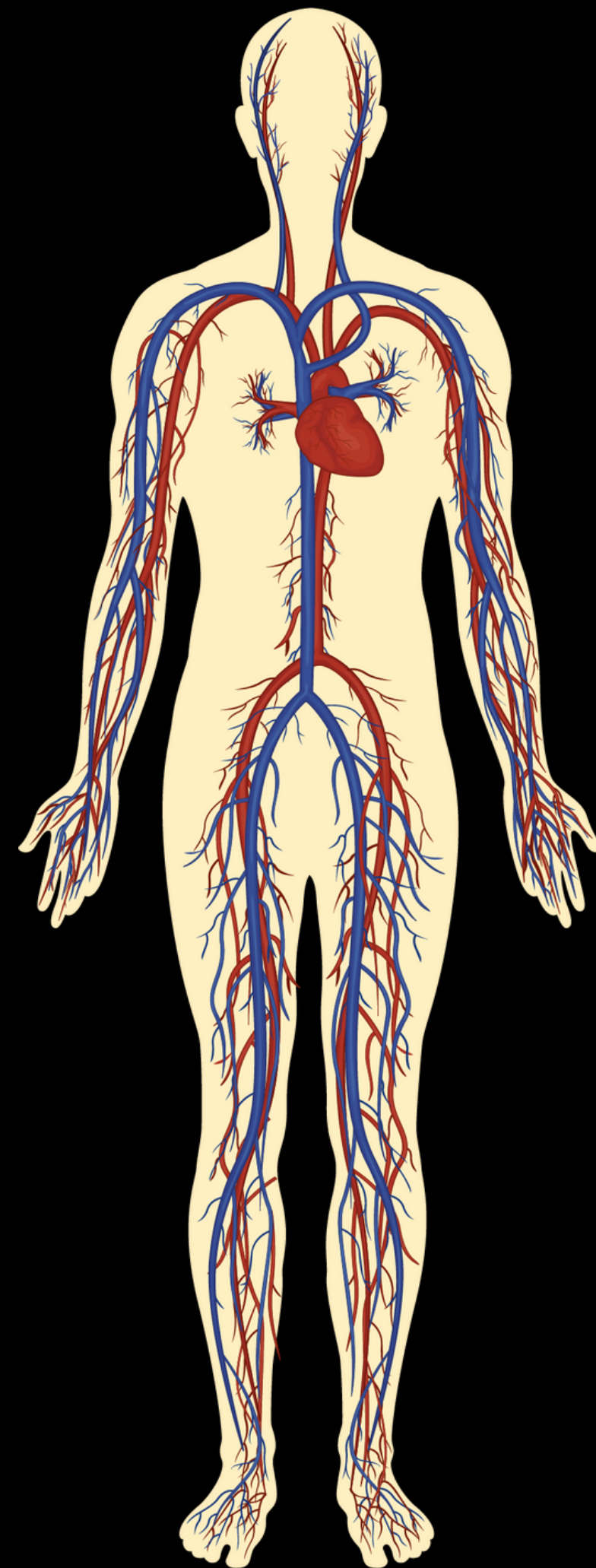
Dry mouth, loss of saliva

Tense shoulders/neck

Increased heart rate

Sweating

Tense muscles



Fast and shallow breathing

Release of adrenaline

Digestion slows

Cortisol releases

Inability to concentrate

Impaired memory

Quick Reflection

Make a list

Strategies you use to regulate yourself
in high-stress moments



Reduce Anxiety & Stress with the Physiological Sigh | H...



Share

REDUCE ANXIETY WITH SIGH

HUBERMAN LAB

Watch on  YouTube **QUANTAL CLIPS**



“He goes from zero to 100,
just like that...”



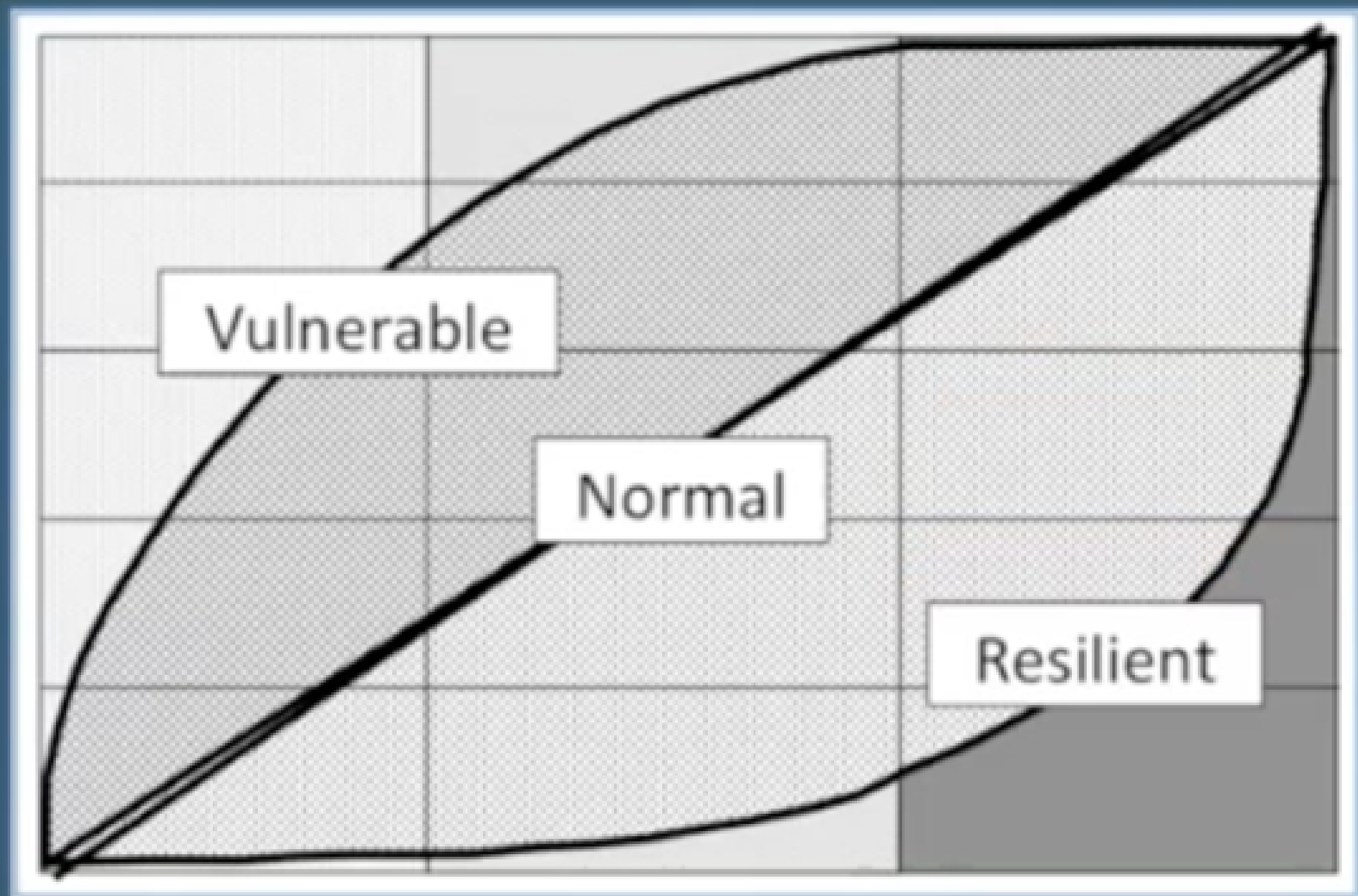
Terror

Fear

Alarm

Alert

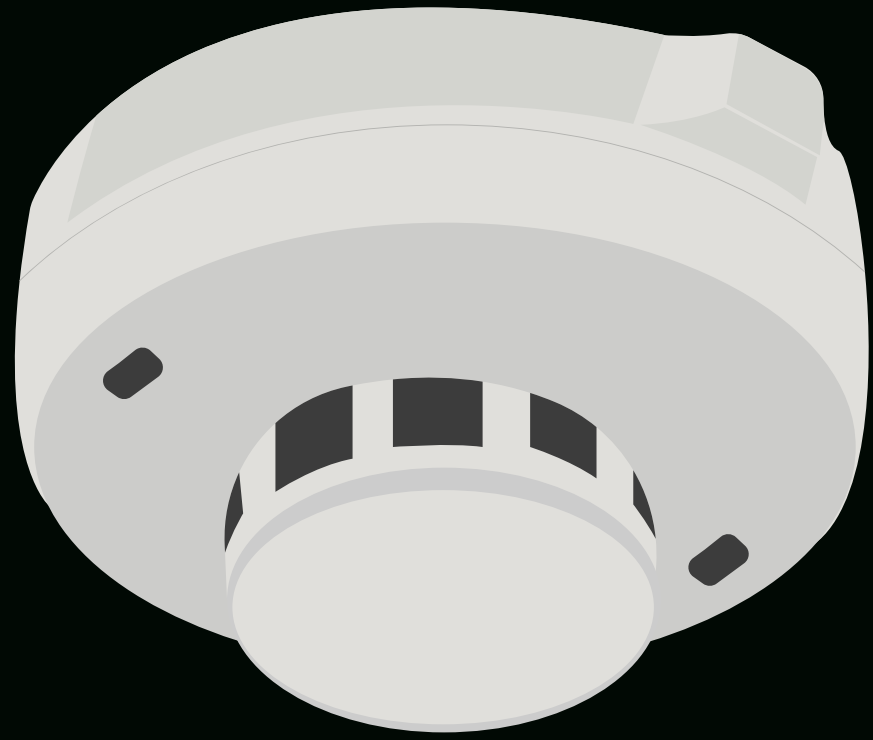
Calm



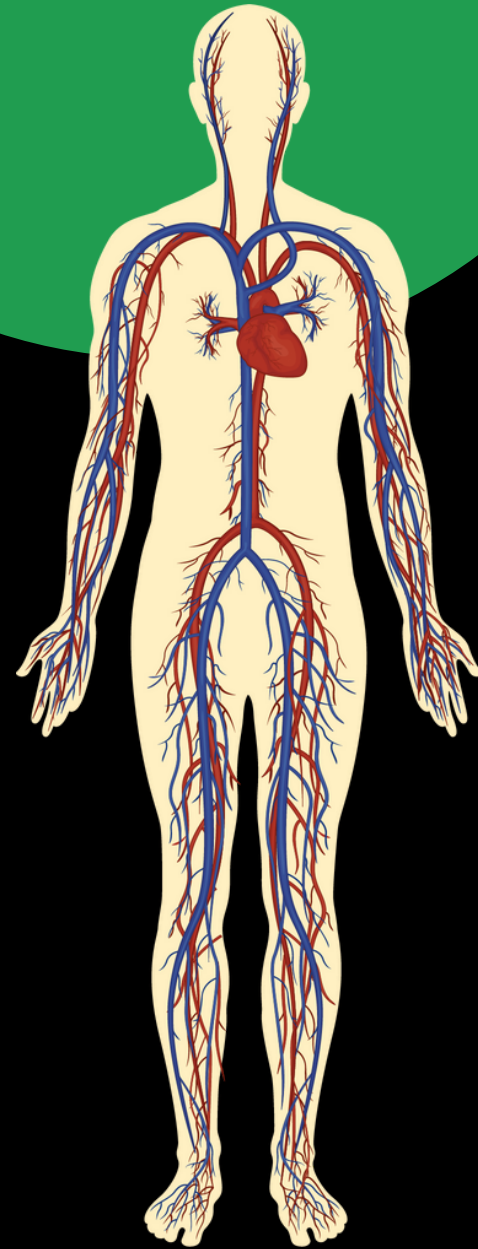
Baseline

Stress

Extreme Stress



REGULATE

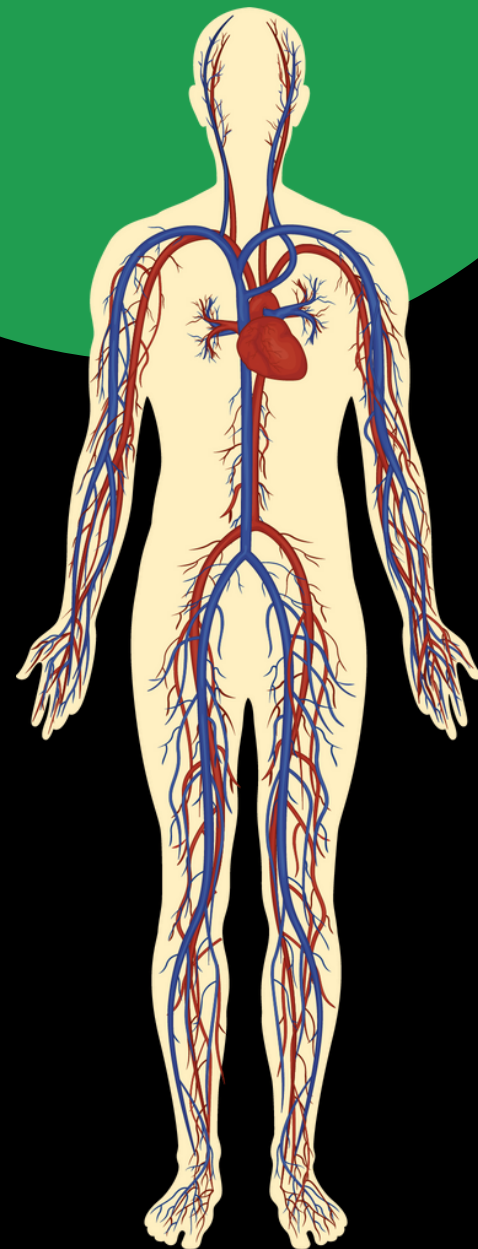


Understanding and responding to our emotions and physical needs.

Need multiple experiences of co-regulation before we can self-regulate

What can we do before the "smoke alarm" goes off?

REGULATE

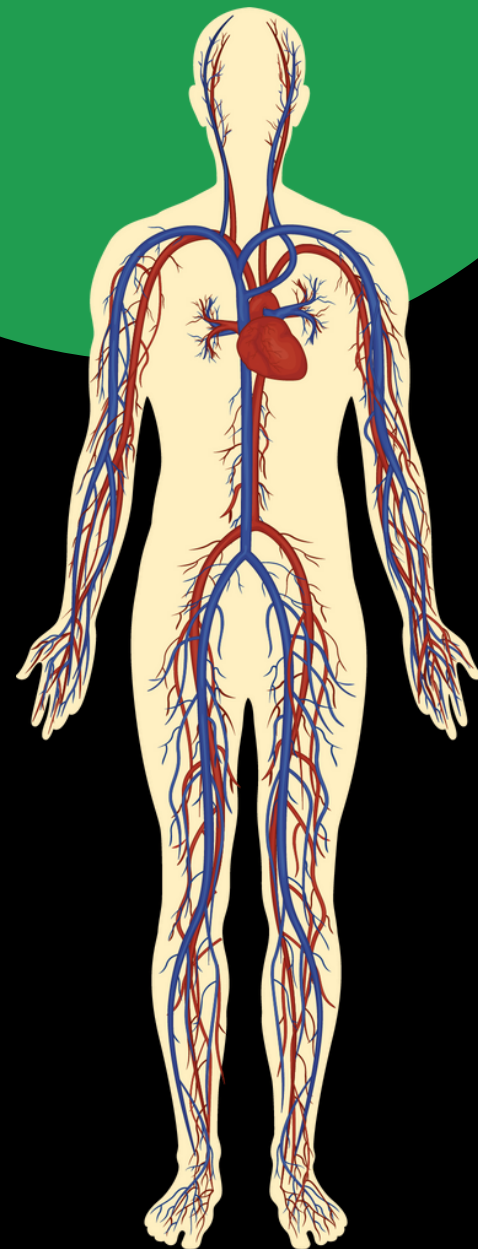


We need to tell the brain that we are safe.

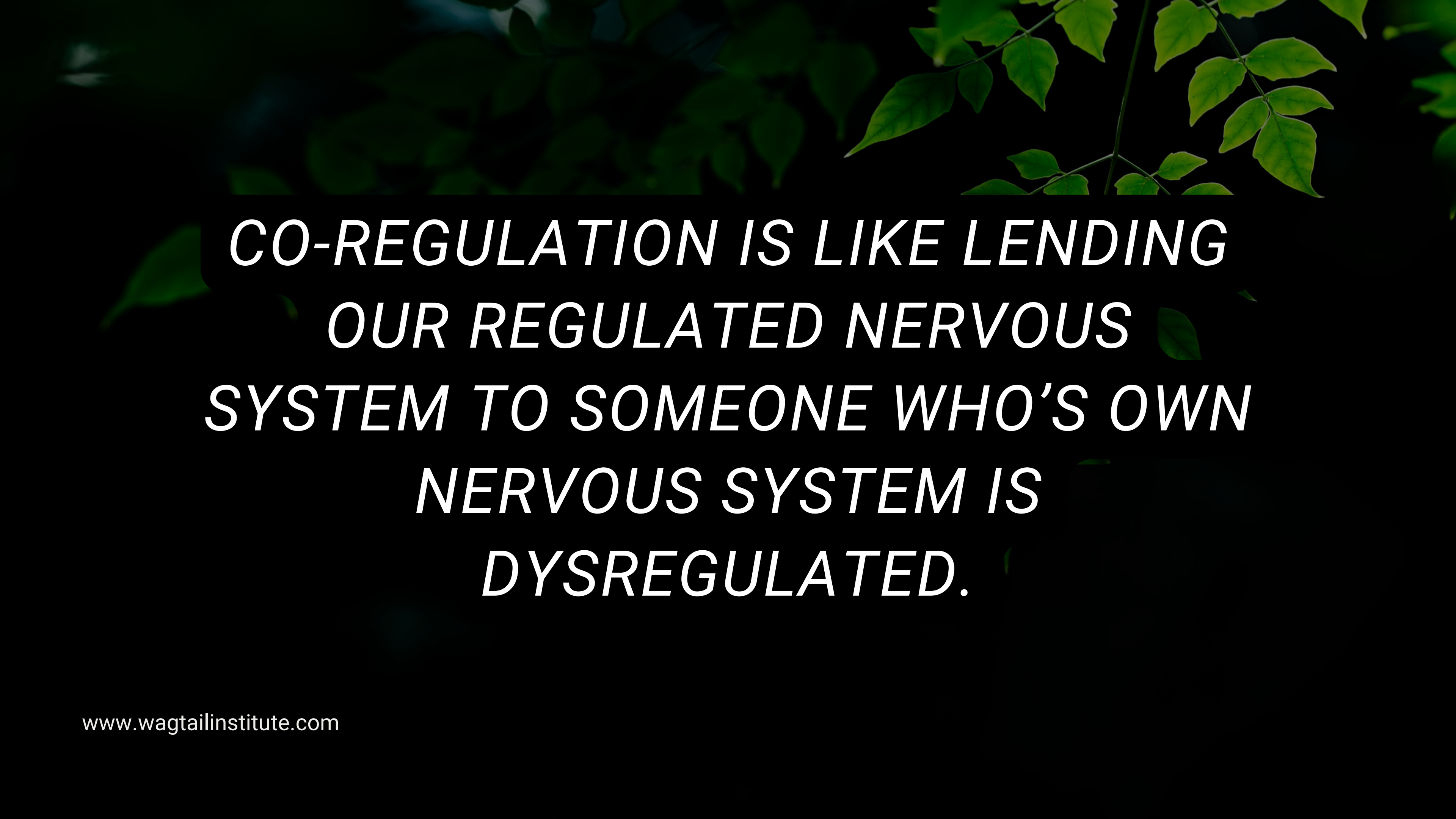
We can do this through the work we do with the
body.

“nervous system work”

REGULATE



Breathing
Doodling
Walking
Running
Listening to music
Cycling
Mindfulness
Guided imagery
Grounding exercises
Tapping (EFT)
Sensory and movement
Calm zone at home



*CO-REGULATION IS LIKE LENDING
OUR REGULATED NERVOUS
SYSTEM TO SOMEONE WHO'S OWN
NERVOUS SYSTEM IS
DYSREGULATED.*

The trauma-informed principles

SAMHSA, 2014

Cultural, historical, and gender issues

Safety

Trust and transparency

Peer Support

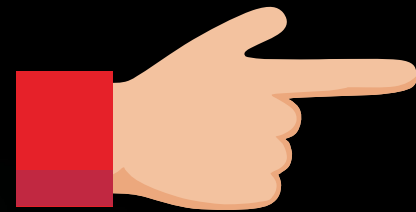
Empowerment, voice, and choice

Collaboration and mutuality

“WHAT HAVE CARERS OR ADULTS DONE IN THE PAST THAT YOU FIND FRUSTRATING?”

“WHAT DO YOU PREFER ADULTS TO DO WHEN YOU ARE UPSET?”

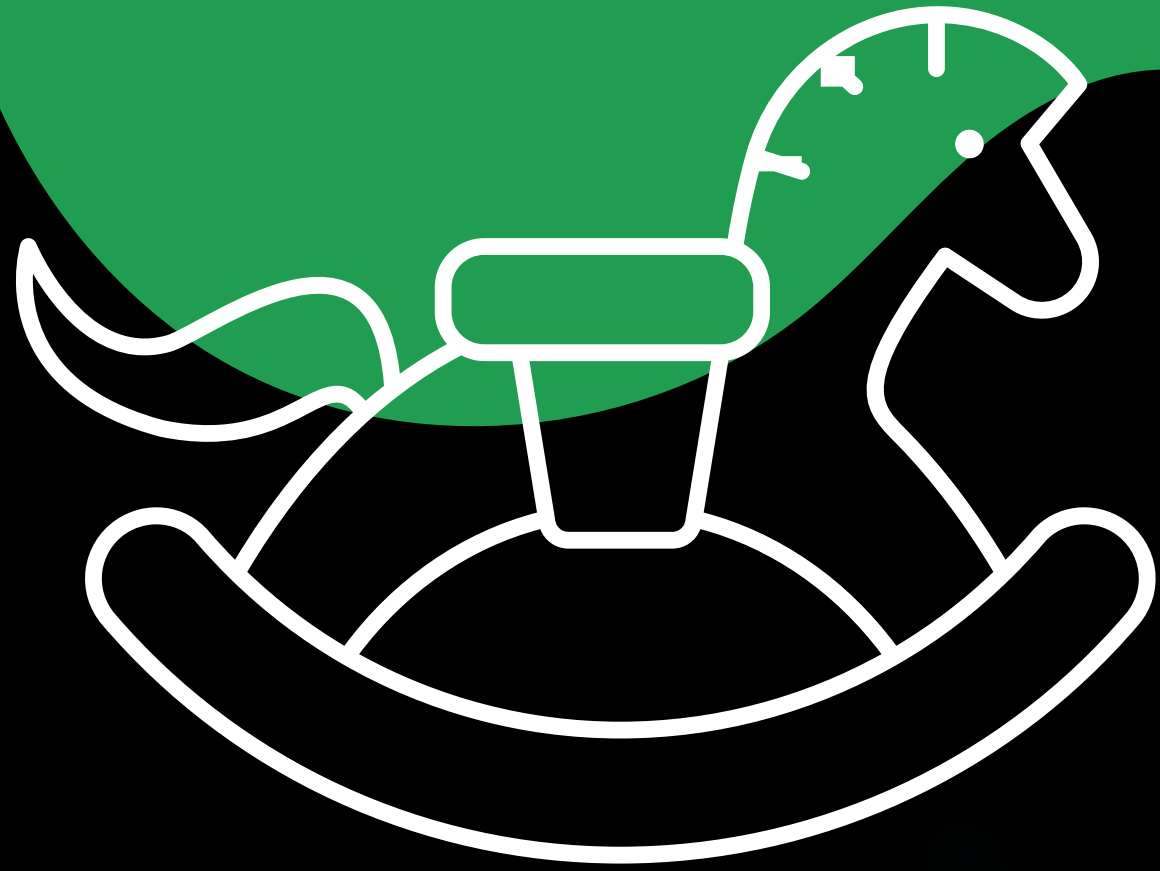
Consider



RHYTHM

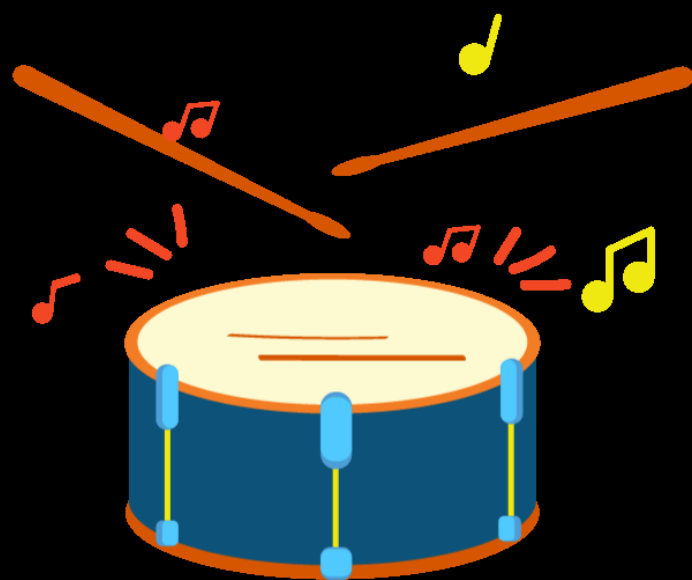


RHYTHM



PATTERN REPETITIVE RHYTHMIC ACTIVITIES

D.B. Perry, 2014



Our nervous system responds to PRRAs, letting the brain know we are safe.

PRRAs- anything that has repeated pattern.

Eg. Music, dancing, boxing, running, painting, skipping, swings, trampoline, colouring in, breathing.

PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER

PLANNING FOR REGULATION:

Triggers frustrations

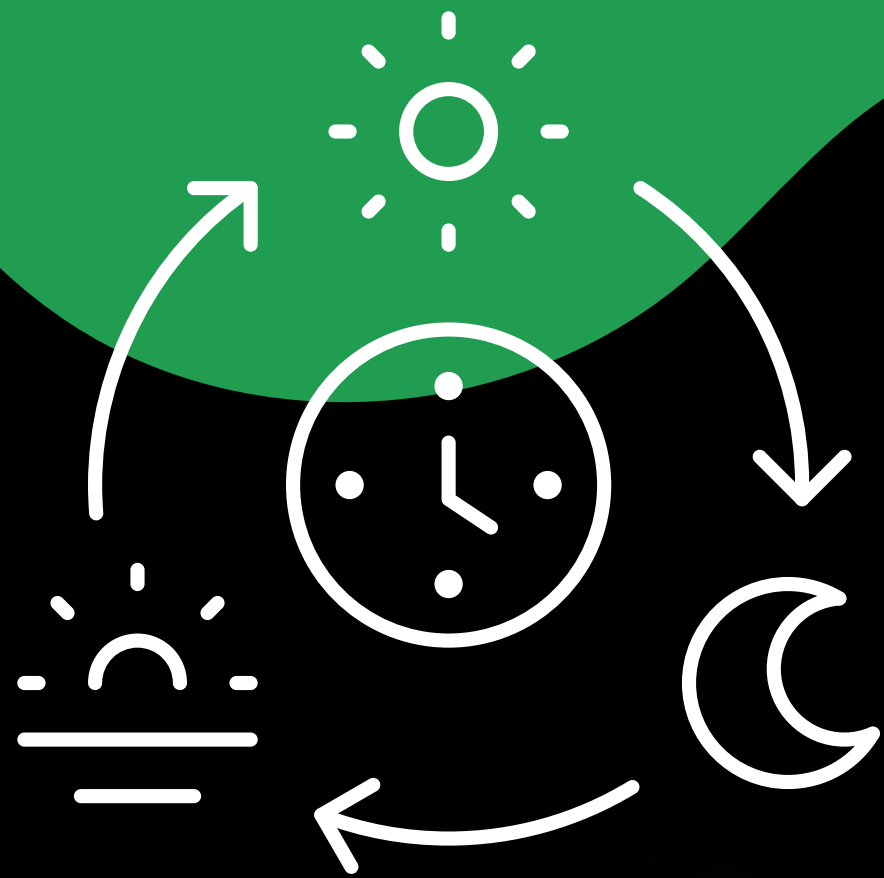
How does it feel in your body when you are stressed/angry/dysregulated?

What does it look like?

What do you want adults to do to support you?

What strategies do you use or would you like to try?

ROUTINES



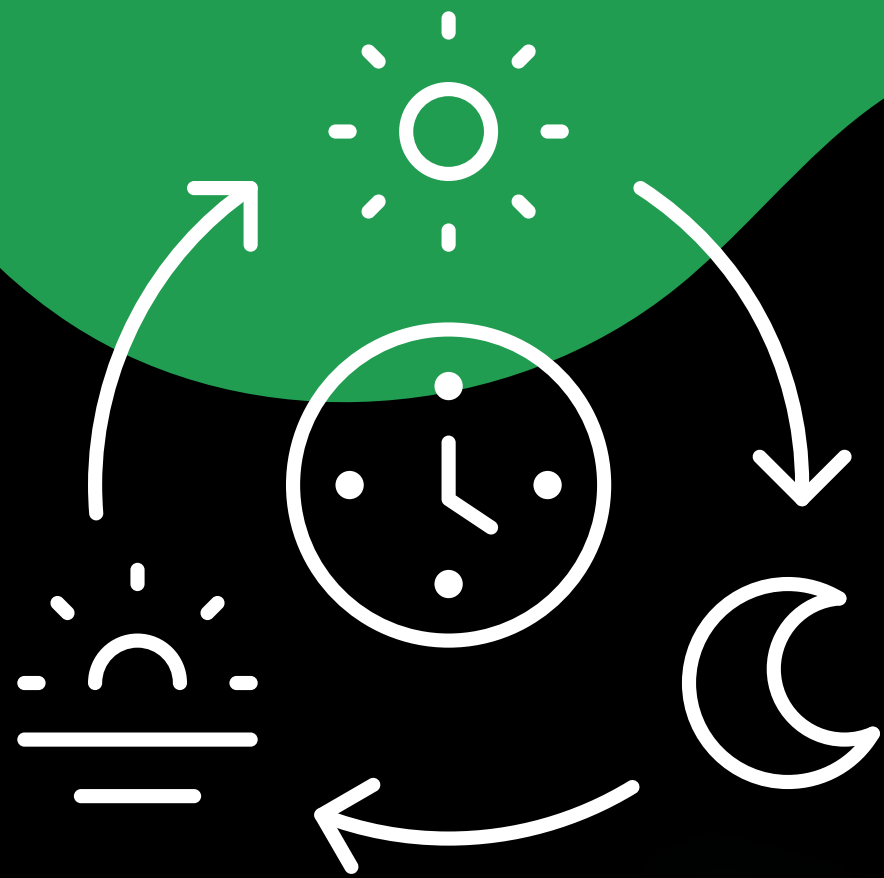
Reflect

Why do we need routines?

Do you have one?

How do you benefit from having a routine?

ROUTINES



Write

How do routines support a child or young person who has experienced trauma?

ROUTINES



The larger scale 'pattern repetitive rhythmic activity' is our day to day, week to week routines

Predictability = safe

Uncertainty = unsafe

Routines start to restore healthy habits, too (sleep, nutrition, exercise).

ROUTINES



We start to know what is next rather than *fearing* what might be next.

Consistent

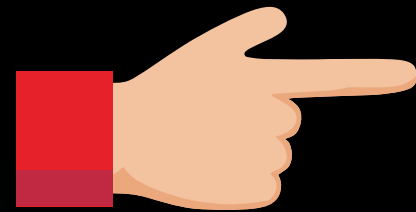
Predictable

Reliable

“WE HAVE SOME FAMILY ROUTINES, WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO ADD?”

“ARE THERE ANY PARTS OF OUR ROUTINE THAT YOU NEED SUPPORT WITH?”

Consider

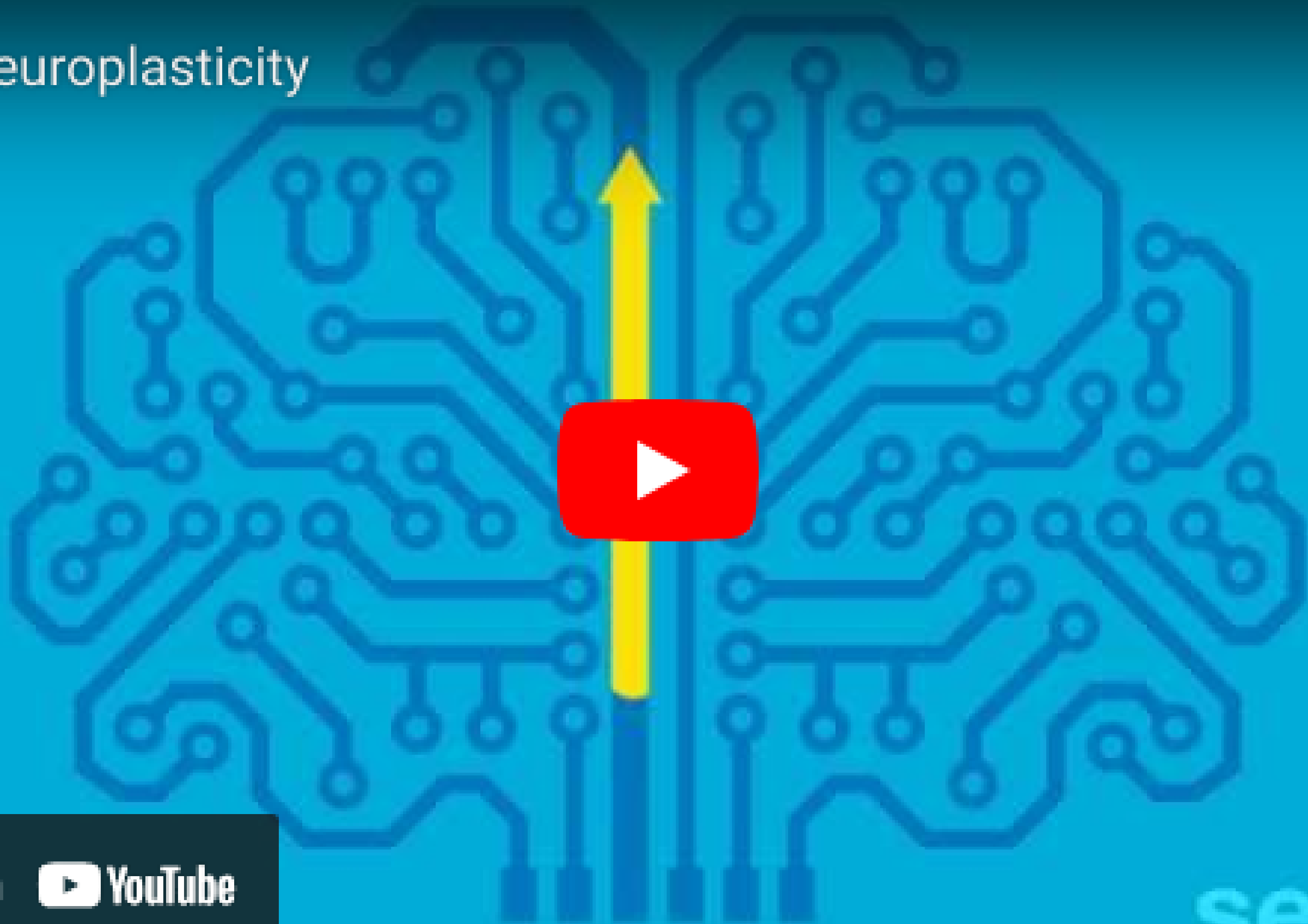




Neuroplasticity



Share



Watch on  YouTube

sentis

ROUTINES



Consider including:

Proactive wellbeing activities

Rhythmic and regulating activities

Meal times, school times, household 'rhythms',
social times

Values and connection

The 'Why?'

ROUTINES- DAY TO DAY

DAILY PLANNER

date

day of week

MORNING

PRIORITIES

-
-
-
-
-
-

DAY

MEAL PLAN

EVENING

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

ROUTINES- DAY TO DAY

ROUTINES TO SUPPORT WELLBEING AND CONNECTION:

What went well today and “why”?

Gratitude practices

Name one thing you did for yourself today?

ROUTINES- DAY TO DAY

Let's try!!

Write

What went well today and why?

ROUTINES- WEEK TO WEEK

weekly plan

MONDAY	
TUESDAY	
WEDNESDAY	
THURSDAY	
FRIDAY	
SATURDAY	
SUNDAY	

ROUTINES



Taking care of the caregiver!!!

Where in the routine do you take care of you?

3 KEY TAKEAWAYS



**WE NEED TO REGULATE THE BODY
AND NERVOUS SYSTEM TO TELL
THE BRAIN WE ARE SAFE**

**GIVE THE CHILD OR YOUNG
PERSON CHOICE AND VOICE
WHEN DEVELOPING ROUTINES**

**WHAT IS GOOD FOR THE CHILD OR
YOUNG PERSON IS GOOD FOR US,
TOO!**

Session Feedback



Scan QR code
or use weblink:

<https://wkf.ms/44VSSth>



Thank you!

For training visit: carerkafe.org.au

Follow us on Facebook for updates



The Carer Kafe program is hosted by three agencies working in partnership: **The Centre for Excellence in Child and Family Welfare, Victorian Aboriginal Child Care Agency (VACCA)** and **Kinship Carers Victoria**. Carer Kafe is supported by a Governance Group, which includes the following organisations:



Keep in touch

The Wagtail Institute is
dedicated to supporting
wellbeing in complex settings

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