

THE

Regulation

DECK

Somatic tools for calming your nervous system



TEMPLE GLIDE



Place heels of palms on temples with gentle pressure.
Pull upwards and slightly back.
Hold for 2 minutes.



Gentle pressure and upward movement can relax facial tension and support calming through touch and sensory input.

SNIFF BREATHING



Take two quick nasal sniffs to expand the belly, then a slow exhale through the mouth.
Repeat 10 times.



Strengthens diaphragmatic movement and reinforces vagal input from the respiratory system.

GARGLING WATER



Gargle with warm water for 30 seconds.



Activates throat muscles connected to the vagus; consistent practice increases tone in this pathway.

BUTTERFLY HUG



Cross your arms so your right hand touches your left upper arm and vice versa.
Tap alternately—left, right, left, right—slowly and rhythmically.
With each tap, say internally: “I’m safe, I’m present.”
Continue for 1 minute.



This engages bilateral stimulation and parasympathetic grounding.

CAT COW STRETCH



On hands and knees, inhale as you arch (cow), exhale as you round (cat).
Continue for one minute.



Diaphragmatic motion and spinal fluid rhythm stimulate vagal communication with abdominal organs.

FACE SUBMERSION



Fill bowl with cold water.
Submerge or press against your face for 15-30 seconds while breathing calmly.



Triggers the mammalian dive reflex: heart rate drops, vagal tone rises, body enters energy-conservation mode.

GUA SHA/FACIAL MASSAGE



Using a smooth tool or fingers, stroke gently behind ears, along jawline, and down neck.
Continue 1-2 minutes.



Stimulates the auricular and cervical branches of the vagus; improves lymph flow and relaxation.

ABDOMINAL MASSAGE



Place a hand on your abdomen and move in slow clockwise circles for 2-3 minutes.



Follows the path of digestion, enhancing gut motility and vagal signaling between intestines and brain.

AURICULAR MASSAGE



With thumb and forefinger, massage the tragus and inner ear bowl for 30–60 seconds.



These zones are innervated by the auricular branch of the vagus; gentle stimulation boosts parasympathetic tone.

TONGUE ROOT STRETCH



Stick out your tongue fully, hold for five seconds, release.
Repeat five times.



The tongue's root shares neuromuscular pathways with the vagus; stretching it engages those reflexes.

LAUGHING



Begin with forced laughter (“ha-ha-ha”) for 30 seconds.
Let it become genuine if it can.

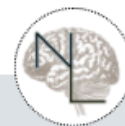


Laughing alternates diaphragm contraction and relaxation, producing a mini massage of the vagus.

ICE PACK



Take an ice pack wrapped in a towel and hold it to your face, neck, or chest for 15 seconds up to 20 minutes.



Stimulates facial cold receptors, triggering the dive reflex, which increases vagal tone, reduces heart rate, and promotes calm.

QI GONG INNER SMILE



Close eyes, bring a slight smile, and “send” that warmth to your heart, lungs, and abdomen.
Hold 2-3 minutes.



Visualization plus gentle facial engagement recruits vagal relaxation and emotional coherence.

RESONANCE BREATHING



Inhale through your nose for 5.5 seconds
Exhale slowly through your mouth for 5.5 seconds
Continue this rhythmic pattern for 2 minutes



Imagine your breath sweeping through your heart center. This synchronizes heart and breath rhythms for optimal vagal tone.

COLD WATER SPLASH



Splash face with cold water for 30-45 seconds.
Breathe calmly as the water touches your face.



This activates the mammalian dive reflex, slowing heart rate and stimulating the vagus.

ICE PACK



Take an ice pack wrapped in a towel and hold it to your face, neck, or chest for 15 seconds up to 20 minutes.



Stimulates facial cold receptors, triggering the dive reflex, which increases vagal tone, reduces heart rate, and promotes calm.

LEGS UP WALL



Lie on your back with legs resting up a wall or chair.
Let arms fall open, palms up.
Focus on slow exhalations. Continue this pose for 2-3
minutes.

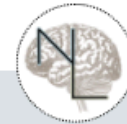


The position supports venous return and engages baroreceptors
that feed into the vagus nerve.

EYE & NECK RELEASE



Slowly move eyes side to side (without moving your
head), pausing for 5 seconds at each end.
Next, tilt your head slightly right, breathe in; tilt left,
breathe out.



Finish by softening your gaze and let your eyes rest on the
periphery of the room, noticing safety in your surroundings.

HUMMING/CHANTING



Choose a low tone like "mmm" or "om" and hum
through your exhale.
Feel the vibration in your throat, chest, and face.
Continue for one minute of steady sound and breath.

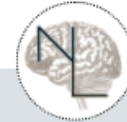


Close your eyes to reduce sensory input and amplify internal calm.

TONING VOWELS



Sustain "Aaaaah," "Eeee," and "Oooo" for 10 seconds
each.
Cycle through for 1-2 minutes.



These long vowels produce broad vibratory resonance that reaches
cranial nerves IX and X (glossopharyngeal and vagus).

SHOULDER SHRUG



Lift shoulders toward ears as you inhale.

Hold for 2-3 seconds

As you exhale, drop your shoulders.

Repeat 5-10 times



Releases built-up tension in the neck and shoulders and uses a quick release + exhale to signal safety to the nervous system.

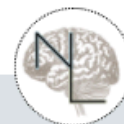
PALM PRESS



Press palms together and start to increase pressure slowly. Hold for 5-10 seconds.

Release.

Repeat 3-4 times.



Activates deep pressure receptors, which can create a grounding, organizing effect on the nervous system.

WALL PUSH



Place hands on wall and push as hard as feels safe.

Hold for 5-10 seconds, then slowly release.

Repeat 3-5 times.



Engages muscles in a controlled way (isometric activation), helping the body discharge stress and feel more stable.

BILATERAL TAPPING



Tap left thigh with left hand.

Then right thigh with right hand.

Alternate back and forth. Keep a steady rhythm.

Continue 1-2 minutes.



Alternating left-right stimulation helps regulate the brain and can reduce emotional overwhelm (similar to EMDR principles).

VALSALVA MANEUVER



Pinch nose tight & close your mouth
Exhale forcefully.
Hold for 10-15 seconds.



Briefly increases internal pressure, which can stimulate the vagus nerve and slow heart rate when released.

SHAKE RELEASE



Shake your body.
Arms, legs, hands, feet, etc.
Do for at least 1 minute



Mimics the body's natural way of releasing stress, helping discharge excess activation and reset the system.

TRAGAL PRESSURE



Use your thumbs to press the tragus on ear to "close"
the ear. Hum a low note.
Do this for a minute.



Applies pressure near branches of the vagus nerve in the ear,
which can support calming and parasympathetic activation.

EFT TAPPING



Tap each spot 5-7x.
At each spot repeat a grounding phrase.
Repeat entire process as many times as
needed.



Uses rhythmic tapping on acupressure points to reduce stress
signals and help regulate emotional intensity.

DOMING



Lift the soft palate in the top of your mouth.
Feel the stretch and hold for a few seconds.
Repeat 2-3 times.



Engages muscles connected to the vagus nerve in the soft palate,
which may support parasympathetic activation.

STERNUM TAPS



Use your hand to gently tap sternum.
1-2 taps per second.
Do this for 20 seconds up to several minutes.



Stimulates the area over the heart and thymus, using rhythm to
promote calming and regulation.

TONGUE CIRCLES



With mouth closed trace your teeth in a circle.
10x clockwise
10x counter-clockwise



Activates cranial nerves connected to the vagus nerve and helps
release tension in the jaw and face.

BODY COMPRESSION



Cross arms and grab opposite shoulders
Squeeze firmly.
Cross legs at ankles
Squeeze firmly.
Hold for 20-30 seconds.



Deep pressure input to joints and muscles provides grounding and
a sense of physical safety.