

Support the Vagus Nerve Reset, Relaxation, and Digestion:

A list to choose a few of that sound enjoyable to implement. The purpose is to actively do less, not put more on an already full plate. :)

- **Eat slowly**— Make meals an "experience." Our bodies are smart, but can't tell if we're running from a bear or just in hurry mode. It shuts digestion off if we're in flight or flight mode since it knows keeping us alive is more important than digesting a meal.
- **Chew food at least 20-30 times before swallowing**— 30% of digestion happens in the mouth through chewing and saliva! Give the poor stomach a break by chewing.
- **Always sit while eating**— this goes with the first two points. If we aren't seated, this tells our body not to digest food, but then forces it to do so when we're on the go or standing.
- **Checking your breathing habits throughout the day**— is breath coming from the chest or belly, and how quick is it? Deep belly breathing gives more oxygen to the body, which is vital for full cell functionality.
- **Relax facial muscles at night**— Oftentimes unknowingly, we carry tension from the day with us to bed. Are your eyes squeezed together tightly, your lips pursed, forehead furrowed? Go further and check your hands and arms.
- **Slow breathing when going to bed**— Just like with our facial muscles, the quick, short breaths often follow us to bed. Focus on deep, belly breathing while going to sleep.
- **Humming**— This can actually reset the vagus nerve-- the nerve that runs directly from the brain to the gut-- and support calmness.
- **Quite seated morning time before getting going**— If time allows, before getting going for the day, sit quietly (e.g. prayer, reading the Bbl, journaling). This allows your body to slowly wake up and feel energized, instead of "on edge," jumping from bed into the day.
- **A walk/sitting out in nature**— numerous studies have shown how this actually causes the nervous system to relax. Nature is God's free therapy to us, so why not use it?
- **Practice being present**— Take time in the day to focus on sounds, smells, anything around you to be very present, turning off any thoughts and just listening.
- **Journaling**— though not everyone's favorite, particularly those who are busy/ don't like sitting for longer periods of time, I highly encourage trying it. The frequency is your choice— every morning or just every Saturday. This gives the mind a break.
- **Listening to peaceful music**— This is another form of therapy that's been studied to have amazing effects on the vagus nerve
- **Self talk**— Tell yourself that resting is an ACTIVE form of supporting yourself and doing good for others. It allows us to be more in-tune and present when interacting with others.