

NERVOUS SYSTEM

Vagus Nerve Calming

Gentle techniques that activate the vagal brake and help move the body out of a stress response. The vagus nerve links the brain with the heart, lungs and gut — stimulating it gently tells the whole body it is safe to slow down.

Techniques to try

01	Extended exhale	Breathe in for four and out for six to eight. The slow out-breath is one of the most direct ways to engage the vagal brake.
02	Humming	Hum a low, steady note on your out-breath. The vibration in the throat and chest gently stimulates the vagus nerve. Singing works too.
03	Cool water	Splash cool water on your face, or hold something cool against your cheeks or the back of your neck for a few moments.
04	Soft gaze	Let your eyes rest on something neutral in the middle distance. Slowly turn your head from side to side, letting your gaze trail behind.
05	Gentle pressure	Place a hand on your chest or belly and feel its warmth and weight. Slow, self-directed touch can be deeply settling.

Gentle reminders

- These techniques work best with repetition. A minute or two, a few times a day, matters more than one long session.
- Notice which techniques suit you — everyone's nervous system responds a little differently.
- If any technique feels uncomfortable, simply leave it. Take what helps and set aside the rest.

None of this is homework, and none of it is required — take what feels helpful and leave the rest.