

## Stress Reactions Continuum



Ahhhh.....

**SAFE:** I'm able to relax, **connect with myself and others**, and think. People and things matter to me, and I'm interested in learning.



Did I hear something!

**ON GUARD:** I'm ALERT and **checking out my surroundings**. I'm looking around to figure out what information will help me make sense of things. I'm feeling nervous about doing things that seem new or challenging. My thinking is more concrete so I might struggle with things that require creative thinking. If I *know what to expect*, and feel connected, I can still learn.



I definitely heard something!

**CHARGED:** I'm ALARMED because I perceive a real threat. I am paying attention to all movements and sounds but likely **won't process them accurately**. My sense of safety is deteriorating and I'm beginning to feel overwhelmed. The only information I'm processing is what feels relevant to staying safe. My body is frozen as I'm **assessing the danger**. I need someone to *authentically connect with me* and help me move back towards my window of tolerance.



It's coming for me!

**REACTIVE:** I'm AFRAID and feel complete lack of safety. Everything feels like a threat, including you. I've completely disconnected from others and am only aware of myself at this very moment. I'm trying to figure out if there's a way to **get away**. I need an *external regulator to support me* in grounding and regulating.



It's got me, I'm going to die!

**OUT OF CONTROL:** I'm TERRIFIED and in survival mode. My behavior is instinctive, I'm mobilizing everything in my power to **stay alive**. I'm not thinking nor aware of you or my surroundings. I need an external regulator to *keep me safe*.