

COME HOME TO VENTRAL

Early Edition

Practices for Shifting Your Nervous System State

Your Nervous System Is Not the Enemy

- Your nervous system is always trying to keep you safe.
 - When you feel anxious or shut down (**sympathetic (fight/flight)** or **dorsal (freeze/collapse)**), your body is not failing. It is protecting you.
 - These simple practices can help your body return to a calm, safe place. That calm place is called **ventral**. It is where connection, healing, and peace live.
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MOVEMENT PRACTICES

HIGH ACTIVATION - Fight or Flight

You might feel: Anxious • Restless • Heart racing • Overwhelmed • Snappy • Unable to slow down

1. **Extended Exhale Breath**
 - Breathe in for 4 counts.
 - Breathe out for 6–8 counts.
 - Longer exhales help your body calm down.
 - Repeat 5–10 times.
2. **Look Around (Orienting)**
 - Slowly turn your head from side to side.
 - Let your eyes gently look around the room.
 - This tells your body, “I am safe right now.”
3. **Shake It Out**
 - Like a horse after it gets scared, gently shake your hands, arms, and legs.
 - Let the extra energy move out of your body.
4. **Cold Water or Press Your Feet Down**
 - Run cold water over your wrists OR
 - Press your feet firmly into the floor.
 - This helps your body come back to the present moment.

LOW ACTIVATION - Freeze or Shut Down

You might feel: Numb • Tired • Heavy • Foggy • Disconnected • Quiet

1. **Gentle Movement**
 - Rock side to side, sway, or take a slow walk.
 - Slow movement helps wake your body up safely.
2. **Humming**
 - Hum a low, steady sound.
 - The vibration helps your body move toward calm and connection.
3. **Sunlight and Warmth**
 - Step outside.
 - Feel the sun on your face.
 - Light and warmth tell your body that it is safe.
4. **Do One Small Thing**
 - Make tea.
 - Write three words.
 - Text someone you care about.
 - Small actions help you feel strong and able again.

The Worthy Cowgirl

COMING HOME TO VENTRAL

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MOVEMENT PRACTICE — FOR SHIFTING YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM STATE

DEEPENING CALM (VENTRAL) Already feeling steady? These help you stay there longer.

1. **Notice Something Beautiful**
 - Pause and really enjoy something good.
 - Let yourself stay with that feeling.
2. **Soft Face and Kind Eye Contact**
 - Let your face relax.
 - Make gentle eye contact with a person, your horse, or even yourself in the mirror.
 - Connection helps your body feel safe.
3. **Feel Gratitude in Your Body**
 - Think of something you are thankful for.
 - Notice where you feel it in your body — maybe your chest or your belly.
 - Feeling gratitude in your body is more powerful than just thinking about it
4. **Be With Your Horse**
 - Stand quietly with your horse.
 - Breathe with them.
 - Feel their warmth.
 - When your horse feels safe, they live in calm.
 - Let their calm help your calm.

GENTLE REMINDERS

- *You are not broken. Your body learned these responses to survive.*
 - *Change takes practice and kindness, not force.*
 - *Small calm moments, practiced often, build new habits in your brain.*
 - *You are not meant to do this alone. Connection is part of healing.*
 - *Healing is not a straight line. Some days you practice. Some days you rest. Both matter.*
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"Your horse is always listening to your nervous system. When you come home to calm, they feel it before you say a word. Your calm is the invitation."