

What is FND?

A Nervous System Perspective



Boulder Center
for Neuro Health

FND – A Condition of the Nervous System



FND is NOT a mental health disorder.



FND is REAL, you are NOT “faking it,” “making it up,” or “doing it for attention”.



FND is hard to understand for others and can be lonely and scary.



FND is NOT who you are, you do not have to live with symptoms.
FND is temporary.



FND impacts your



Body: seizures, paralysis, out-of-body, twitches, weakness, pain, etc.



Mind: Racing thoughts, rumination, worry, memory problems, difficulty focusing, brain fog, etc.



Emotions: Anxiety, depression, fear, anger, shame, hopelessness etc.



Your Nervous System ...



Controls Movement
FND = involuntary movement



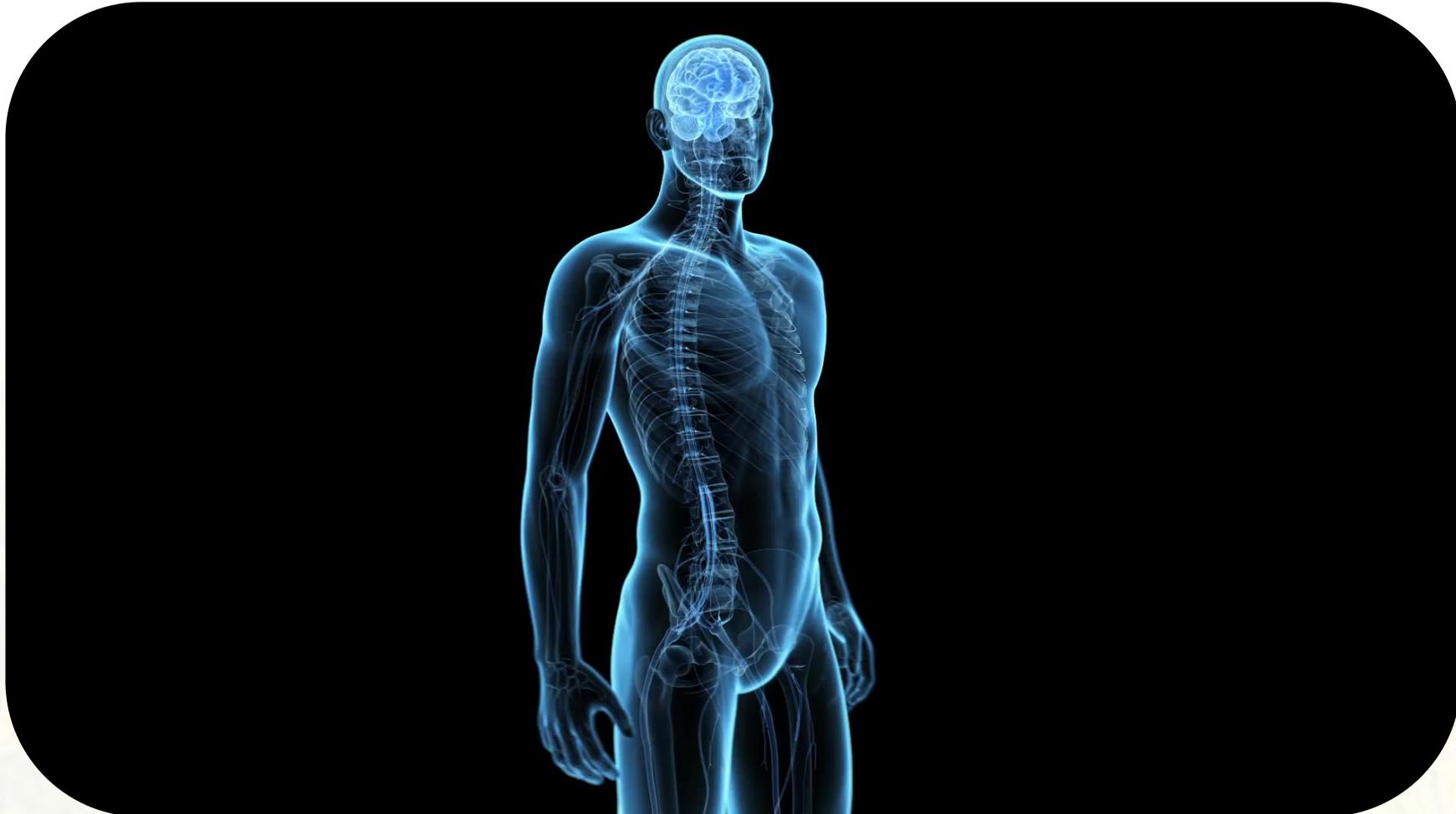
**Impacts thoughts, feelings,
learning, memory**

**Consists of Your Brain and
the Nerves in our Body**

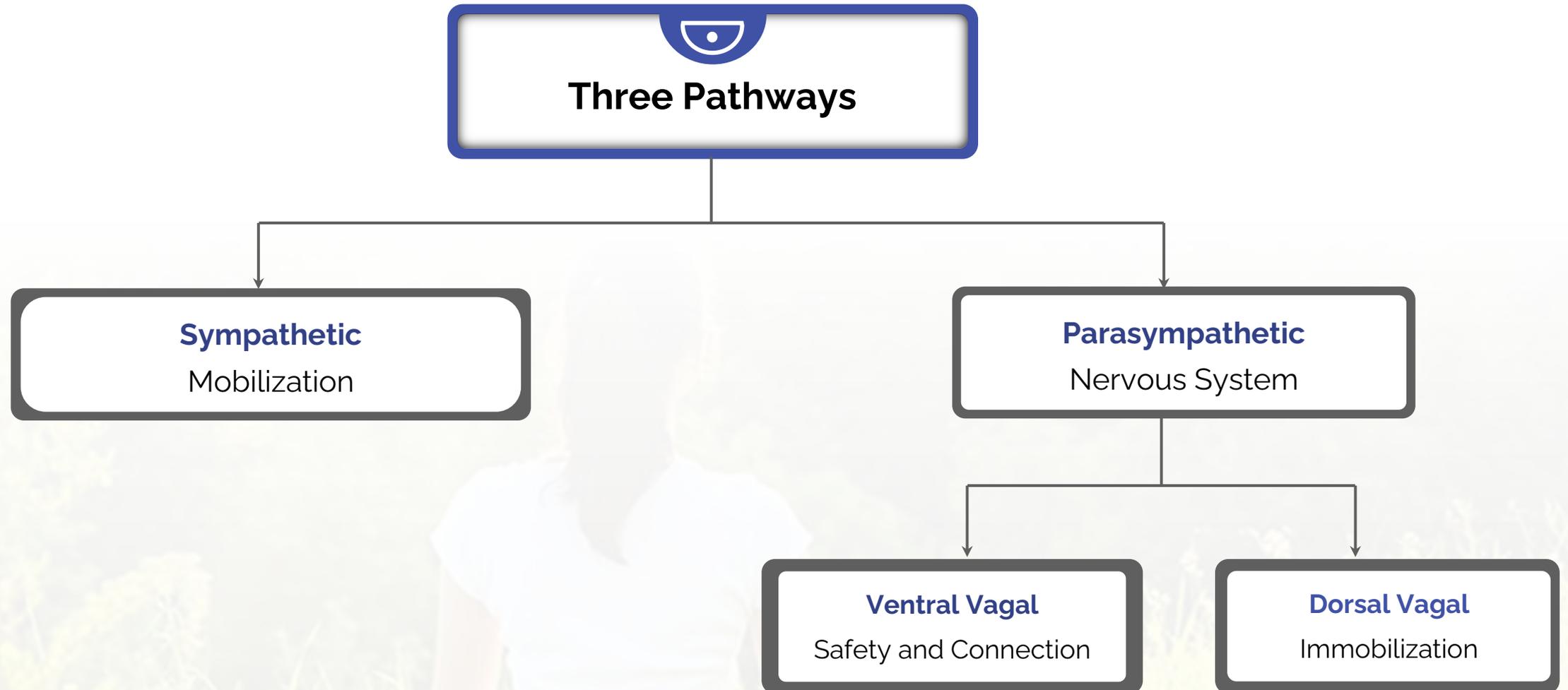
**Effects all our Senses:
see, hear, taste, touch, feel
(Sensitivities)**



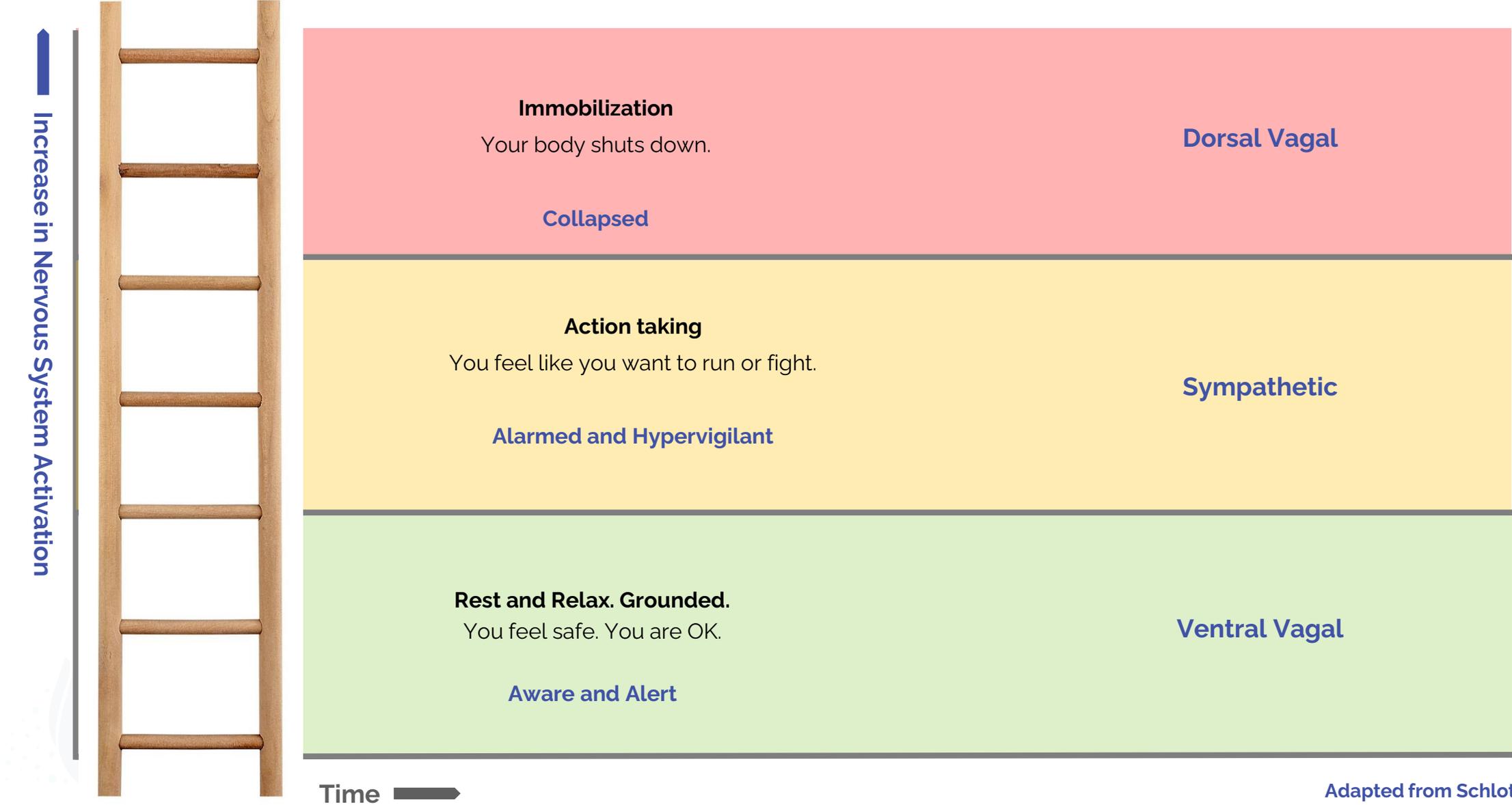
Your Nervous System sends information from the body to the brain – In FND the messaging is disorganized.



The part of the Nervous System important for FND is the Autonomic Nervous System

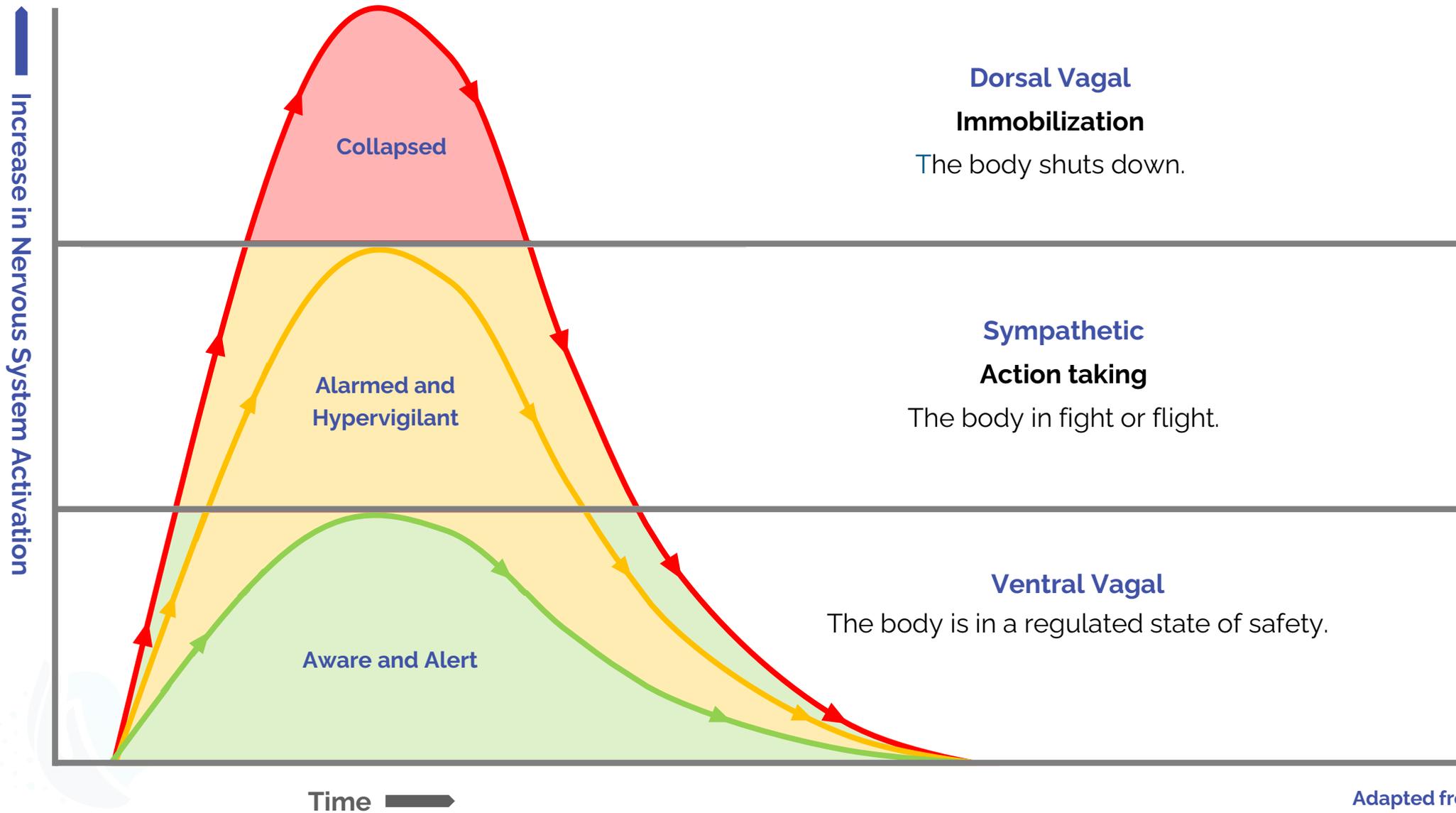


Think of Your Nervous System as a Ladder



Adapted from Schlote, Porges, & Dana

We All get Activated at Times



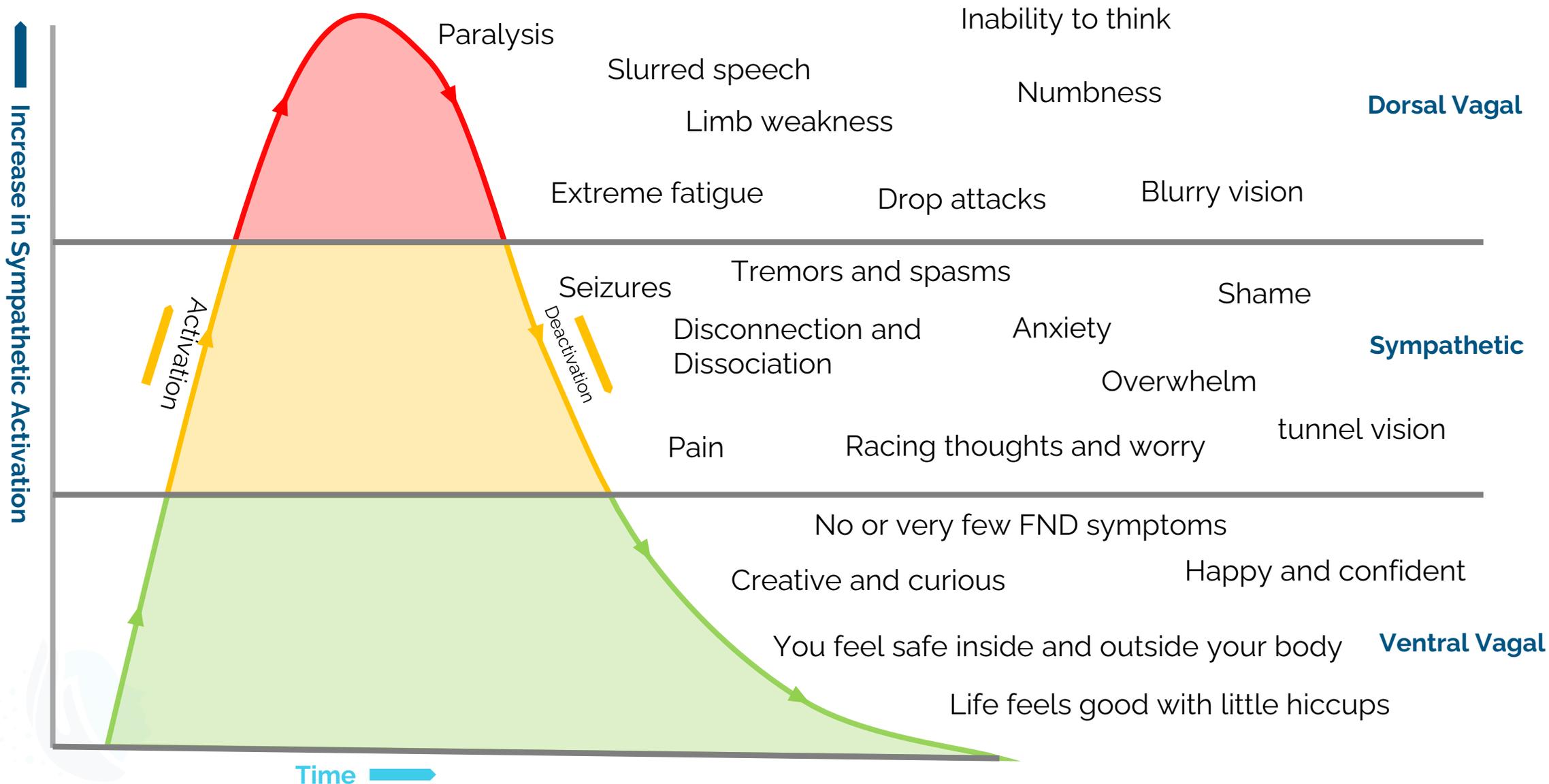
**Dorsal Vagal
Immobilization**
The body shuts down.

**Sympathetic
Action taking**
The body in fight or flight.

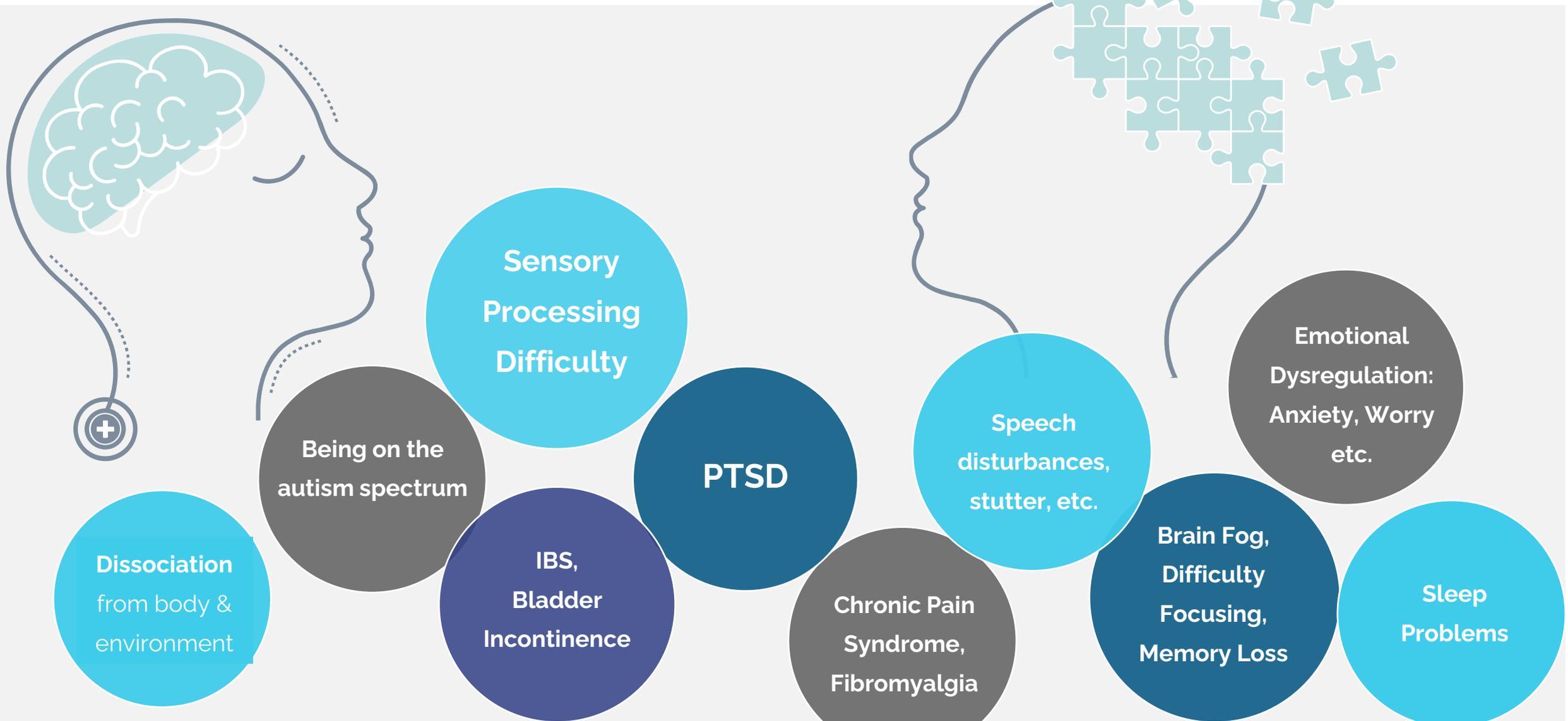
Ventral Vagal
The body is in a regulated state of safety.



Where your FND Symptoms Happen



What Experiences can be part of FND ?



Sensory Symptoms in FND

Positive Sensory Symptoms in FND (Sympathetic Activation):

- Lights too bright, blurry or double vision
- Noises too intrusive
- Heat and cold very uncomfortable
- Uncomfortable skin sensations (tingling, buzzing, crawling, prickling, tenderness or pain)
- Involuntary movement

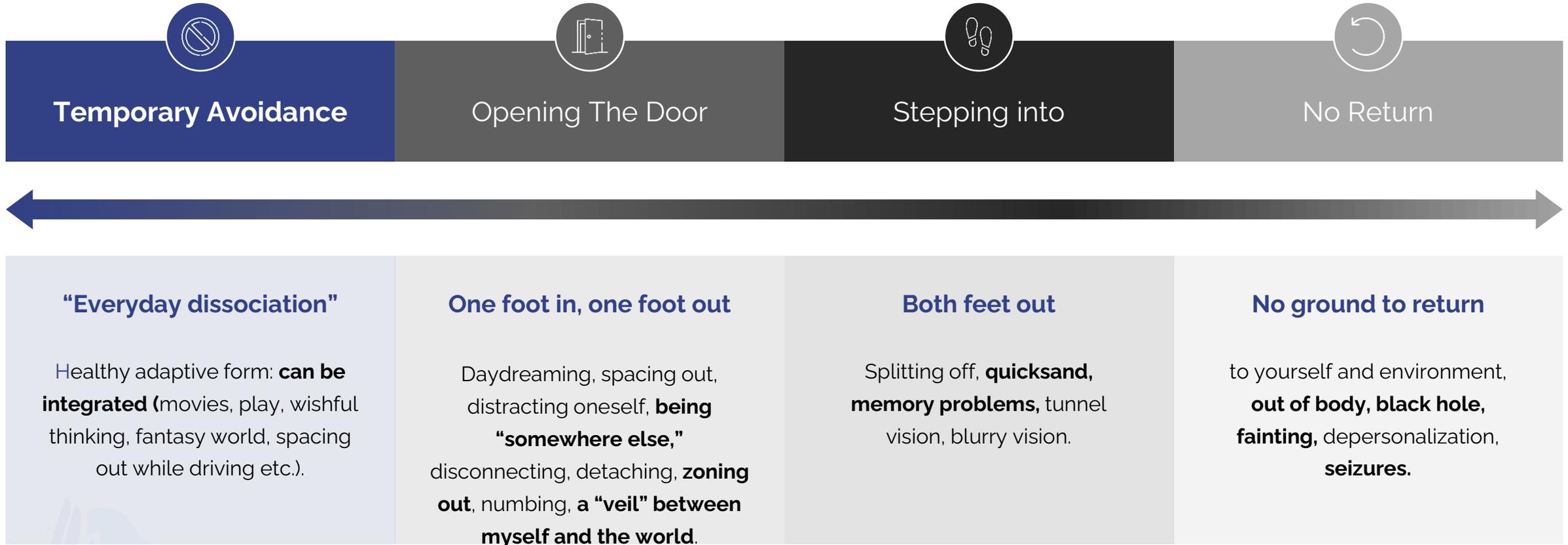
Negative Sensory Symptoms in FND (Dorsal Vagal Collapse):

- Loss of sensation: numbness, no pain, paralysis, etc.



We all Dissociate – You Might get Stuck

Dissociation happens on a Continuum



Helpful Tip: Don't open the door until you know you can step back in.

What can you do? Creating Safety & Connection



Allowing the body to feel safe. “What feels good?”



Stepping into the world of sensory-motor Experiences, away from the narrative.



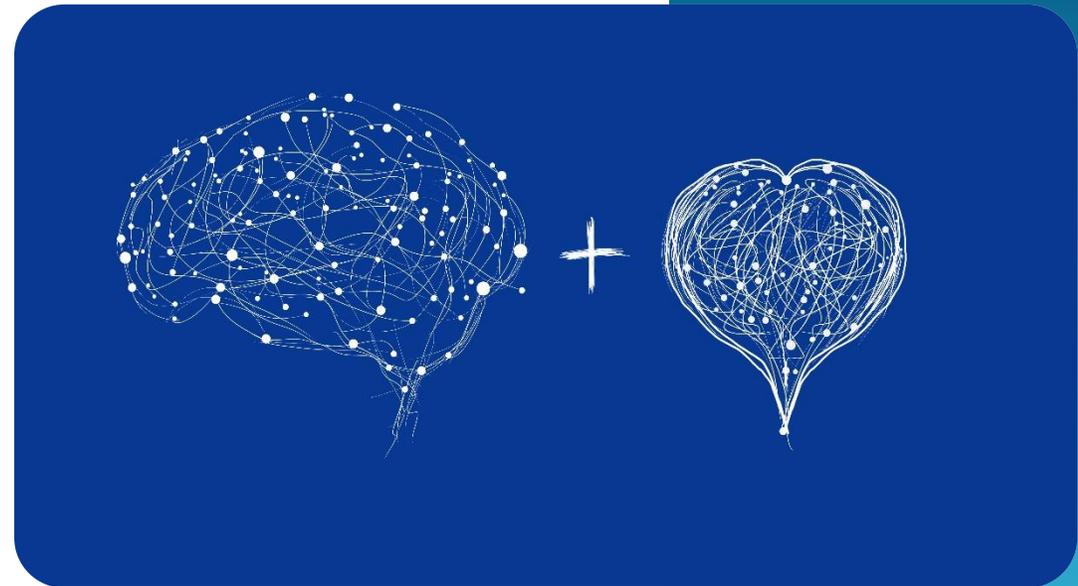
Catching symptoms early allows you to regulate your nervous system.



Offering choice in the exploration of different nervous system states.



Creating Resources: What does the nervous system need in both parent and child?



Resources to Regulate the Nervous System



- **Internal Resources** are **always accessible** no matter where you are.

Examples: Kindness, compassion, patience, life-affirming thinking, positive memories, feeling lovable, hope, etc.



External Resources can become internal resources.

Examples: A safe home, your pet, weighted blanket, friends and family, ice pack, fidget toys, sunglasses, ear plugs, music, quiet, etc.





Sympathetic – when the world is too much

Introduce Safety and Calm

- **Internal:** a general belief that others can be supportive, the world can be safe, ability to lean into others. Etc.
- **External:** friends, family, pets, weighted blanket/vest, soft lighting, soft texture, bath, quiet, ear plugs, sunglasses, a safe home, etc.



Dorsal Vagal – when I am numb and collapsed

Introduce Alertness not Activation

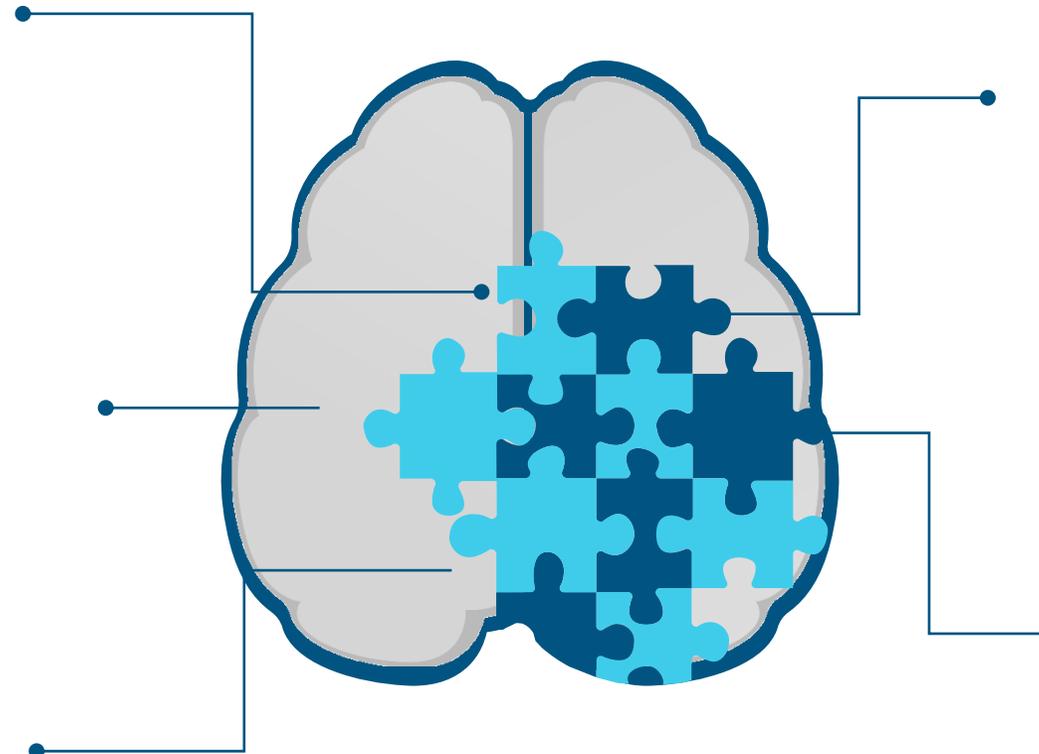
- **Internal:** Kindness, compassion, patience, life-affirming thinking (“I matter.”), positive memories, feeling lovable, hope, etc.
- **External:** small movements, sensory brush, finger worm, music, touch, aromatherapy, your pet, friends and family, ice pack, fidget toys, etc.

Self-regulation – You are inherently healthy

Tracking and Naming a positive experience—where am I on the activation curve?

Bring in a Resource to regulate and Ask for Help.

Setting External and Internal Boundaries.



You are NOT your FND
There is nothing “wrong”
with you.

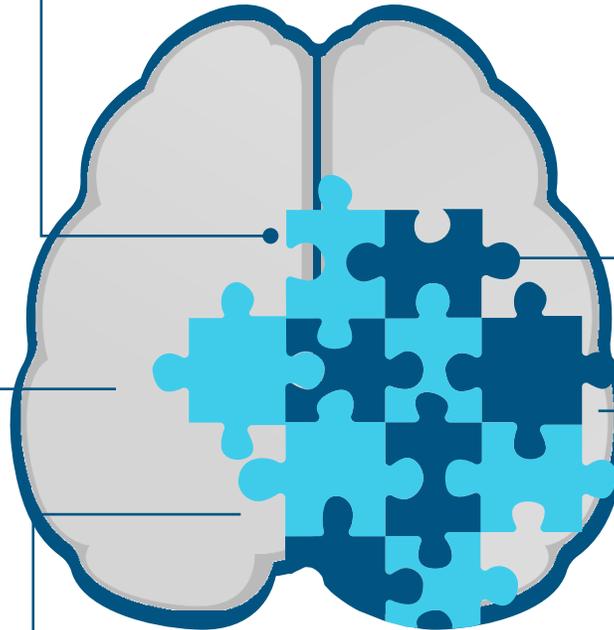
Kindness and Self-
Compassion.
You are loveable just the
way you are.

Co-Regulation – the Family Nervous System

Listen. Validate your child's experience. Listen again.

Learn how to regulate YOUR nervous system and help coregulate your child.

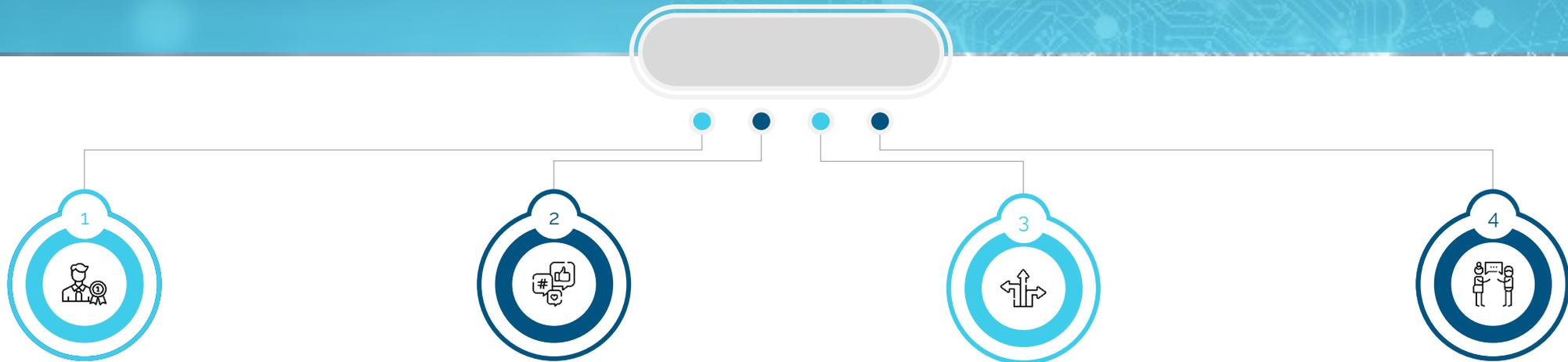
Take the shame out of the experience. FND is nobody's fault.



Allow for space and boundaries while staying in connection.

Be curious. Don't make assumptions. "We are in this together."

Goal: Creating a Life According to YOUR Nervous System



You are more than your Symptoms.

**Know your Limits.
Know your Strength.**

Looking for **“Triggers”**
is not **helpful.**

Not every symptom is FND.
Some days we just feel off.



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for Neuro Health

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