



Stephen Porges: Embodiment Through the Lens of Polyvagal Theory



Stephen Porges holds a Ph.D., is the author of the Polyvagal Theory, is the distinguished University Scientist at the Kinsey Institute, Indiana University, and is Professor of Psychiatry at the University of North Carolina. Learn about the importance of felt safety to increase the connectedness between other people.

TOP EMBODIMENT TIP: Listen to your body, and as you listen to your body, know whether you live in a space of safety or threat. Take a breath and then see if the world looks more safe to you.

Full Embodiment: **Not only being fully in our body, but also being at a calm state enables us to fully interact with others, so that we are co-regulating with other people.**

Social Engagement System: **Where we evaluate others at a distance to determine the level of safety or caution**

- Trauma re-tunes the body's nervous system to first detect harm rather than to detect safety.
- Trauma re-tunes (changes wiring in the nervous system) to be defensive & removes the privilege of feeling safe.
- Trauma disintegrates purpose in life due to the person now questioning- is it ok to get out of bed? Is it safe to go outside?
- There is only one true purpose: survival. The flip-side result is that the ANS will see danger where there is no danger.

Exercises to Re-Regulate the Vagus Nerve with the Autonomic Nervous System:

- **Through the breath** - when we exhale slowly, the Vagus Nerve is calmed, and extending the inhale is energizing.
- Breathing deeply with the abdomen will also calm down the nervous system.
- Extend your phrases of words and take a breath.
- Playing a wind instrument can also help practicing long breaths.

How to become a Super Co-Regulator:

- Super co-regulators have learned to self-regulate themselves, and share that safe space with others.
- To be a super co-regulator, use facial expression; good witnesses use listening skills and acknowledge others.
- Be a compassionate witness (without offering advice or judgment).
- **Find ways to see others in pain without taking on their pain, but in supporting the aspects of that person's Autonomic Nervous System.**

Resources:

- ❖ **Books:** *Polyvagal Exercises for Safety and Connection: 50 Client-Centered Practices*
- ❖ **Website:** www.stephenporges.com, and soon to come: www.polyvagalinstitute.com



Stephen Porges, Ph.D.





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Ilan offers **online trainings and in-person retreats** and her work has been described as an “Avantgarde Embodiment Training for Warriors”. She teaches in both German and English.

Currently she is dedicating an online training to **#LoveAndRage** - a somatic series of events teaching how to un-learn cultural confusion around anger, relationship, love and self-love. **#LoveAndRage** explores how to activate innate instincts and boundaries, and how this empowers human love beyond concepts and words. You are welcome to find out for yourself!

ILAN STEPHANI

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