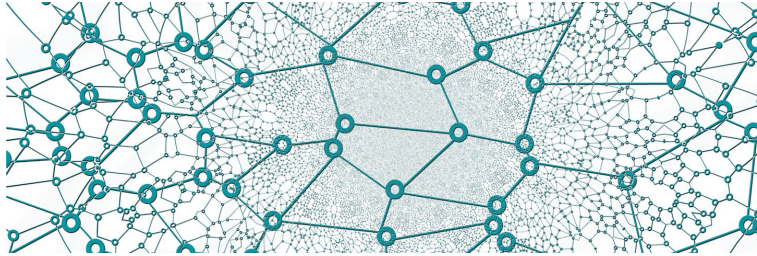


## Understanding the Body's Safety Circuit



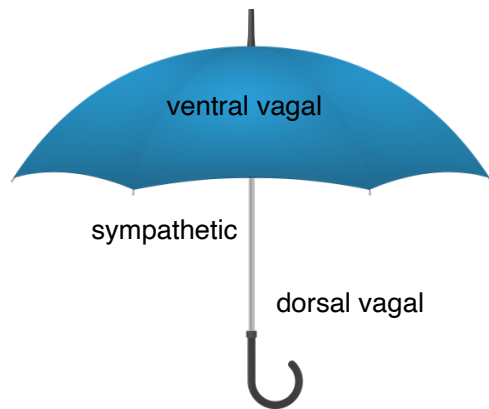
Deb Dana, LCSW

[rhythmofregulation.com](http://rhythmofregulation.com)  
[polyvagal institute.org](http://polyvagal institute.org)

## Webinar 2: Essential Ingredients



## Ventral Vagal Energy is the Active Ingredient



copyright Deb Dana, LCSW 2021





## Bring Your System to Life

Create an image of ventral overseeing the system

Imagine/enact a movement that represents ventral holding sympathetic and dorsal

Write a statement that speaks to ventral active and alive in the system

copyright Deb Dana, LCSW 2021

Without a critical mass of ventral in our system, we are pulled into “conservation” and “activation” as we try to find regulation.



copyright Deb Dana, LCSW 2021

## Anchor in Ventral

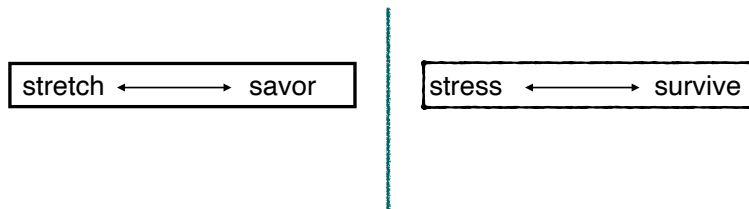
We need a “critical mass” of ventral alive and active in the system

Reach for regulation

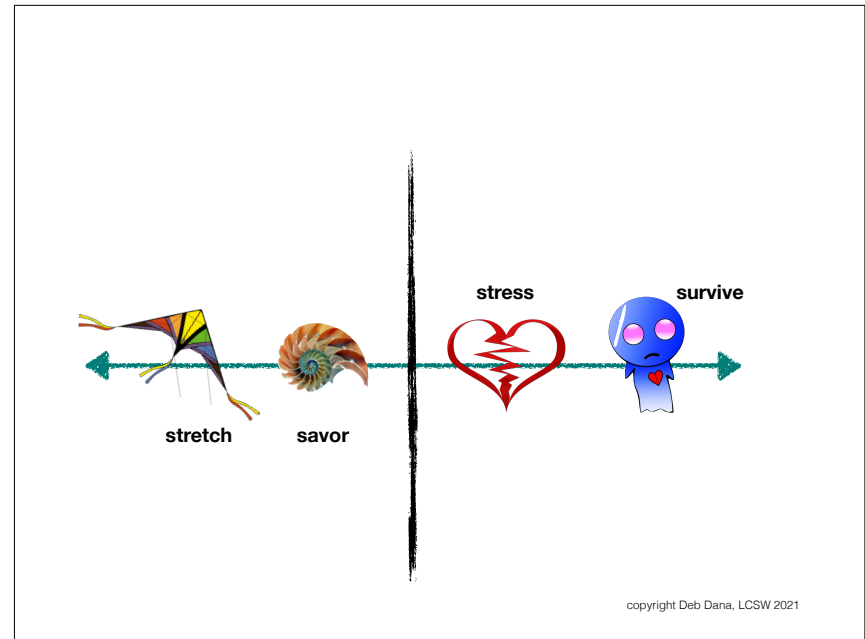
Find your ventral vagal anchors: who (people, pets, ancestors, guides), what (actions and objects), where, and when

copyright Deb Dana, LCSW 2021

## The Right Degree of Challenge



copyright Deb Dana, LCSW 2021



copyright Deb Dana, LCSW 2021

## Navigating the Continuum

Start on the midpoint - balanced at the point of change - and name this place.

Move to stretch and remember a moment of moving in a new direction. Feel the energy of readiness for change.

Move to savor and take time to really notice that.

Travel between stretch and savor.

copyright Deb Dana, LCSW 2021

Return to the midpoint and stop there for a moment.

Take a step into stress. Get to know how you move away from shaping.

Dip a toe in survive. Feel the survival energy and pattern of protection.

Move back from survive to stress and notice the shift.

End your exploration back at the midpoint.

copyright Deb Dana, LCSW 2021

## The Social Engagement System

Formed through the evolutionary integration of Cranial Nerves V (trigeminal), VII (facial), IX (glossopharyngeal), X (vagus), XI (spinal accessory)

### Controls:

- Facial expression (emotional expression)
- Eyelids (social gaze)
- Middle ear (hear human voice)
- Mastication (ingestion, sucking)
- Larynx, pharynx (vocalizing, swallowing, breathing)
- Head turn and tilt (social gesture, orienting)

copyright Deb Dana, LCSW 2021

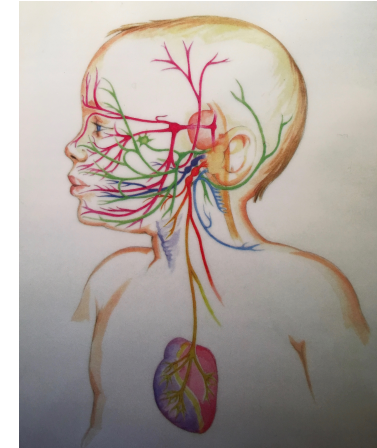
Five cranial nerves joined in the search for connection through our...

eyes

ears

voice

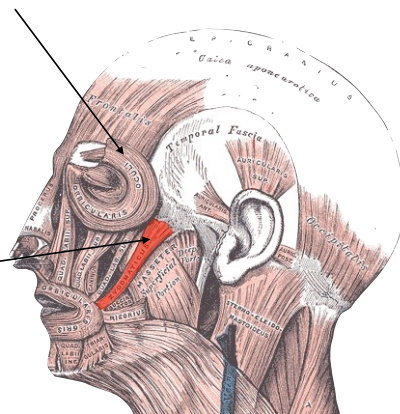
face and head movements



copyright Deb Dana, LCSW 2021

Used with permission: copyright Kate White [ppncenter.com](http://ppncenter.com)

Moving in and out of eye contact is a regulating action. We use the eyes (orbicularis oculi) to sense safety and signal safety.



*"...the zygomatic major can be willed into action, but only the sweet emotions of the soul force the orbicularis oculi to contract." Duchenne*

Gray's Anatomy of the Human Body 1918

## The Power of Prosody

- The music of the voice
- Patterns of rhythm and sound
- Frequency
- Duration
- Intensity
- Reveals the underlying intent

Intonation before Information

copyright Deb Dana, LCSW 2021

## Connection through Vocal Bursts

*When you don't know what to say...use a vocal burst.*

“non-language sounds” we use to communicate  
ahhh, mmmm, ohhhh, humph  
understood across cultures  
understood across species  
understood with a high degree of accuracy

What is the autonomic message you are sending?

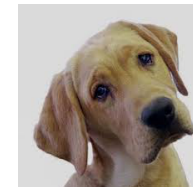
copyright Deb Dana, LCSW 2021

## Head Movement

A straight, unmoving head is an autonomic cue of danger.

A slight tilt to the head broadcasts a cue of safety and an autonomic welcome.

Head nods send a message of connection.



copyright Deb Dana, LCSW 2021

## Extend an Invitation for Connection

There are many flavors of ventral

There are many ways to send a ventral welcome

Stay in the autonomic conversation with another nervous system.

Find the flavor of ventral that meets your client in the moment.

copyright Deb Dana, LCSW 2021