

Your Nervous System

WHY YOUR BODY REACTS THE WAY IT DOES

Your nervous system is designed to keep you safe. When it senses danger, it responds automatically. These responses are not choices — they are survival responses.

YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM

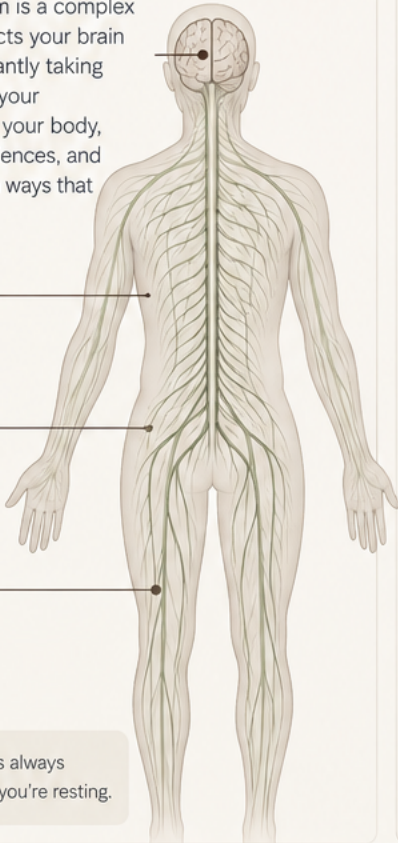
Your nervous system is a complex network that connects your brain and body. It's constantly taking in information from your environment, inside your body, and from past experiences, and helps you respond in ways that keep you safe.

BRAIN
Processes information

SPINAL CORD
Sends and receives signals

NERVES
Carry messages throughout your body

Your nervous system is always working — even when you're resting.



COMMON NERVOUS SYSTEM RESPONSES

When your nervous system senses a threat (real or perceived), it can respond in different ways:



FIGHT

I feel angry, irritated, or overwhelmed.
My body prepares to confront the threat.



FLIGHT

I feel anxious, panicked, or restless.
My body prepares to escape the threat.



FREEZE

I feel stuck, numb, or unable to move.
My body shuts down to survive.



FAWN (PEOPLE-PLEASING)

I try to keep others happy or avoid conflict to feel safe. I lose connection with my own needs.

These responses are automatic and can be helpful in the short term. They become challenging when the nervous system remains activated even when the threat is no longer present.

SIGNS OF NERVOUS SYSTEM DYSREGULATION

A dysregulated nervous system can show up in many ways, including:

- Anxiety, worry, or feeling on edge
- Difficulty relaxing or sleeping
- Feeling numb or disconnected
- Irritability or sudden anger
- Trouble concentrating
- Physical symptoms (e.g., tension, headaches, upset stomach)
- Feeling overwhelmed by everyday stress

WAYS TO SUPPORT YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM

You can help your nervous system feel safer by:



Slow, deep breathing

Signals safety to your nervous system



Gentle movement

Helps release built-up energy and tension



Grounding through your senses

Brings you to the present moment



Connection with safe people

Co-regulation supports a calmer nervous system



Self-compassion and rest

Gives your nervous system time to reset



A more regulated nervous system can help you feel calmer, more present, and more connected to yourself and others.