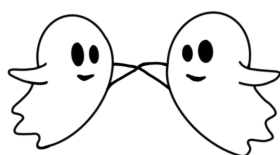


CONNECTION

Eye Gaze

Maintaining eye contact—whether with yourself in a mirror or with another person—is a powerful practice for enhancing the ventral vagal state (a state of the autonomic nervous system where you feel safe and socially engaged). It promotes social connection by stimulating the cranial nerves responsible for facial expressions and emotional regulation.



Choose to practice with a mirror or a willing partner. Start with short sessions (30-60 seconds) and gradually work up to 3-5 minutes.

- 1) Take a few deep breaths to relax & center yourself.
- 2) If you're with a partner: maintain a soft + gentle gaze on one of their eyes, or the 'third eye' region (between the 2 eyes and slightly above the eyebrows). In a mirror: focus on making eye contact with this area on your face.
- 3) Keep your gaze steady & continue to breathe deeply
- 4) As you settle, notice any changes you experience.

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From Vagus Nerve Deck: 75 Exercises to Reset Your Nervous System, Melissa Romano