



SYNERGETIC EDUCATION®INSTITUTE

## Ways to Activate the Vagus Nerve, Increase Vagal Tone, and Increase your Heart-Rate Variability (HRV):

### Body awareness

- Tune into how your body feels.
- Notice what it feels like to have your feet on the ground, anything that brings your body back to the present moment

### Breathing

- Paying attention to your breathing
- Deep breathing
- Breathing with longer exhale than inhale. Inhale through the nose for 6 and out through the mouth for 8.
- Alternate-nostril breathing

### Gentle and moderate pressure

- Massaging your foot, head, neck, or carotid sinus (near the right side of your throat where you can feel your heartbeat).
- Massaging your inner ear using slow circles, pull your ear, and massage the area behind your ear.
- Give yourself proprioceptive input.

### Connection

- In person with others
- Online with others
- Visualizing safe others or places
- Looking for clues of safety in your environment

### Additional

- Cold water on your face, or cold compress to your face and back of your neck.
- Vibrating Sounds: Singing, humming, chanting, gargling
- Laughing

### The Basic Exercise (“Accessing the Healing Power of the Vagus Nerve” by Stanley Rosenberg)

1. Lie on back
2. Interweave fingers on both hands and place behind head
3. Without turning your head, look to the right
4. Remain here until you spontaneously yawn or swallow
5. Return to the neutral state with head and eyes straight
6. Repeat on the other side

“The vagus nerve is deeply plugged into our heart, our guts, and our voice. Whenever we turn inward to check in with our true feelings; to check in with our intuitive wisdom; or to find our true expressiveness, we’re lighting up the vagus nerve. Whenever our face reflects what we’re really feeling or experiencing, the vagus nerve is at work. Whenever we plug into the rhythms of ourselves or the world around us, we’re lighting up the vagus nerve.

When we speak, shout, sing, the vagus nerve is lit up like a Christmas tree— which is one of the reasons why those activities can be so cathartic and emotional for so many of us.”

- Dr. Glenn Doyle