

10 Ways to Calm Your Vagus Nerve

We all know that Play is our favorite state to be in... right?
Or at least I hope you do; if not, just play along with me!

As it turns out, our play state is directly related to our Vagus Nerve and how stressed out we are. In order for us to be in our highest state, where we can access our empathy, be in the now, and enjoy our most ineffably joyous, playful self... we cannot be stressed!

Stress and fear are the mind killer, so let's explore ways to regulate our Vagus system and stay playful...

#10 Deep Breathing: When you breathe deeply your mind assumes that everything is fine, you are not being chased by a tiger. One of the first things I do after waking up while still lying in bed is a box breathing pattern; 5 count in slowly tightening my perineum, hold for 5 count, and then a 5 count vibrating "horse lips" release, 5 count relax. Repeat as needed...



#9 Meditation: With a laundry list of benefits, meditation is highly recommended to help with almost every aspect of life. The modern living style is very stressful and comes at us fast and furiously. Taking time to slow down gives your brain time to relax and refocus. This is an incredible gift you can give yourself and your creation, so make time for meditation!

#8 Intermittent Fasting: Give your digestion a break. Usually 12 hours is a good time to cleanse, so if you stop eating at 7pm, at least 2 hours before bedtime, wait until at least 7am before eating again. That's pretty easy, right? Of course you can do a longer intermittent fasting as well, or go for days. It's up to you...



#7 Probiotics: A healthy gut will keep your Vagus Nerve in good shape. You can invest in a diverse probiotic culture and/or consider adding fermented foods to your diet. For an additional bonus to the health of your mind, body, and spirit... cut back on sugar!

#6 Cold Exposure: A nice cold shower helps tone your whole body including the Vagus Nerve. Start with 30 seconds, go to warm and lather up, then finish with a cold rinse. The benefits of starting off cold are legendary and finishing off with cold protects your body by sealing up the skin and closing hair follicles. In other words, starting off with a cold blast is invigorating, while finishing off with a cold rinse is imperative!





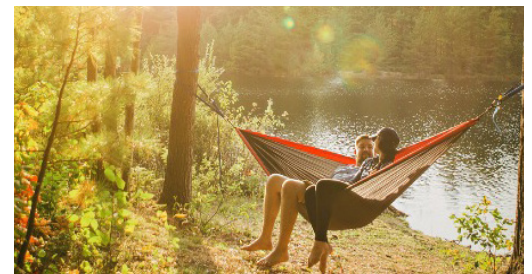
#5 Laugh, Smile, Dance & Sing: Monty Python got it right. As it turns out, all of these activities are incredible for relaxing your mind. Also worthy: whistling, humming, gargling, "horse lips", and chanting. *If your feeling in the dumps, don't be a silly chumps, **just try some of these out** that's the thing... and always look on the bright side of life!*

#4 Exercise: When your body moves your brain grooves, and it also activates your Vagus Nerve somethin' fierce. In addition, exercising regularly helps reverse cognitive decline and gives an overall lift to your spirit. Many brain health experts place exercise at the top of the list for optimal brain functioning; juggling... *did someone mention juggling?*



#3 Massage: Who doesn't love an amazing massage? And rightfully so! A relaxing massage will calm you down and give your brain and body a moment to reset. If a full body massage is not available, focusing on the feet will also relax the Vagus Nerve as well as a quick ear massage, where the nerve can be easily be accessed.

#2 Relaxing: Who would have thought that relaxation is... relaxing? The simple act of giving ourself time to not take everything so dang seriously will allow our mind, body and spirit to ease out of the fight, flight, freeze, & fawn states that we may continually find ourself in. So make time just to relax whenever possible, the ROI is worth it!



#1 PLAY: You knew this one was coming! Flooding your system with joyful brain chemicals, play is my #1 recommendation for getting your Vagus Nerve toned. You can only get into a playful state when your Vagus Nerve is functioning optimally; so which comes first, the play or the calm? My advice... *play like your life depends on it!*

These tools are worthy; utilize what works, pacify your Vagus Nerve, and awaken your Play-full Self!

Did i mention juggling?

The **11th**, bonus recommendation... juggling! (Free "how to juggle" class available @ hackido.org)
"If you knew how amazing it was for your brain, you would stop everything and learn this ineffably fun, self-playful, infinitely challenging, ultimate brain exercise..." ~ zander phelps, Ambassador of Play (that's me)

Find out more ways to activate your Play-Flow-State at HACKiDO.org

Get Your Play On!!!