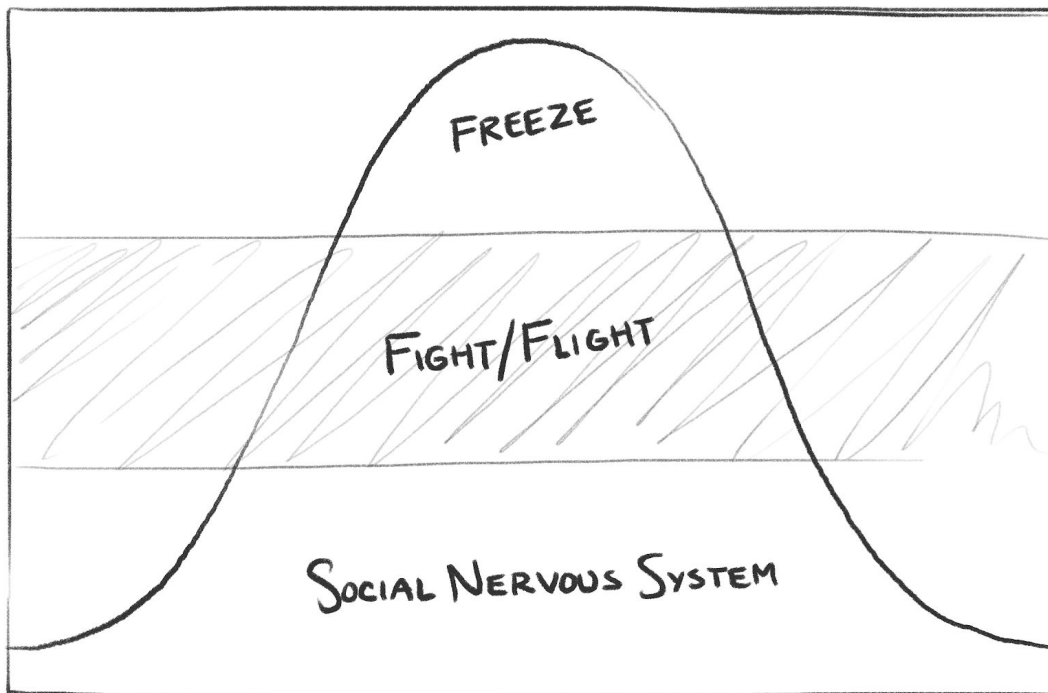


UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCY AND THE STRESS-RELAXATION CYCLE

Resiliency refers to the capacity of individuals, families, and communities to heal from trauma, and to strengthen their wellbeing and adaptability in ways that can mitigate or prevent future trauma (LATRISC, 2017).

One way to build resiliency is to develop an embodied understanding of the stress-relaxation cycle (SR Cycle). In the simplest version of this model, there are three stages of the SR Cycle: *social nervous system*, *fight/flight*, and *freeze*. Once a person can use the SR Cycle as a tool to identify where they are in the cycle, they can determine which tools are best to help settle their body in that given moment. When people develop a regular practice of using self-regulation tools as needed, they increase their capacity to manage stress and build resilience. When service providers can do this for themselves and identify where those they work are in the SR cycle, they can: 1) respond more effectively to the needs of their clients, 2) actively resist re-traumatization, and 3) prevent compassion fatigue and burnout.



Stress-Relaxation Cycle

Signs of stress down-regulation

Yawning, sighing, eyes watering, stomach gurgling

UNDERSTANDING RESILIENCY AND THE STRESS-RELAXATION CYCLE

	Mental	Emotional	Physical	Social
Freeze	Hopeless Stuck Trapped Overwhelmed Scattered Spacey Dreamy Confusion Blank mind Forgetful	Numb Apathy Shame	Very tight or overly soft muscles Slow heart rate Slow, shallow breathing Numbness Dizziness Pale Unfocused eyes Blurry vision Flat facial expression Monotone voice Clumsy	Disconnected Non-responsive Shut down Checked out
Fight/Flight	Over-focused or unfocused Difficult concentration Negative outlook Rigid Repetitive thoughts Rapid thoughts	Irritable Annoyed Angry Rage Worried Anxious Afraid Terror Panic	Tight muscles Fast, shallow breathing Fast heart rate Cold hands and feet Sweaty and hot Dry mouth Poor digestion Constipation Restless Agitated Shaky Fast speech Eyes darting Poor sleep	Impatient Self-focused Confrontational Avoidant
Social Nervous System	Curious Clear mind Creative Flexible Focus and concentration Positive outlook Peaceful Ease	Happy Joy Love Even mood	Vibrant Relaxed muscles Even breathing Moderate heart rate Easy digestion and elimination Expressive facial movements Fluid rhythm and tone in voice	Attuned Responsive Interactive Patient

TOOLS FOR STRESS DOWN-REGULATION

GROUND	
Type	Mindfulness
When to use	Medium fight/flight
How to do	Bring awareness to your entire physical state (sensations) in the present moment without judging or attempting to change the experience. Then bring awareness to your emotional state (feelings) in the same way, and lastly to your mental state (thoughts).

TRACK	
Type	Mindfulness
When to use	Medium and low fight/flight
How to do	Focus your attention on an area of discomfort without judging or attempting to change the sensations. Note as many qualities of the sensation as possible (location, depth, type of sensation, etc.). Also note if the sensation changes in any way

ORIENT	
Type	Mindfulness
When to use	Anytime, especially freeze and high fight/flight
How to do	Engage your senses to connect to your external environment. Look around, being sure to turn your neck. Notice sounds, smells, and taste. Feel sensation and temperature on your skin.

SETTLING BREATH	
Type	Movement – Breath
When to use	Anytime, especially medium fight/flight or freeze
How to do	Notice your breathing. Gradually and gently increase the length of the exhale until it is twice as long as your inhale (for example, breath in for a count of 2 and out for a count of 4). The breath should be easy and unforced. Try breathing through your nose if this is comfortable. Repeat several times.

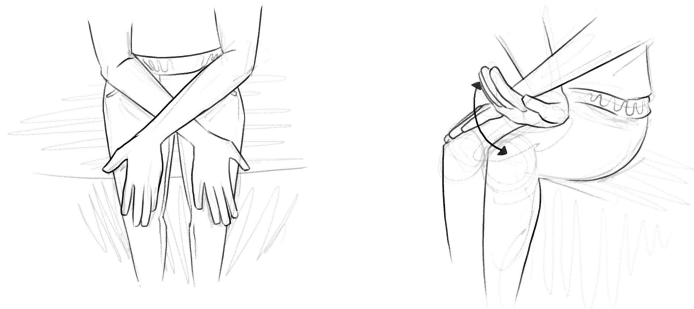
BUTTERFLY HUG	
Type	Movement – Cross the Midline
When to use	Anytime, especially freeze and high fight/flight
How to do	Lift both hands with palms facing you. Cross the hands and grasp the thumbs. Place the hands on your chest with the fingers pointing up toward your head and the fingertips just under your collarbone. Tap one hand gently against the chest and then the other. Continue alternate tapping

KNEE TAPPING	
Type	Movement – Cross the Midline
When to use	Anytime, especially freeze and high fight/flight
How to do	Place the right palm on the left thigh just above the knee. Place the left palm on the right thigh just above the knee. Tap the right hand and then the left. Continue alternate tapping



Butterfly Hug

Knee Tapping



IDENTIFYING SIGNS OF TRAUMA PRACTICE

Please provide a few examples of the signs of trauma your clients exhibit **most frequently**.

Domain	Examples of Trauma Impact on an Individual
Physical	
Emotional & Mental	
Behavioral	
Spiritual	
Relational	