

Autonomic Nervous System & Mental Health

Our autonomic nervous system (ANS) works with the goal of our survival. Therefore, it needs to act quickly & respond to threat or danger, often with our cognitive/conscious understanding of the experience coming later.

Perception

The story that we create to make meaning of our experience is highly informed by the automatic state/response we just had. Sometimes we experience a state of sadness or anxiety, but our cognitive understanding or insight of our current experience may not come right away.

Our ANS is constantly shifting & changing throughout the day and throughout our lifetime. Our ANS was shaped as we developed in childhood. Our past experiences, positive or negative, sculpted our ANS. Complex or single event traumas can alter the functioning of our ANS, causing emotional dysregulation.

Homeostatis

Homeostatis is what our body constantly pursues.

With a fully functioning ventral vagus, we are able to flexibly move through the different states (fight/flight/freeze/fawn/connection) throughout our day. Stimuli our ANS filters contributes in creating our state.

