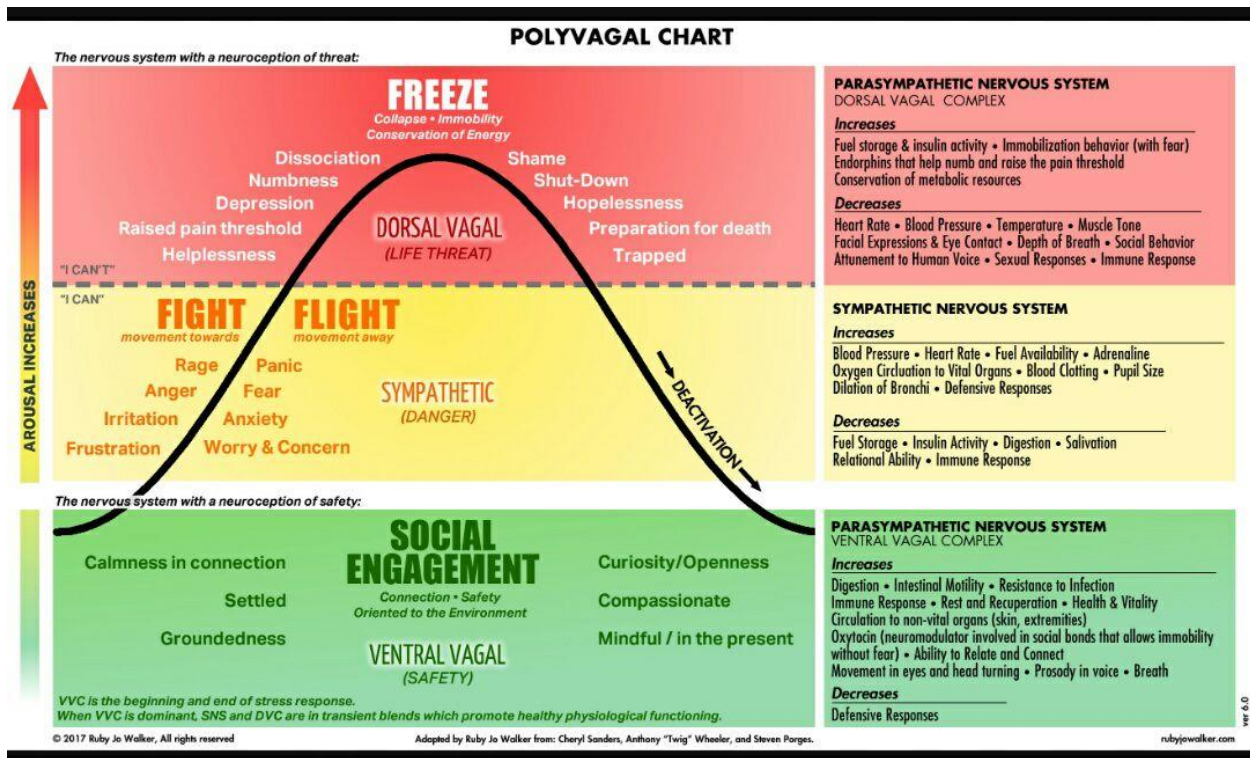


SIX RIVERS

Trauma – Informed Communication

When people experience trauma, it lodges in their body. During the traumatic experience, the nervous system responds with increased or decreased activity. Later, if certain factors (specific environment, activities, stress states, etc.) occur, the nervous system will respond as if the trauma is reoccurring. When this happens, people lose their ability to relate and connect. The chart below describes the physiological states accompanying trauma response.



When interacting with someone in a trauma response, or when in a triggered state oneself, the most important action is to shift the nervous system towards safety. If you observe agitation or shutting down in another person, model calm social engagement. The following four-step process can help settle oneself as well as provide settling for another person.

Situation	What do you observe? What is happening?
Background	What is the context? Who else knows?
Assessment	What is your capacity? Consider situational relevance and stability.
Recommendations	What are you or they going to do?