

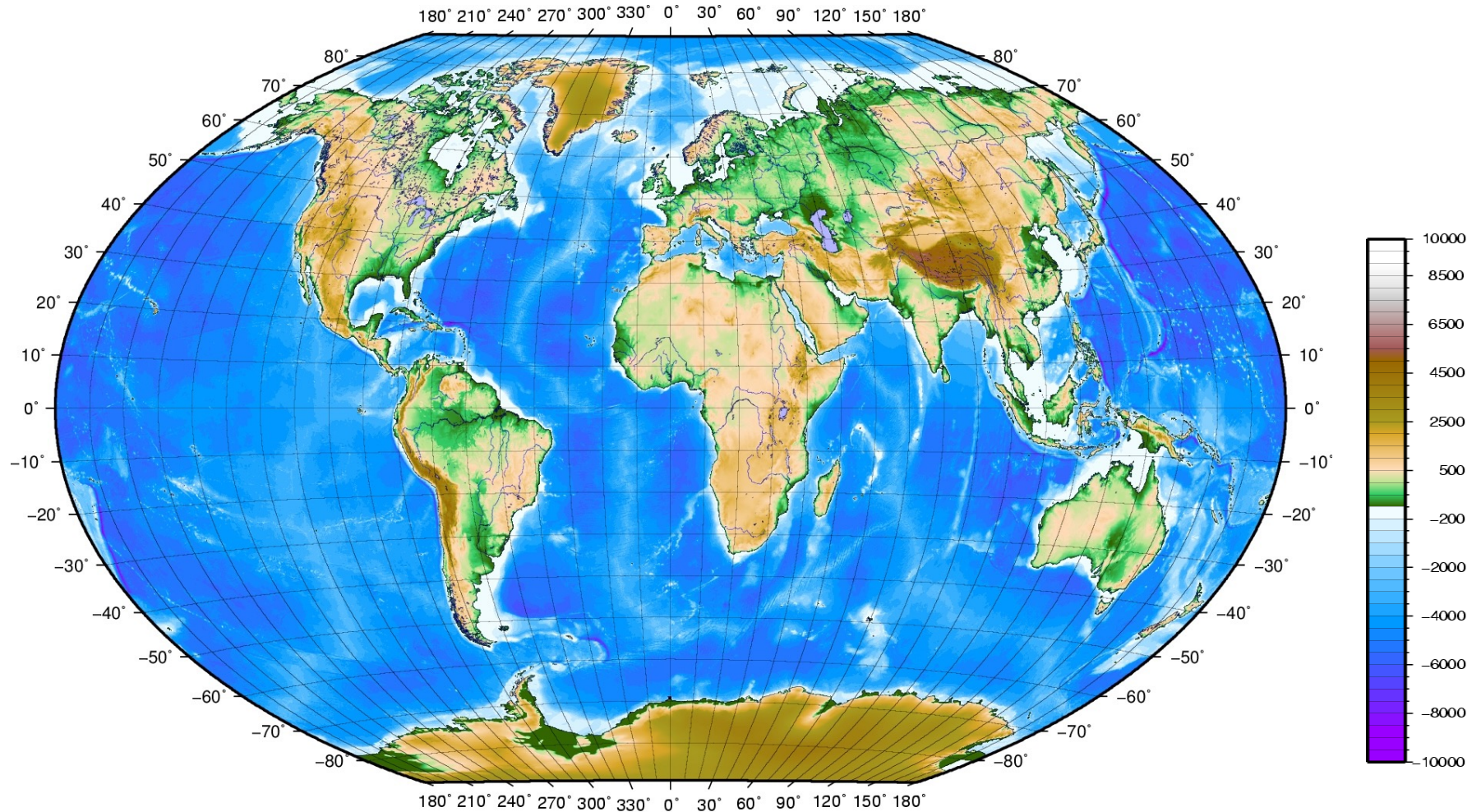
The Sweet-spot for Relationship & Wellbeing

An internal body-mind map of experience

Survivor's Healing Center Presentation on 11/27/23
Marlon A. Guarino LMFT

World Map

To go somewhere in the world, we must first know where we are, the terrain around us, and possible destinations. A map, so we know where home is and how to get there.



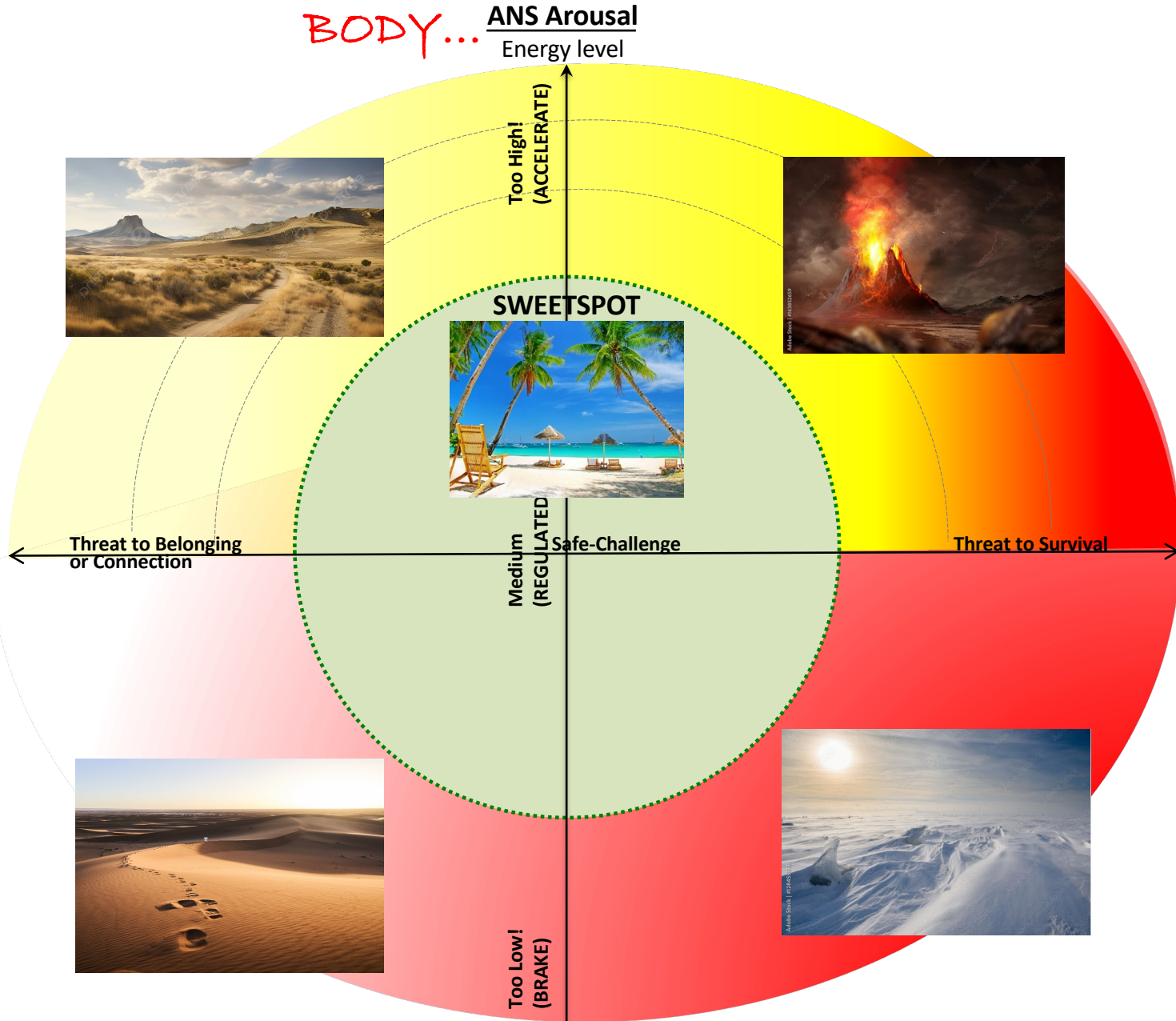
The Sweet-spot for Relationship & Wellbeing

So as well we need a map of our internal body-mind-spirit experience. To help navigate, to know where and how to get to the place of wellbeing. To cultivate healthy relationship with oneself, with our loved ones, with others, nature, and the unknowable.

BODY... ANS Arousal
Energy level

MIND ...

SAFETY
Perceived or Actual,
Externally or Internally



*Adapted from Relational Mindfulness & autonomic Nervous System (ANS), 2018 ProactiveMindfulness.com article by Serge Prengel, at <https://tinyurl.com/v9w6ojl>

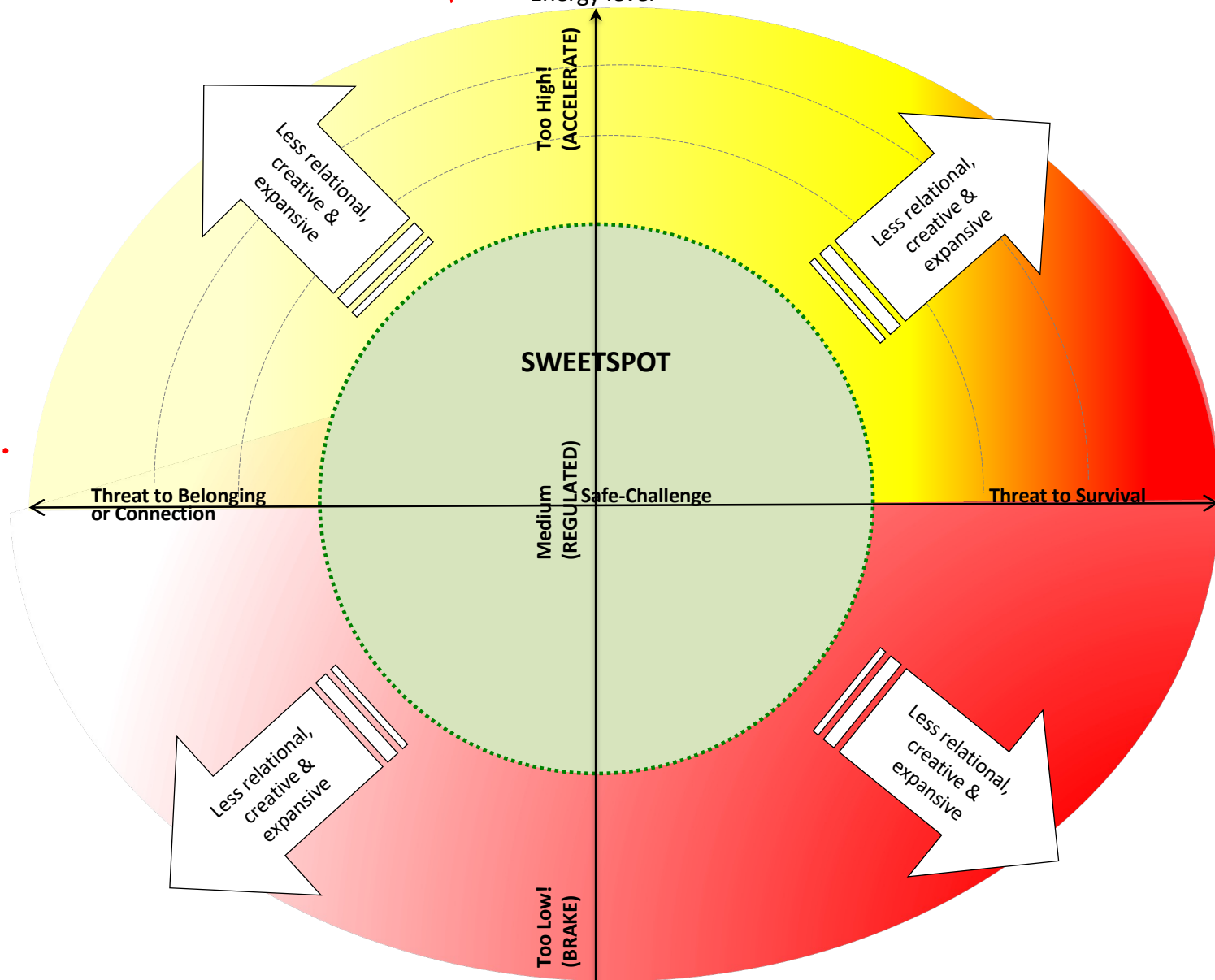
The Sweet-spot for Relationship & Wellbeing

In the sweet-spot we are able to be relational, however, as we move away from the center (green circle) we become less and less capable of being relational.

BODY... ANS Arousal
Energy level

MIND ...

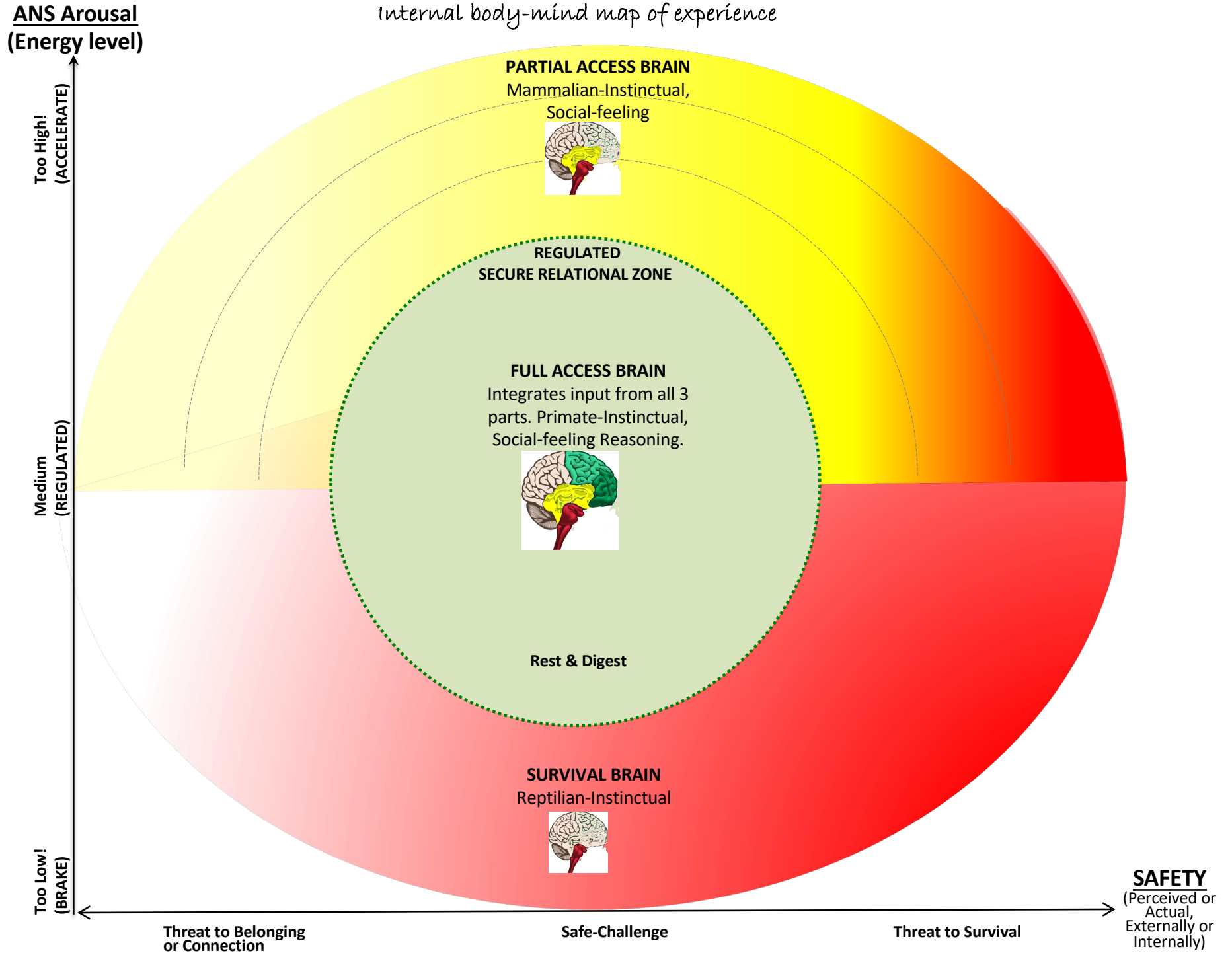
SAFETY
Perceived or Actual,
Externally or Internally



*Adapted from Relational Mindfulness & autonomic Nervous System (ANS), 2018 ProactiveMindfulness.com article by Serge Prengel, at <https://tinyurl.com/v9w6ojl>

The Sweetspot for Relationship and Wellbeing

Internal body-mind map of experience



*Adapted from Relational Mindfulness & autonomic Nervous System (ANS), 2018 ProactiveMindfulness.com article by Serge Prengel, at <https://tinyurl.com/v9w6ojl>

The Sweetspot for Relationship and Wellbeing

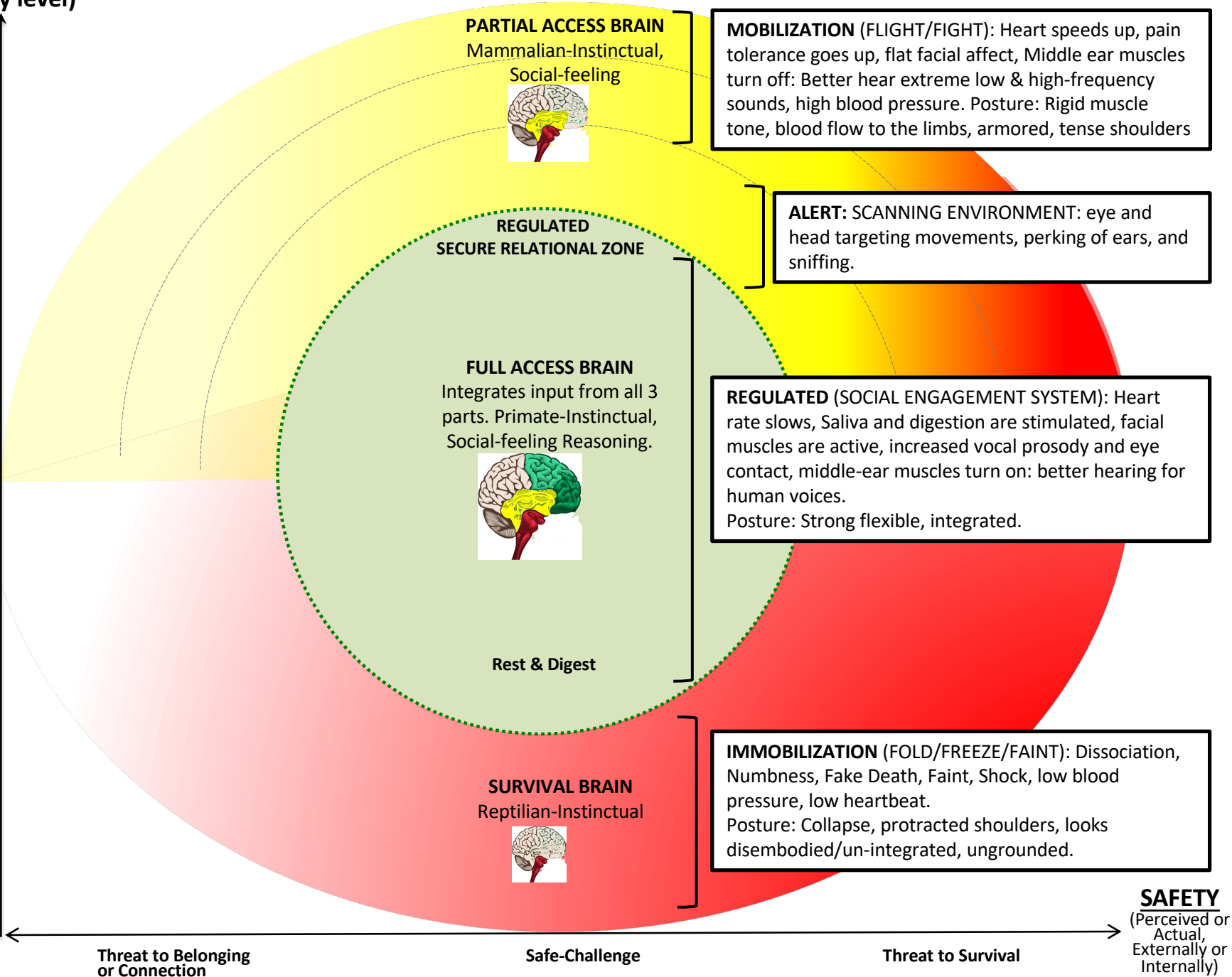
Internal body-mind map of experience

**ANS Arousal
(Energy level)**

Too High!
(ACCELERATE)

Medium
(REGULATED)

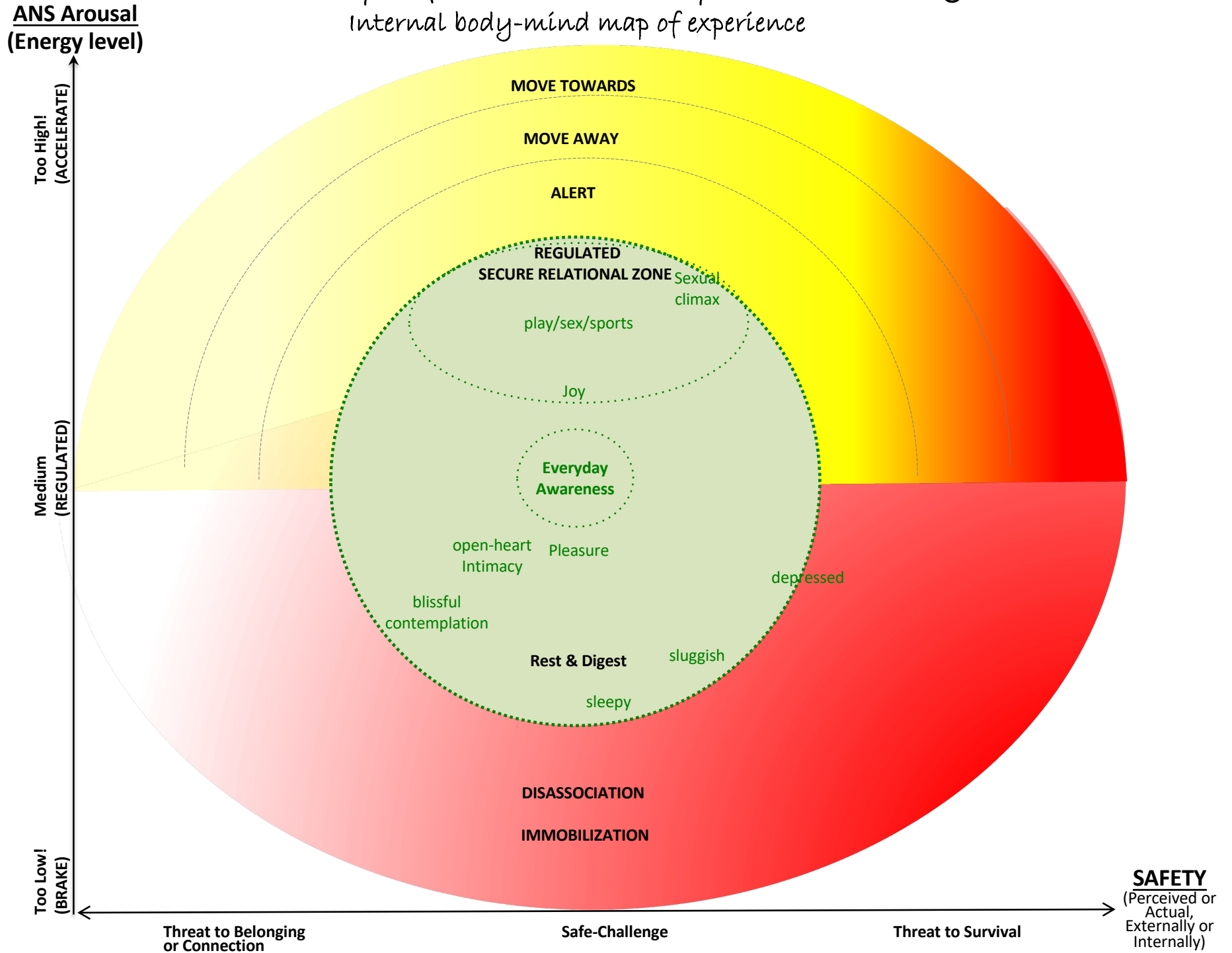
Too Low!
(BRAKE)



*Adapted from Relational Mindfulness & autonomic Nervous System (ANS), 2018 ProactiveMindfulness.com article by Serge Prengel, at <https://tinyurl.com/v9w6oj>

The Sweetspot for Relationship and Wellbeing

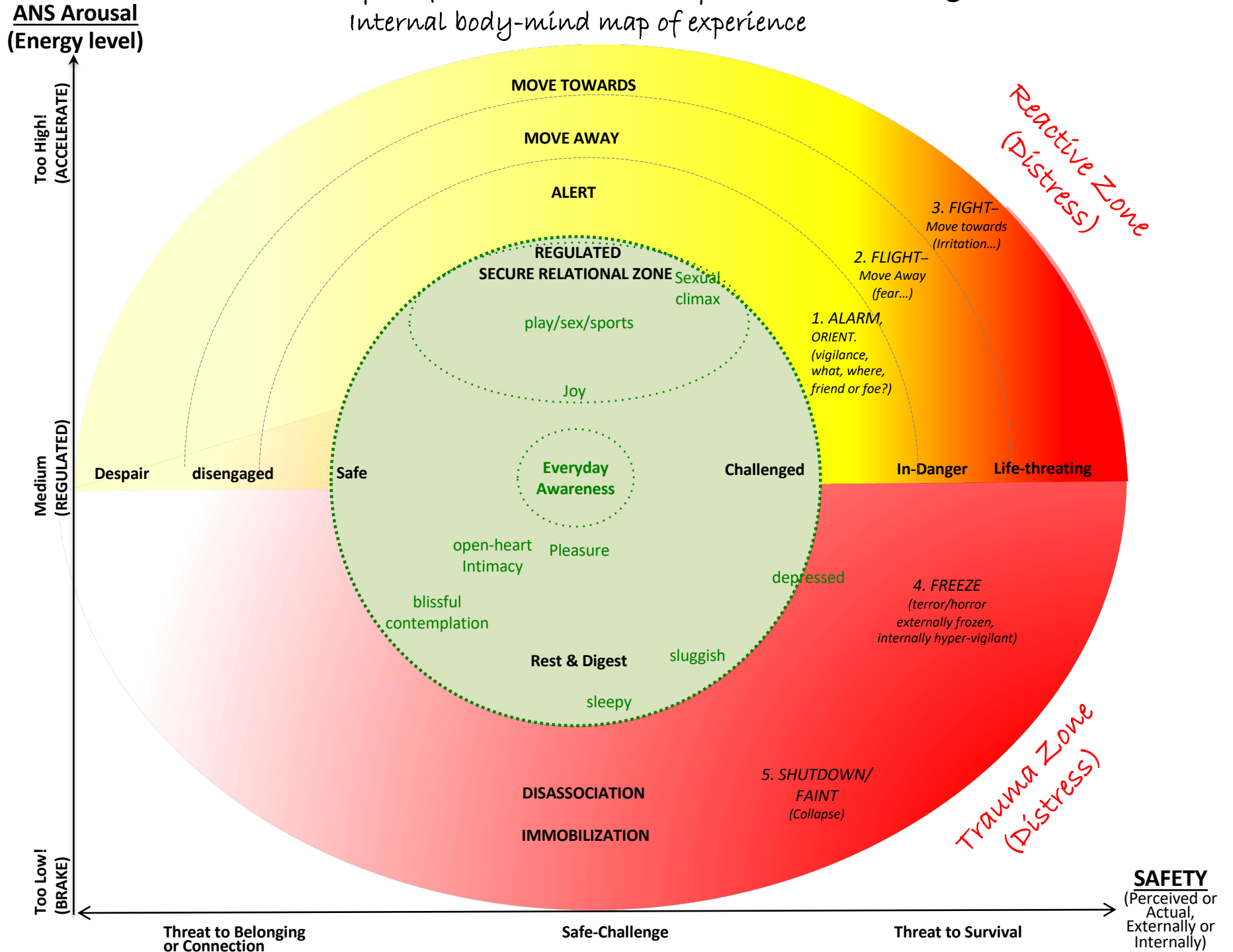
Internal body-mind map of experience



*Adapted from Relational Mindfulness & autonomic Nervous System (ANS), 2018 ProactiveMindfulness.com article by Serge Prengel, at <https://tinyurl.com/v9w6ojl>

The Sweetspot for Relationship and Wellbeing

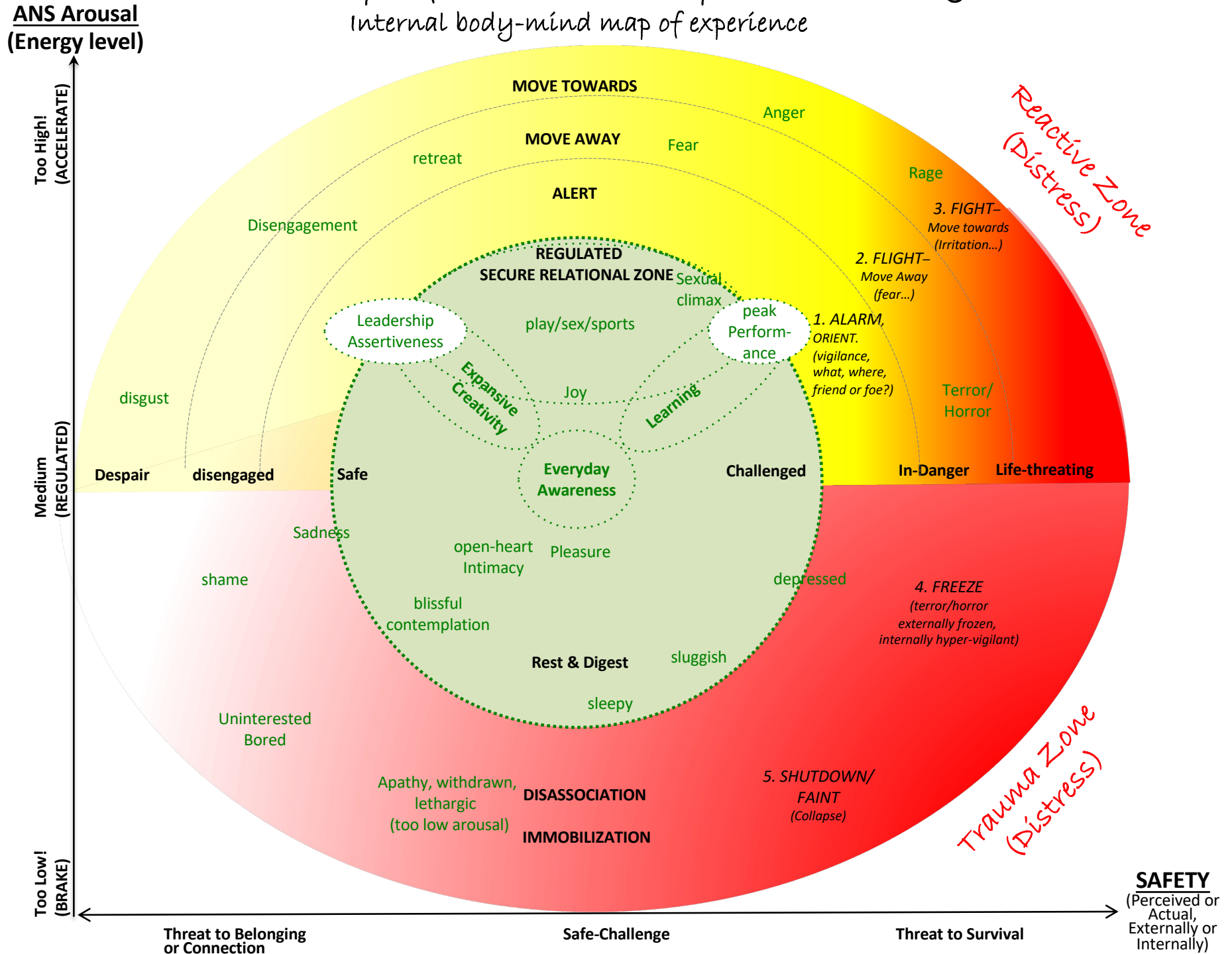
Internal body-mind map of experience



*Adapted from Relational Mindfulness & autonomic Nervous System (ANS), 2018 ProactiveMindfulness.com article by Serge Prengel, at <https://tinyurl.com/v9w6ojl>

The Sweetspot for Relationship and Wellbeing

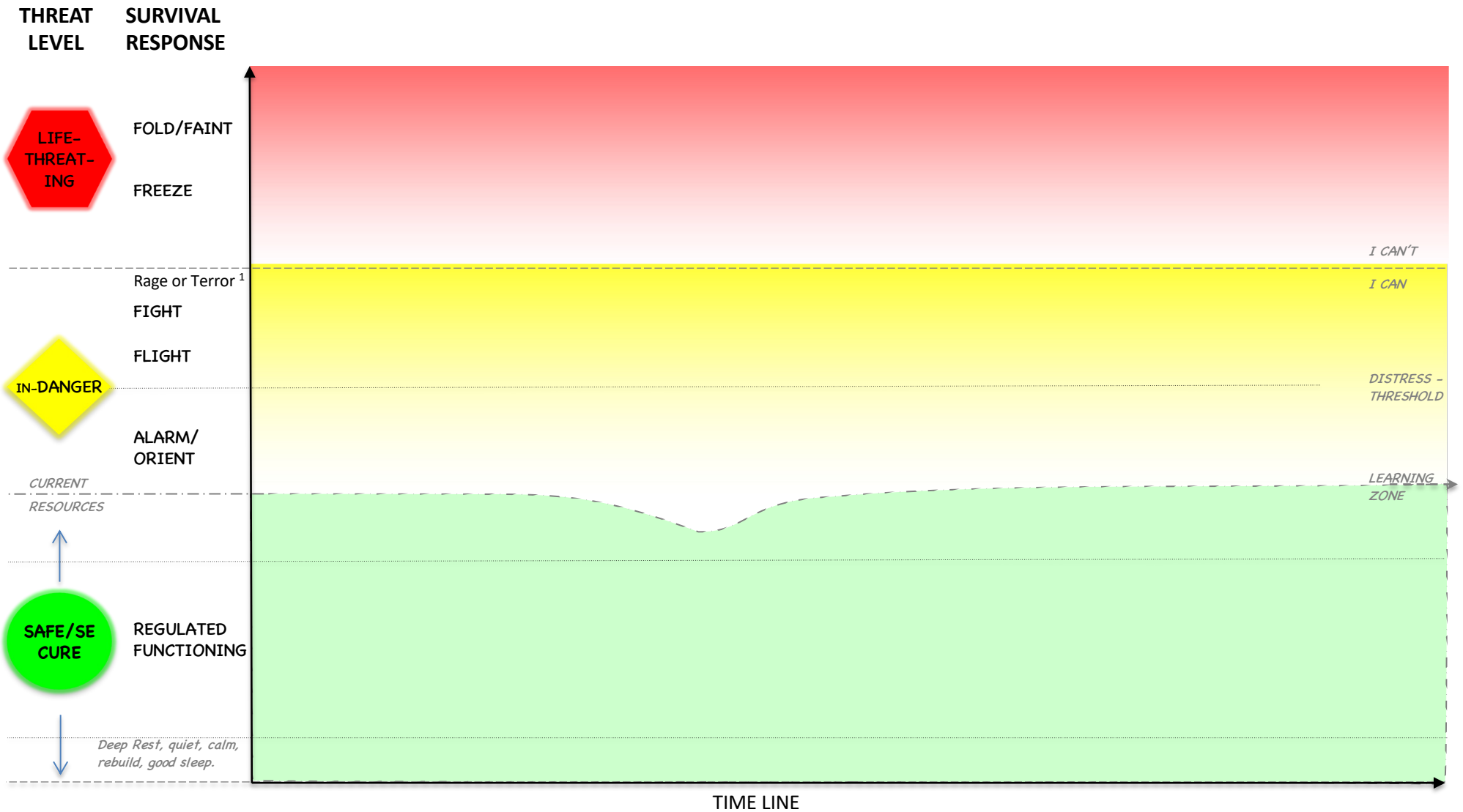
Internal body-mind map of experience



*Adapted from Relational Mindfulness & autonomic Nervous System (ANS), 2018 ProactiveMindfulness.com article by Serge Prengel, at <https://tinyurl.com/v9w6ojl>

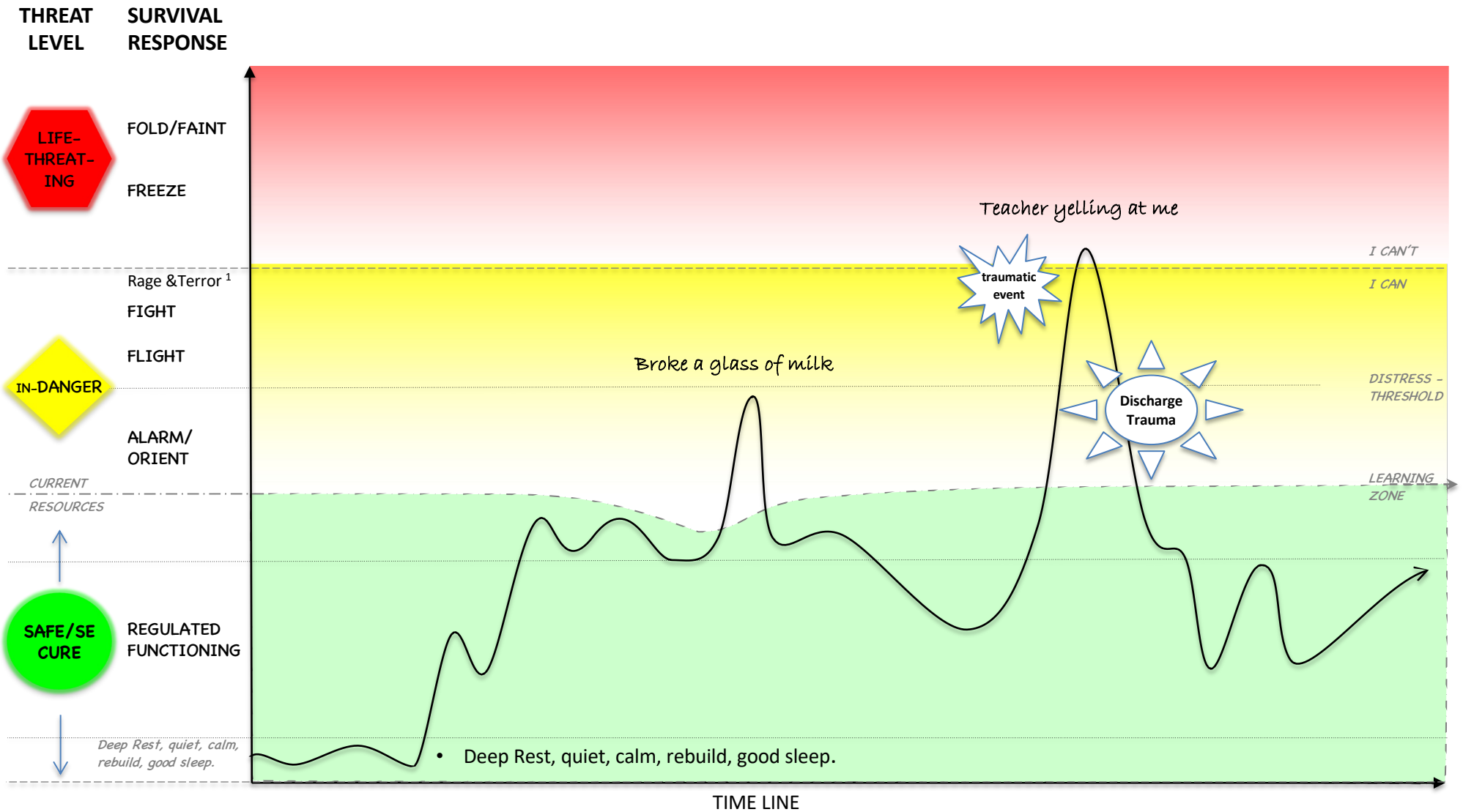
Autonomic Nervous System (ANS) Response to Environment

A simple model of the auto-regulation of the Nervous System responding on the person's perceived sense of safety or threat level. The greater the threat the less access to the brain capabilities and greater need for internal/external resources.



* Adapted from various research findings by Pat Ogden, Minton and Pain, Peter Levine, Bill Bowen, and H. Stefan Bracha MD.

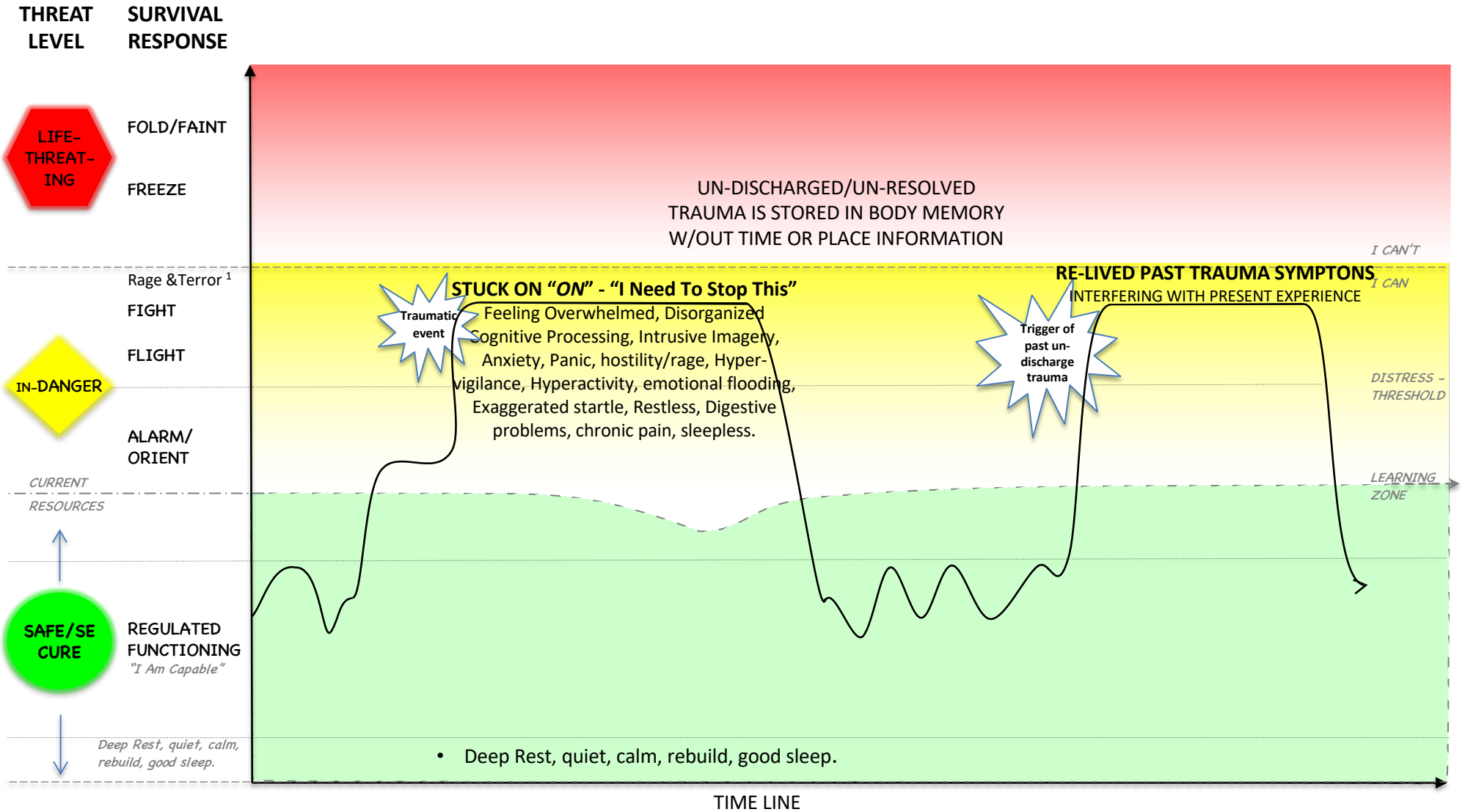
Autonomic Nervous System (ANS) Response to overall "SAFE" Environment with a traumatic event.



* Adapted from various research findings by Pat Ogden, Minton and Pain, Peter Levine, Bill Bowen, and H. Stefan Bracha MD.

ANS "Stuck ON" PTSD

Un-resolved Response to an "In-Danger" Event

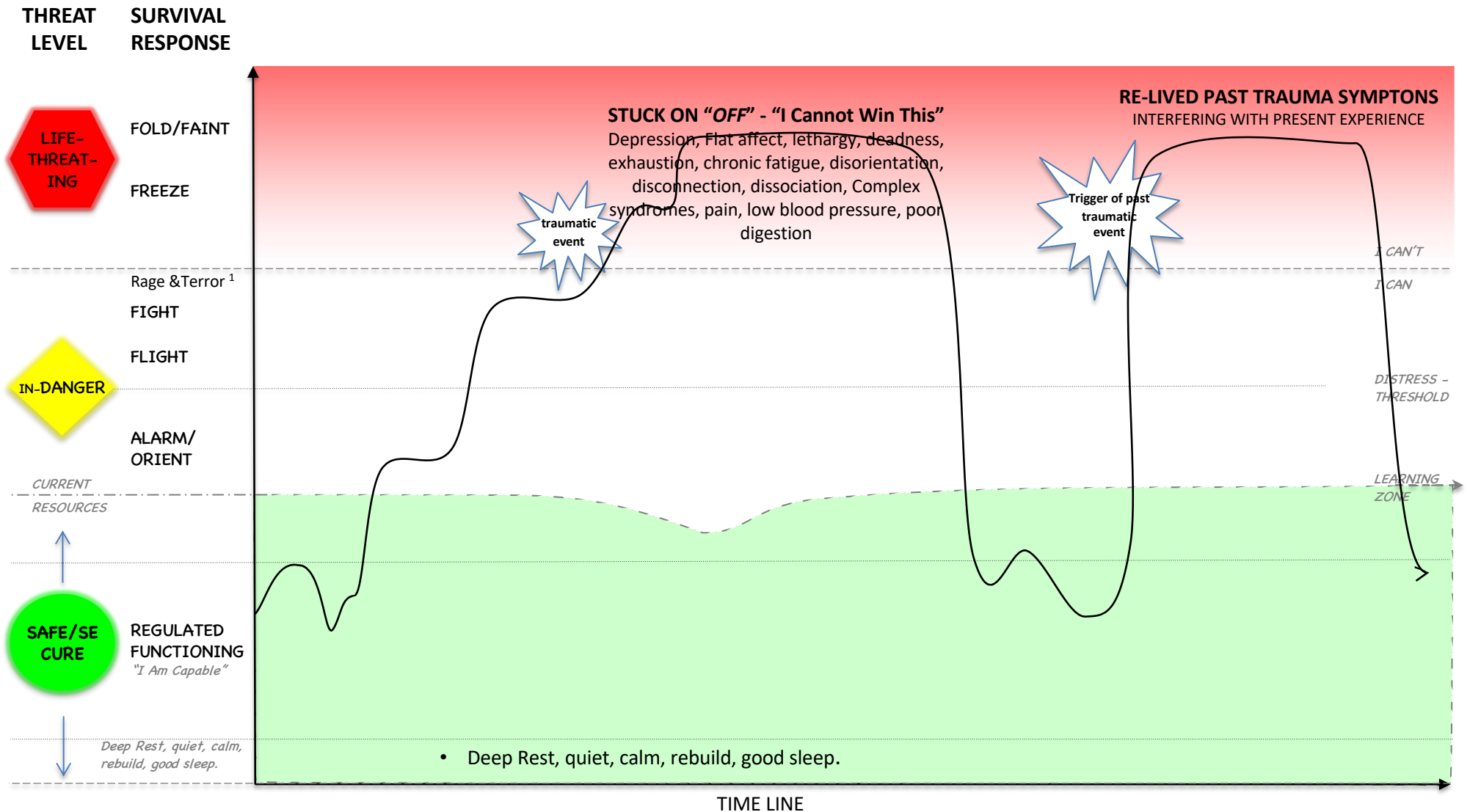


* Adapted from various research findings by Pat Ogden, Minton and Pain, Peter Levine, Bill Bowen, and H. Stefan Bracha MD.

ANS Stuck on "OFF" PTSD

Un-resolved Response to an "Life-Threatening" Event

"The power of the freezing response is equaled by the power of the nervous system's drive to complete the freezing response. It never stops trying to release the bound energy. This is our greatest ally, when we know how to use it. All we need is an opportunity: a safe supportive environment, resources, attention, and time."

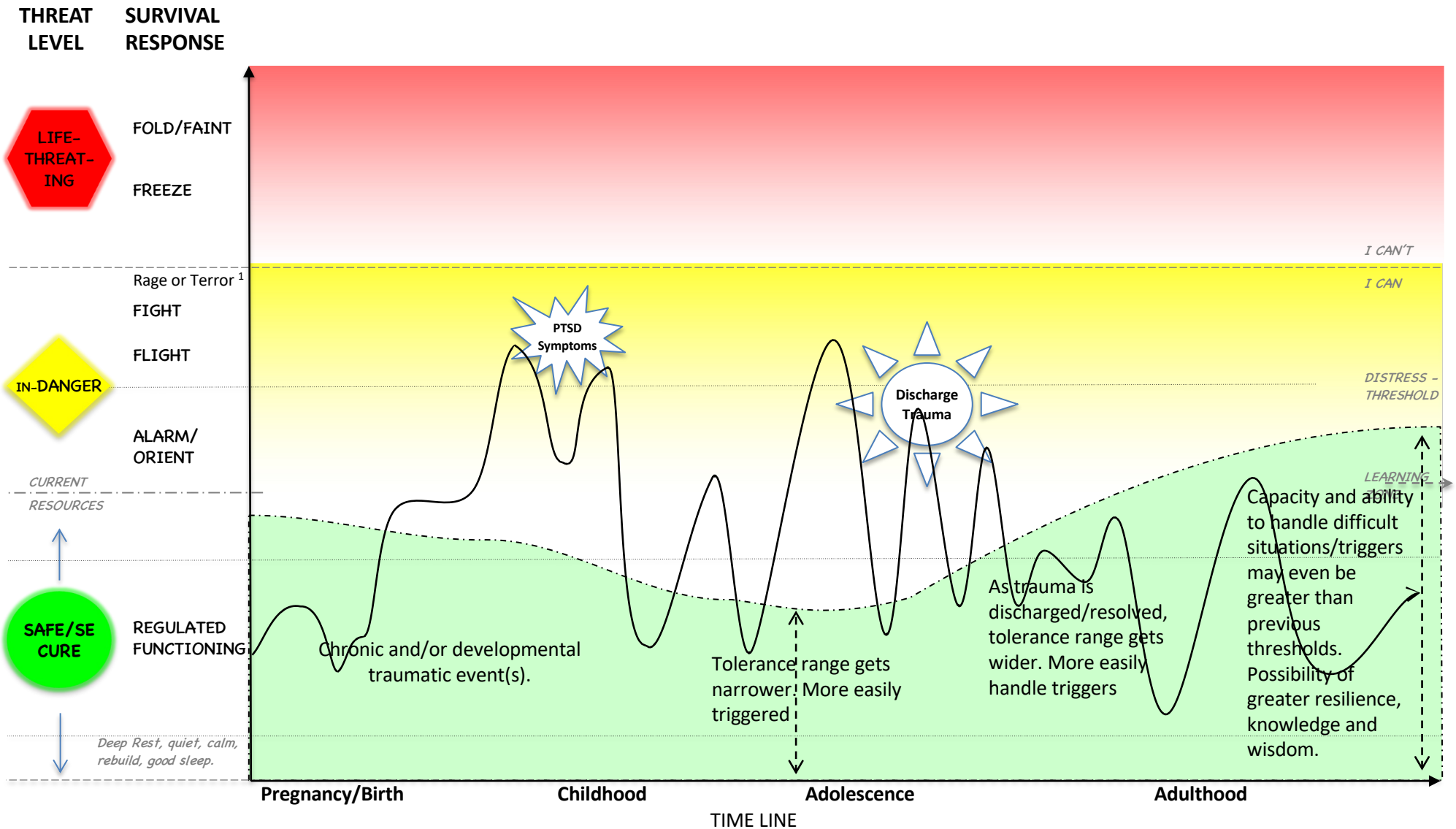


1. Preceding freezing is characterized by the intense emotions of Rage and Terror. Rage is the frustrated fight response; Terror is the frustrated flight response." In this brief phase phenomenal exertions are possible, as in the mother lifting a car to free a trapped child. However, if not discharged rage and terror emotions are held in check. 2. Vagal Brake is off leading to Hyper-vigilance.

* Adapted from various research findings by Pat Ogden, Minton and Pain, Peter Levine, Bill Bowen, and H. Stefan Bracha MD.

Post-traumatic Resolution and Growth

The graph below depicts how chronic or developmental trauma over time (i.e. childhood) can decrease our sense of safety. In other words how the safety range/zone becomes narrower (green zone) and we are more easily triggered into a survival strategies. However, as trauma is resolved our capacity for safety and resilience can be restored and even increased. We gain knowledge and experience, which may lead to a greater wisdom and capacity to appreciate life.



* Adapted from various research findings by Pat Ogden, Minton and Pain, Peter Levine, Bill Bowen, and H. Stefan Bracha MD.

Building Resilience skills*

- **Grounding**
 - Feel your feet on the ground. Feel gravity. Feel pressure of your body on what is supporting it. Feel the texture of objects with your fingers. Name details of what you touch, see, hear, smell and taste.
- **Tracking/Felt Sense**
 - Place your attention on sensations in the body and monitor for a period of time. Describe them and notice when they change. Stay with yourself even if something very uncomfortable comes up; be like a Velcro. Challenge yourself not to dissociate.
- **Resourcing**
 - Create an imaginary peaceful place, or recall a peaceful, calming, comforting experience you had in your life. Imagine you're there and notice what you feel. Know that you can always go to this place in your imagination if you need to calm yourself down.
- **Contact/Self-Holding Exercises**
 - Put your hands on the parts of your body that feel difficult sensations (tension, discomfort). Notice how the hands feel when on the body. Notice how the body feels under the hands. Notice how the space in the body located between the hands feels.
- **Slowing / Titration**
 - Deliberately slow down your emotions and disturbing body sensations, like slowing down the tempo of music. Separate out and work on only a small bit of the emotions or sensations and leave the rest for later, like taking only one bite of the pie.
- **Pendulation**
 - Be deeply present with an area of your body feeling activation, such as fear, anger, panic, tension. Then move your attention to a place of neutrality or calm in your body. Very slowly go back and forth. Build your capacity to stay with the negative. Also build your capacity to feel positive things again and to stay with the positive.
- **Community**
 - Socialize and participate in your community. Human connection builds resilience.

*Hanson, H.(2016, June, 30).Resiliency Building Skills to Practice for Trauma Recovery. [Blog post]. Retrieved from <https://goo.gl/kuyzie>

Takeaways*

- Your automatic state is the filter through which **you experience the world**.
- Environmental cues can **magically transform your physiology** – and how people perceive you.
- **This is automatic**, but you can control it if you know how.
- Trauma is **physiological**, not just psychological.
- **Feeling safe/secure is necessary** for living a good life and bonding with others.
- Sensation is a Language. The Survival Brain understands the language of sensation. You communicate with it by becoming aware of sensations in your body
- **Bonding** with others is necessary for good health.
- When people don't feel safe, they don't **think critically**.
- The simplest way to **make people like you** (including dogs & children): Use your facial muscles and speak with prosody.
- **We can change it**. Simply feeling “safe” can **jumpstart healing** process.

* Porges, S.[Nerd Nite].(2017,Nov.,3).“The Polyvagal Theory: The New Science of Safety and Trauma [Video File]. Retrieved from <https://goo.gl/Cwcgx4> .

*"How Was My Day" Tracking Chart

Responses To Perceived Novelty Or Danger Over Time

Threat / Response



EVENT(S)/TRIGGER(S) AND RESOURCES LOG						
DT/Time	Trigger/Situation	Body Sensations	SUDS ¹	What resource(s) did you use?	Any changes after use of resource?	SUDS after
Monday 10 AM	Partner yelled at me about being late for dinner.	Heart pounding, blood rushing in my ears, upper body immobilized	7	Centering: one hand on heart, one hand on belly	Breathing slowed, heart rate calmed, feel like I could move.	4

*Adapted from various research findings by Pat Ogden, Minton and Pain, Peter Levine, Bill Bowen, Ken Robins, Peter Walker, and H. Stefan Bracha MD. ¹SUDS (Subjective Unit of Distress) 10=most distress you could imagine, 0=no distress, non at all. **RESOURCES** can be from any of the following categories: Psychological, Physical, Emotional, Intellectual, Relational, Spiritual, Creative, Nature, Material, Behaviors.





*”How Was My Day” Log

EVENT(S)/TRIGGER(S) AND RESOURCES LOG						
DT/Time	Trigger/Situation	Body Sensations	SUDS ¹	What resource(s) did you use?	Any changes after use of resource?	SUDS after
Monday 10 AM	Partner yelled at me about being late for dinner.	Heart pounding, blood rushing in my ears, upper body immobilized	7	Centering: one hand on heart, one hand on belly	Breathing slowed, heart rate calmed, feel like I could move.	4

¹SUDS (Subjective Unit of Distress) 10=most distress you could imagine, 0=no distress, non at all.

RESOURCES can be from any of the following categories: Psychological, Physical, Emotional, Intellectual, Relational, Spiritual, Creative, Nature, Material, Behaviors.

SURVIVAL RESPONSES & UNRESOLVED TRAUMA RESPONSES

Perceived Threat or Safety	Survival Response	Emotions	Unresolved Trauma Response	Attachment Adaptations	Postural tendencies
	FAWN FREEZE (Fake Death, Faint, ...)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numb feelings, body/mind/feelings fragmentation. 	STUCK ON "OFF" - "I Cannot Win This" Depression, Flat affect, lethargy, deadness, exhaustion, chronic fatigue, disorientation, disconnection, dissociation, PTSD, Complex syndromes, pain, low blood pressure, poor digestion	Disorganized: contains both avoidant and ambivalent strategies	Collapse, protracted shoulders, flaccid muscle tone, looks disembodied/unintegrated, gangly/ awkward, ungrounded.
	FIGHT <hr/> FLIGHT	Anger, Rage <hr/> Fear, Terror (victim), Horror (when witnessing)	STUCK ON "ON" - "I Need To Stop This" Feeling Overwhelmed, Disorganized Cognitive Processing, Intrusive Imagery, Anxiety, Panic, hostility/rage,, Hyperactivity, emotional flooding, Restless, sleepless, addiction, chronic stress, Digestive problems, chronic pain	Ambivalent <hr/> Avoidant	Rigid muscle tone, wide stance, armored, tense shoulders, inflated and puffed out chest, clenched fists, TMJ, and raised shoulders
	SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT – ALARM/ORIENT (where & what is it? Danger?)		Exaggerated startle, Hyper-vigilance		involuntary eye& voice contact. Seek help.
	Healthy internal sense of self, able to handle level of stimulation or stress, able to emotionally Self-regulate, clear reasoning, learning, creative. Interpersonal contact & communication. Deep Rest, quiet, calm, rebuild, good sleep.	All emotions are manageable	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> N/A 	Secure	Strong, flexible, integrated

END