

# UNLOCK YOUR PEACE

REGULATE YOUR NERVOUS  
SYSTEM IN 14 DAYS

by  
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## ABOUT

# Heidi

I am a licensed school psychologist with over 20 years supporting kids, schools, & families in private practice, public & private schools, clinics, & as a professor. I am a small business owner as well in my small town of Floyd, VA. More than any of that though, what taught me to really understand how to help kids, is my 25 years of experience as a mom of 7 through birth & adoption. I am passionate about supporting adults who serve kids.

## FIND ME

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READY?

# Unlock Your Peace

A 14-Day Guide to Transformative Nervous System Regulation for Overwhelmed Parents and Teachers.

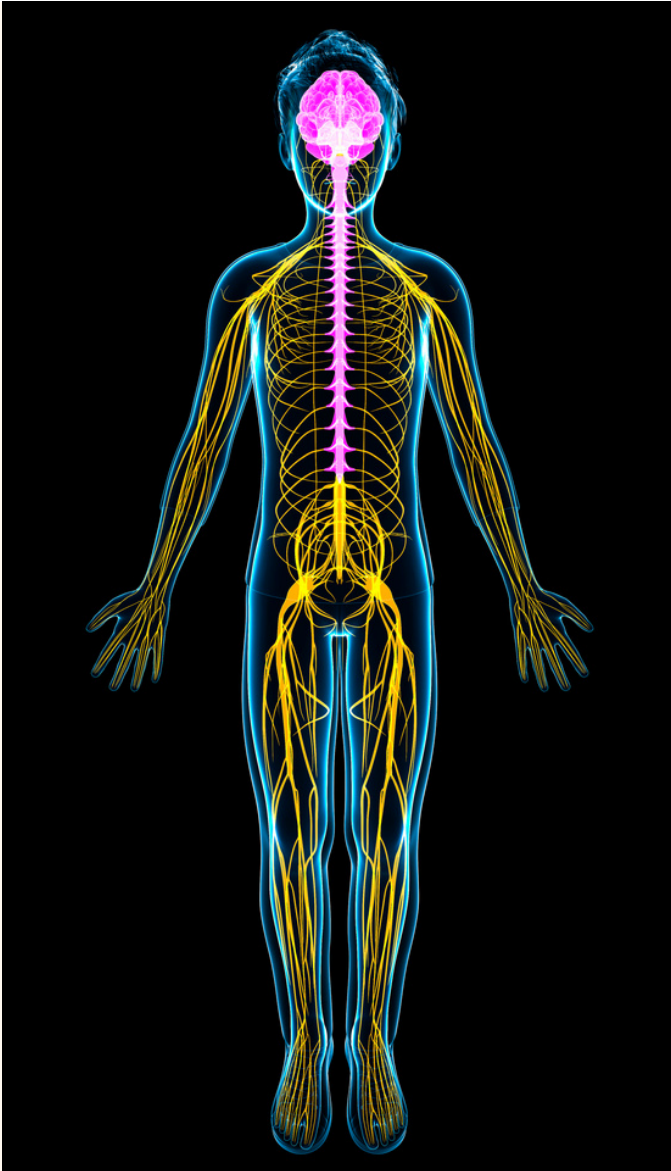
As a seasoned psychologist, entrepreneur, and a dedicated mother of seven, I merge brain-based science with relatable insights, providing you with scaffolded steps to regulate your own nervous system and empower your children for a more harmonious life. Let's embark on this journey together, where science meets practicality, and transformation begins in just 14 days!



“Your most valuable parenting skill is learning to manage yourself first.”  
– Dr. Laura Markham

## DAY 1-3

We begin by delving into the intricacies of the nervous system. In this you will, explore the autonomic nervous system and its impact on stress response and recognize the fight-or-flight and rest-and-digest modes, laying the foundation for effective regulation



### UNDERSTANDING THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

The nervous system is a complex network of nerves and cells that transmit signals between different parts of the body. It plays a crucial role in regulating various bodily functions, including our response to stress. Two key branches of the nervous system are particularly relevant in understanding stress responses: the sympathetic nervous system (SNS) and the parasympathetic nervous system (PNS).





## SYMPATHETIC NERVOUS SYSTEM

# Sympathetic Nervous System

**Function:** The SNS is often referred to as the "fight-or-flight" system. It activates in response to perceived threats, preparing the body for action.

**Physical Responses:** When the SNS is activated, your heart rate increases, breathing becomes rapid, and blood is redirected to vital organs, preparing you for quick and decisive action.

*Imagine a parent hearing a loud crash in the house. The immediate surge of adrenaline and heightened alertness is a result of the SNS preparing the body to respond to a potential threat.*



Function: The PNS is often referred to as the "rest-and-digest" system. It promotes relaxation and recovery.

### Physical Responses:

Activation of the PNS leads to a decrease in heart rate, slowed breathing, and increased blood flow to the digestive system.



After a stressful day, when a parent takes a moment to sit down, breathe deeply, and relax, it's the PNS at work, signaling the body to shift into a state of calm.



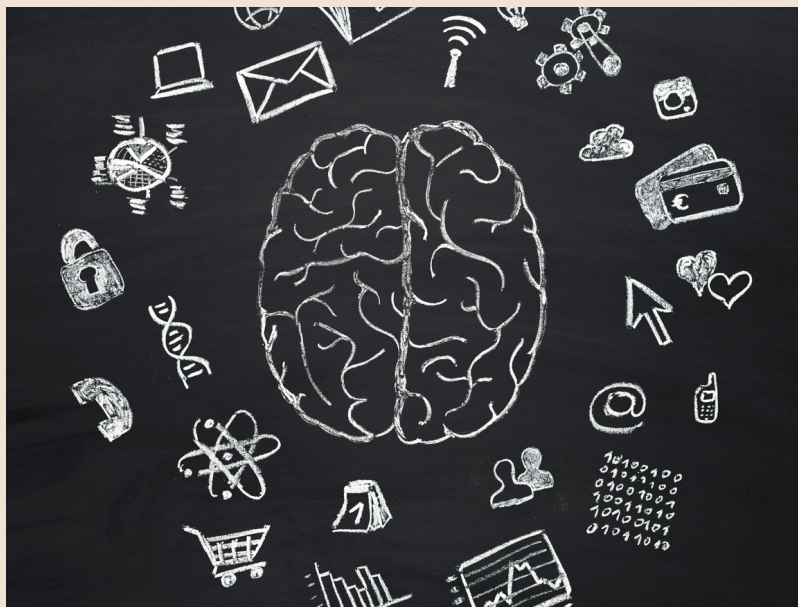
### ***Recognizing the Fight-or-Flight and Rest-and-Digest Modes***

If a parent is stuck in traffic and running late to pick up their child, the fight-or-flight response may kick in, leading to physical symptoms such as a racing heart and increased stress.

# ***Recognizing the Fight-or-Flight and Rest-and-Digest Modes***

## **SIGNS OF FIGHT-OR-FLIGHT MODE**

- ***Rapid heartbeat***
- ***Shallow breathing***
- ***Tense muscles***
- ***Heightened alertness***
- ***Sweating***





## SIGNS OF REST-AND-DIGEST MODE

- Slower heartbeat
- Deep, steady breathing
- Relaxed muscles
- Improved digestion
- Sense of calm

***Taking a few minutes for deep breathing exercises or enjoying a quiet moment with a cup of tea can activate the rest-and-digest mode, promoting a sense of relaxation and well-being.***



Recognizing these modes is the first step in effective regulation. By developing awareness of your body's stress responses, you can intentionally engage strategies to shift from fight-or-flight to rest-and-digest, promoting emotional balance and resilience. In the midst of parenting challenges, being attuned to your nervous system allows you to respond thoughtfully rather than react impulsively, fostering a calmer and more supportive environment for both you and your children.

# Mindful Breathing

Introduce simple yet powerful mindful breathing exercises to bring awareness to your breath, activate the vagus nerve, regulate the amygdala. Practice daily to regulate your nervous system and model these techniques for your children. Discover the profound impact conscious breathing can have on stress reduction.



01

## FIND A QUIET SPACE & COMFY POSTURE

Choose a quiet place where you won't be disturbed, creating an environment conducive to relaxation. Sit or lie down in a comfortable position. Close your eyes if you feel comfortable doing so.

02

## FOCUS ON & COUNT YOUR BREATHS

Inhale slowly to a count of four, then exhale to the same count. Repeat this cycle. Focusing on the breath and counting helps anchor your attention. If your mind starts to wander, gently bring it back to the breath without judgment. Observe the rise and fall of your chest or the sensation

## GRADUAL LENGTHENING & PRACTICE

As you become more comfortable, gradually extend the length of your inhalations and exhalations. Set aside a few minutes each day for mindful breathing. Consistency is key to reaping the full benefits.

## WHY BREATHING & PRACTICE MATTERS

Regular practice rewires the brain over time. Consistent mindful breathing strengthens the neural pathways associated with calmness, making it easier to access a regulated state during stressful situations. It reduces cortisol levels, enhances emotional regulation, & improves focus.



In summary, mindful breathing is a scientifically grounded technique that empowers overwhelmed parents to regulate their nervous systems and model emotional resilience for their children. Through daily practice, this simple yet profound activity becomes a cornerstone for building a more harmonious and stress-resilient family dynamic

# Grounding

Explore grounding techniques that connect you to the present moment. Whether it's through mindful walking, grounding exercises, or nature immersion, learn to anchor yourself amidst life's chaos. Share these practices with your children to build a family culture of resilience.

## WHY IT MATTERS

### Interrupting the Stress Response:

Grounding techniques act as a pause button for the stress response. By anchoring your attention in the present moment, you disrupt the cycle of anxious thoughts and physiological stress reactions.

### Creating a Sense of Safety:

Grounding brings awareness to the immediate environment, signaling to the brain that there is no immediate threat. This sense of safety allows the nervous system to shift towards a more relaxed state.

## 5-4-3-2-1 Grounding Exercise

5 things you can see: Look around and notice five distinct things in your environment.

4 things you can touch: Identify four textures or surfaces you can touch.

3 things you can hear: Pay attention to three sounds in your surroundings.

2 things you can smell: Recognize two scents, whether subtle or strong.

1 thing you can taste: Focus on one taste, even if it's just the lingering flavor in your mouth.





# EMOTIONAL REGULATION

Neuroplasticity: Regular practice of emotional regulation techniques rewires the brain over time. Modeling these practices for children contributes to the development of healthy neural pathways associated with emotional balance.

Creating a Family Culture: Consistent practice establishes emotional regulation as a valued skill within the family. It creates a culture where acknowledging and managing emotions is a normal and constructive part of daily life.

Parents can verbalize their emotions, saying, "I feel frustrated right now." This modeling helps children understand that it's normal to experience a range of emotions. Encourage children to express their feelings verbally, fostering emotional intelligence and open communication within the family.

By incorporating these research-backed emotional regulation strategies and modeling them for children, overwhelmed parents can foster a resilient family environment where emotional well-being is prioritized and actively cultivated.

## STRATEGIES

# EMOTION LABELING

*Emotion labeling involves the prefrontal cortex, responsible for self-awareness and emotional regulation. Actively naming emotions engages this region, calming the amygdala's response and facilitating a more measured emotional reaction.*

*Research indicates that accurately labeling emotions diminishes their intensity. By putting feelings into words, individuals gain a cognitive handle on their emotions, making it easier to navigate and regulate them.*



## **PROGRESSIVE MUSCLE RELAXATION**

1. Find a Quiet Space: Choose a comfortable and quiet space where you can sit or lie down.
2. Focus on Breathing: Take a few deep breaths to center yourself. Inhale slowly through your nose, hold for a moment, and exhale through your mouth.
3. Begin with Toes: Tense the muscles in your toes for 5-10 seconds, then release the tension completely. Feel the difference between tension and relaxation.
4. Move to Calves: Progressively move through each muscle group, tensing and then relaxing. Move from your toes to your calves, thighs, abdomen, chest, arms, and all the way up to your forehead.



### **SELF SOOTHING TECHNIQUE**

**As you tense and release each muscle group, pay attention to the sensations. Notice the contrast between tension and relaxation.**

**If you still feel tension, repeat the process for specific muscle groups or the entire body until you experience a sense of calm.**



## THANK YOU

As I worked on this guide for you, I found myself thinking about who will use it, apply it, & calm with these words. I pray it eases your stress, improves your family dynamic, & gives you peace.

**Continue your journey with me & check out my other resources & courses on my site.**

Website : [www.nestpsychological.com](http://www.nestpsychological.com)