




SELF-REGULATION



Repairing the nervous system

"Self-control is the chief element in self-respect, and
self-respect is the chief element in courage."—
Thucydides

JESSICA MCGUIRE



How your parents
regulated your nervous
system when you were a
child, can shape how you
cope with and recover
from stress today.



jessicamaguire.com @repairing_the_nervous_system



Parents can't be regulated or attuned to their children all of the time. Research shows that a child will learn healthy self-regulation with "good enough" parenting.

A parent getting stressed, reactive or needing to take care of other siblings happens. Once attunement is restored again the child's developing nervous system will continue to have healthy development.



Without enough soothing co-regulation from a parent or caregivers though, dysregulation can arise: of emotion, thought, cognition and even consciousness in the form of dissociation.

There can be less integration in the areas that link:

- the left and right sides of the brain
 - that link the memory systems
- the thinking brain and the survival brain, and
 - between the brain and the body.



The emotional attunement you receive from parents most of the time throughout your childhood shapes how safe, connected and tethered in the world you feel.

Brain regions to do with self-regulation of stress develop from how parents “tune-in” to your state. Feeling seen and felt as your own separate self, as well as feeling the sense of belonging to something larger than just yourself, sets the stage for healthy regulation. This mirroring teaches you to make sense of your emotions and how to communicate your needs.



The bond you had with your parents as a child shapes the growth and development of the brain, the vagus nerve and the nervous system, in the regions to do with self-regulation.

Your childhood bonds with caregivers echo throughout your life, impacting how you connect with other people, and how you cope with and recover from stress.



This new vagal tone and integration will increase your capacity for self-regulation.

Your emotional health will improve because you'll have the ability to recover from states of anxiety, agitation, reactivity and shut-down.

Your personal and professional relationships improve as these are the same neural circuits that help you to “tune-in” and connect to other people.

Your physical health will improve too as the vagus nerve regulates your organs.



The brain and vagus nerve, like the rest of your body, grow the “muscles” they use the most. You can learn to become a securely attached friend to your own distressed self and attune to your own nervous system.

You can still use co-regulation to improve the functioning of your nervous system and your vagus nerve with interpersonal relationships in therapy, with health professionals, friends, family, community members and even pets.



These are also the exact areas where growth can occur at any age.

This can happen by developing enough vagal tone to regulate your physiology when you're stressed so you don't become stuck in fight-flight-freeze. This can be with neurogenesis where regions of the brain can grow new neural circuits and connect to other areas. This promotes healthy self-regulation and reduces anxiety, reactivity and shut-down.



The branch of your vagus nerve that helps you recover from stress, regulates your heart rate and breathing rate, and helps you to connect with others, begins to develop in the final trimester of your mother's pregnancy and continues into your teenage years.

Its development comes from, skin to skin contact, smiling faces, touch & cooing voices. This branch of the vagus nerve develops by internalising your caregivers co-regulation and learning how to calm your nervous system after stress, on your own.



Reach out to the KéKAY Method

TO HELP ANSWER YOUR QUESTIONS
AND TO LEARN ABOUT GUIDING
YOURSELF INTO REGULATION