

## 1. Preamble

My colleague and friend Alastair Dobbin introduced me to Porges' work on the polyvagal theory some two decades ago. Gradually, since then, I have found it to be one of the most helpful therapeutic models for understanding the human condition from a personal, social, and international perspective. Furthermore, many counsellors and psychotherapists now use the model as a background to their approach – whatever psychological model they may use therapeutically [Porges & Dana 2018]. This is reflected in the relatively frequent references to it in the website articles, and explicitly in the trio of articles:

A 7	PORGES AND THE POLYVAGAL THEORY <i>Reflections on clinical and therapeutic significance</i> (2012)
A 8	The Polyvagal Theory and a more sympathetic awareness of the ANS (2012)
B 22	A playfully sympathetic approach to the Polyvagal Theory <i>An introduction to Flourishing Autogenically</i> (updated 2021)

The purpose of this present article is somewhat different from the above. Over the last few years, I have realised that it is possible to integrate the polyvagal theory with the teaching of Autogenic Training (AT)<sup>1</sup> in a fairly non-technical sense. Many AT students have commented on the practical use of this model in their day to day lives. Furthermore, my experience in teaching this ABC model indicates that most of us have an inherent understanding of the basic three states. This is not surprising when we consider that we are embodied beings all with similar neuro-physiological underpinnings to our experiences. And most of us know what we mean by the flight and fight response – and feeling safe.

However, the Polyvagal Theory can cause a lot of confusion if we get lost in the technical terms (as used in A7, A8, and B 22). This article explicitly reduces technical terms to a minimum – except where the ABC model alone is insufficient for a basic understanding. The exception to this is in the glossary and appendix, for those interested in some of these more technical aspects.

In this paper we present, in a more or less step by step fashion, a way of introducing this ABC model. It is based specifically on working with an AT student during 2022 – and she has very kindly and generously agreed for me to share with you the type of matters discussed. The model, with some minor adjustments, can also be used in teaching Mindfulness. *The article is not, however, restricted to Autogenic or Mindfulness Therapists. It is also aimed at any therapists who have a good grounding in the Polyvagal Theory, and may like to introduce it in their work; and also for anyone interested in an experiential type approach to understanding Polyvagal dynamics in this ABC context.*

### Notation of Figures / diagrams and words in glossary:

As in previous articles, the numbering of these refers to Section of the article that they are in. Some sections have no figures, such as Section 4, so there is no Figure 4.

Words in the glossary are generally noted in the text [thus](#).

**Acknowledgements:** thanks once again to Annie Sturgeon, Autogenic Therapist, and my brother Michael Ross, for their most helpful comments and proof reading; and thanks to Jane Bird (AT Therapist) for her pertinent comments and suggestions. In addition, this second edition has a number of small yet significant changes, including several further references. Any errors or omissions remain, as previously, my responsibility.

<sup>1</sup> And more recently Mindfulness Now

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**2. Introducing the ABC model of the Polyvagal Theory** – *usually during Session 1 or 2***2.0: Setting the Scene**

Generally, I introduce the basics of these concepts in the first or second session of the course. This may sound early to do so. However, prior to session 1 we will have already had the standard one to one pre-course orientation session lasting between one and two hours. This includes a discussion on present day stressors in the student's life, how these are (or are not) dealt with, and where they feel they are in their journey through life – within a reciprocal type of paradigm. The approach with each person varies, and what follows is an example of the type of approach. We link present moment experiences with how these affect our body and being. We touch on some neuro-science, yet only to the extent that this is relevant and helpful in giving us a working model of what is going on within – so that we can better understand approaches to developing well-being. With this brief preamble, we are in a position to look at the nitty-gritty of this approach, which covers three specific states:

-  A State (Feeling Safe)
-  B State (Feeling Danger / threatened)
-  C State (“Not feeling good enough”)

However, it is important that in the first or second Session these are covered in a specific order, as outlined in Figure 2.0 below:

	State Covered	Autonomic State represented
2.1 Starting where we are.....when anxious / stressed	B State	Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS)
2.2 When we feel useless / not good enough	C State	Dorsal Vagal PSNS <sup>2</sup>
2.3 When we feel safe	A State	Ventral Vagal PSNS

Figure 2.0  
Experiential and neuro-physiologically based order for introducing the  
three basic Autogenic States

Discussion in and around the B and C states, in an experiential context, can result in distress; for this reason we discuss them in this order, before moving on to the A State – and the settling dynamics of the A State. This is in keeping with general polyvagal principles [Porges 2011; Dana 2018].

<sup>2</sup> PSNS: Para-Sympathetic Nervous System

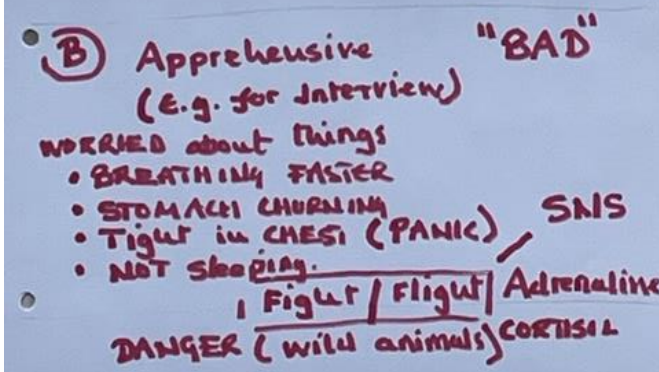
## 2.1 Starting where we are

A timely question in Session 1 is to discuss how we are feeling right now. When we start any new endeavour, it is natural to have some concerns about what we are letting ourselves in for! We discuss these. For example, the student may say they are feeling somewhat anxious. As such feelings are frequently experienced when we embark on a new experience, the idea is floated that this is a normal part of being human – in other words, we normalise these feelings as being part of our collective human experience.

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### B State

In any event, we start with how we feel when under some stress. And we call this the B State. As we discuss these matters, I write down – on a flip chart (face to face) or on an A4 sheet if on Zoom – the essence of the areas reflected upon. Figure 2.1.X is an example of this process.

<p>The B State stands for the Flight /Fight SNS Arousal System. Rather than use the word Bad for this state as a shorthand, I decided a better word for B word is: <b>BEWARE</b> (see footnote<sup>3</sup>).</p> <p>Each A, B and C state has a place for our overall well-being</p> 	<h3>B State</h3> <p><u>Some Initial Comments during this discussion</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ These are typical feelings when we are anxious / stressed.</li> <li>○ The details will be unique for each of us.</li> <li>○ We generally feel uncomfortable<sup>3</sup>; and for this reason we call it the B state, the B standing for Beware – as a convenient way of remembering this ABC model.</li> <li>○ Most people I see are aware of the flight / fight response in some form or other; and can often name a chemical associated with this state. E.g.: Adrenaline and /or CORTISOL.</li> <li>○ This is our in-built response when we feel in some danger. We share it with other mammals. E.g. a zebra being chased by a lion..... In evolutionary terms, this system is activated to defend us from danger.</li> <li>○ The B state is also associated with activation of the Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS), one of the three major parts of our <a href="#">Autonomic</a> ("automatic") <a href="#">Nervous System</a> [Porges 2011].</li> </ul>
<p>Figure 2.1-x: The B State Typical Feelings when we are anxious and / or stressed</p>	

The flight / fight Sympathetic Nervous system response evolved to protect us from danger. If we are blessed with not living in a war zone – or other area of major conflict – we will generally not face actual external danger. However, concern about being able to pay the next fuel bill, or an “unfriendly” smile from our boss, may result in the (unconscious) activation of our Danger Arousal System – called by Porges

<sup>3</sup> When we are stressed or anxious, our B system (Flight / Fight) is activated and this may result in us not feeling good inside; feeling uncomfortable, and so “bad”. This is not in this context a value judgement; more a reflection of how we feel. In any event, when the B state is arising, it is helpful if we can become aware of this; hence Beware.

[neuroception](#) [op.cit.]. Such a response may well be inappropriate, yet it is real – and we may feel our heart racing or our guts churning..... It is as though we are being driven from within and are not in control. See glossary entry: [Zen Story of a man on a horse](#) (p 42).

Before moving on to consider the C state, some further typical experiences from other AT and Mindfulness Now students are shown below; these reflect a stress / fear response:

Feeling Blocked	"I can't breathe"	Feel as if something about to happen	Not comfortable
Distress	Disorientated	Dread	Breath not right
Tight	Dry mouth	Feel like lashing out	
	Heart (going) "nineteen" to the dozen		

Figure 2.1-y: Further Typical Feelings in B State

Having discussed the feelings we have in this B State, we move on to the C State.

## 2.2 When we feel useless / not good enough

### C State

Having spent five or more minutes on the above B State, we then gently move on to what is going on in us when we are not feeling good enough. This may manifest as feeling like running away and hiding – perhaps in a cave. Figure 2.2-x gives a flavour of the sort of areas we may cover.

	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>C State</b></p> <p><u>Some initial comments during this discussion</u></p> <p>When / if we are feeling very low, this may be associated with feeling not good enough and / or low self-esteem.</p> <p>In order to understand what is going on here, we need to see what the benefit of this collapse was for survival historically, as outlined below.....</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Figure 2.2-x: C State</b> Not Feeling Good Enough C standing for "Catastrophe" or "Collapse"</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ During the early evolution of animals, if they were in a life threatening situation (i.e. much worse than the flight / fight of danger of Figure 2.1), they might not be able to escape. They faced potential catastrophe in the sense of life threat leading to death.</li> <li>➤ This is where the collapse or flop state comes in. For example, if a zebra is being chased by a lion and is being overtaken by the lion, there is no escape. The zebra's Life Threat modality comes into play. It flops / collapses on the ground – appearing dead (again an unconscious process / neuroception).             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It may involuntarily poo.</li> <li>• This could have survival value...</li> <li>• The lion may assess this poo as meaning the zebra is rotten and not fit to eat...so the lion might wander off...</li> <li>• And the zebra senses this, jumps up, and escapes.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



This C State is modulated by the most ancient part of our Autonomic Nervous System, involving the ancient (Dorsal) Vagal Nerve (that part of the vagal nerve that is mainly below the diaphragm). The Vagal nerve as a whole is what we mean by the Para-Sympathetic Nervous System; this includes this ancient Dorsal Vagal System – and the much more recent Ventral Vagal System (discussed in Section 2.3 below under the A State).

Most of us living in the UK do not face life threat in this sense. However, this same system is activated when we are feeling low / not good enough. We may feel like hiding, and we tend to withdraw from society – and from seeing people including our friends. Our Self-esteem may plummet. The activation of the C State in such situations brings great human suffering. An extreme example of people giving up hope and life occurred during the Second World War; and this can prove fatal:

- Victor Frankl, who survived one of the concentration camps at that time, subsequently wrote a book about this experience. The collapse of hope associated with loss of meaning can cause a rapid decline in our being, resulting in death. Frankl refers to the term “give-up-itis” to describe this state [Frankl 1946 / 1984 p 163].

Some further feelings expressed by various AT and Mindfulness Now students regarding this C state are tabulated below.

Despondent	Depressed	Dark place	Sense of being bullied with
Disheartened	Lack of Zest**	Not feeling valued by colleagues	associated not feeling good enough.
Shame	Not go out	More cynical	(Going) back into self
** Lack of Zest may of course be secondary to an illness including e.g. flu. However, lack of zest may be a response to not feeling good enough, to feeling criticised, and that others are against us. These feelings can deflate our self-esteem and result in loss of vitality, and zest for life. In the B State we may feel deflated.			

Figure 2.2-y: Further Typical Feelings of C State

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Returning to first principles. These B and C states are embodied in our very Being, as is the A state. With mindfulness practices, which axiomatically include some form of meditation, we can begin to become aware of which state we are in – especially as we move towards the A state. This growing awareness of our present moment A,B or C state can facilitate our well-being. The realisation of the present moment state we are in is a form of meta-attention / meta-awareness.... So, for example, if we realise inappropriate anger / irritation is arising, we have strategies for off-setting this<sup>4</sup>.

Having discussed the B and C states in the context of how we experience these states ourselves, we are in a position to discuss the feelings we have associated with the A State. It is important, as previously mentioned, that in introducing this ABC model we cover them in the following order:

- I. B State
- II. C State; and then finally
- III. A State.

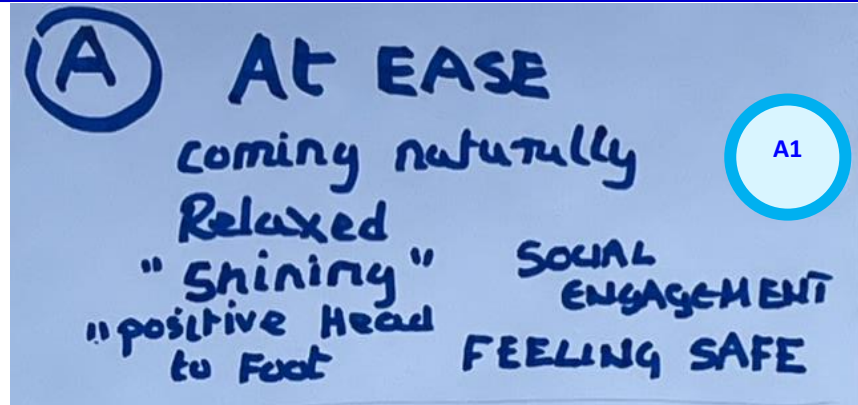
Discussing and reflecting on the B and C States can naturally cause some distress. For this reason, we purposely discuss them before moving on to A State matters – as the latter can help to restore any disturbed equilibrium.

<sup>4</sup> See Section 4 below

## 2.3 When we feel safe

### A State

We now reflect on how we are feeling when we feel safe. Figure 2.3-x includes some of the feelings that were expressed by a student during a second Autogenic Training session.



**Figure 2.3-x**  
**Feeling Safe State (A)**  
We could say we are feeling "A1"

**A State (A1)**

Some joint reflections during this discussion

- ✿ This is the State in which we feel at ease.
- ✿ It is a natural State that all mammals can experience [Porges 2011].
- ✿ We feel Safe.
- ✿ This is the modality of wholesome Social Engagement that embraces nurturing and CARE [Panksepp 1998].

- ✿ This state also facilitates our Reflective Function [Knox 2003 / 2012 Chapter 6 pp 138-165], which is essential for our personal growth and well-being.
- ✿ Playfulness and PLAY may arise spontaneously from this state.

Other expressions / feelings used for this A State in discussion with other AT and Mindfulness Now students are shown below:

Comfortable	Confidence	Calm	Comforting	Patient
Empowering	Aware of others' sadness	Good <sup>SAC</sup>	Joy of sharing	
I can breathe again; feel free <sup>SAC</sup>	Feeling can share matters with others	Enjoying another's good work / achievements / happiness		

**Figure 2.3-y: Further Typical Feelings of A State**

The A state, it is suggested, is the normal default state of citizens who have been blessed with "good enough" parents [Winnicott 1960 pp 145-152] within the milieu of a wholesome society<sup>5</sup>.

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## 2.4 /

<sup>5</sup> E.g. in which the concept of [ubuntu](#) flourishes.



## 2.4: Summary of Section 2

We have in this section covered an experiential approach to the ABC states so that we get the feeling of what these states are. This is not an intellectual exercise; rather a practical and [vivencia](#)<sup>6</sup> approach. These states develop to a large extent unconsciously through [neuroception](#), in which we neurocept (unconsciously perceive) life threat, danger, or safety. These are bodily states – as implied in figure 2.4 on the next page (10); and it is the state that basically determines<sup>7</sup> our being. As Deb Dana says:

❖ Story Follows State  
Dana 2018 p 35

This implies that it is our bodily state that largely determines our mind state, our thinking, our actions and interactions, and our behaviour (with the caveat that our state can also be influenced in other ways such as memory, brain fog, and chemicals, including hormones, anaesthetics and psychedelics.)

The idea behind this approach is that we experience these feeling states throughout the training course, so that we become familiar with them and are able to name our present moment (autonomic) state<sup>8</sup>. The ability to name the state we are in is a form of [meta-awareness](#). This is made much more possible as we increasingly, through regular AT / meditative practice, are in the A State.

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The three Autonomic States that we as humans operate within are discussed in the first or second session of this approach to Autogenic Training and Mindfulness, and are summarised in Figure 2.4:

<sup>6</sup> Vivencia: a Spanish term that is not easily translated into English. Please see Glossary on page 41; and also, and importantly, de Rivera 2018 pp 29-38.

<sup>7</sup> The recognition of this fact has over the last decade or two resulted in a move away from more analytically orientated counselling / psychotherapies, towards more body orientated approaches. The latter focus more on “bottom up approaches”, the former on “top down approaches” [see, for example: [Winhall 2021](#) and Panksepp 2013].

<sup>8</sup> This is subtly different from Siegel’s “naming and taming” – see section 4.1 [Siegel 2010] – which is also very relevant in an overlapping context.

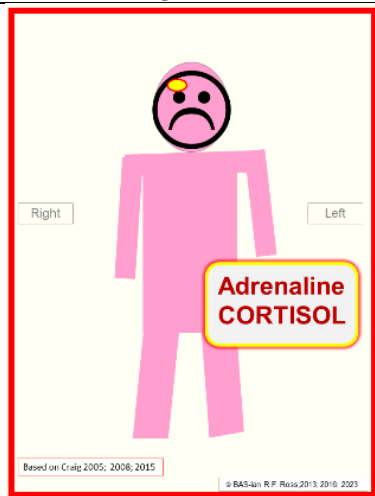
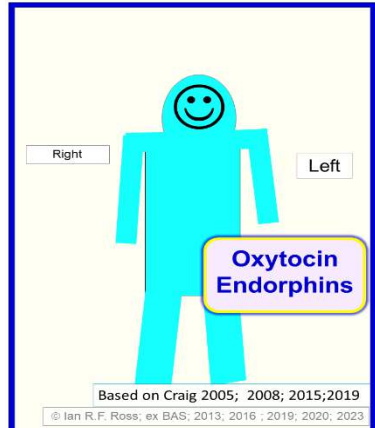
Order of introduction of state	State Covered	Shorthand for State	Image of State
<p>2.1 Starting where we are – e.g. “a bit anxious in this first session.”</p> <p>The B State also is activated when we are in a state of FEAR or Anger (RAGE).</p> <p><i>The image on the right indicates that the A state involves our whole being; our body, mind, and mental state all at the same time.</i></p> <p>❖ Our whole being becomes Hyper-vigilant</p>	<p><b>B State</b></p> <p>Associated with release of adrenaline and cortisol. These can become toxic to us if we are often in this state</p> <p>“The poison is in the dose” [Paracelsus 1493-1541]</p>	<b>Beware</b>	 <p>Based on Craig 2005; 2008; 2015</p> <p>© BAS-Ian R.F. Ross 2013; 2019; 2023</p>
2.2 When we feel useless / not good enough	<b>C State</b>	<b>Catastrophe</b>	
<p>2.3 When we feel safe</p> <p><i>The image on the right indicates that our whole Being: Body Mind and Spirit are in the A State</i></p>	<p><b>A State</b></p> <p>Associated with release of oxytocin and endorphins (opiate type informational molecules) produced within the body.</p>	<b>Safe</b>	 <p>Based on Craig 2005; 2008; 2015; 2019</p> <p>© Ian R.F. Ross; ex BAS; 2013; 2016; 2019; 2020; 2023</p>

Figure 2.4  
Summary of the three Autonomic States covered in Session 1 or 2

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Figures 2.1, 2.2, and 2.3 discussed in the previous pages are now ready to be combined, as outlined below in Section 3 – but not till the next session. Having laid the foundations of the ABC system during an early session of AT / Mindfulness, we return to focus on the next Autogenic exercise or Meditation to be practised. During the intervening week, I construct a composite of the three states outlined above<sup>9</sup> so that a new handout is ready for the next session.

### 3. Experiential Aspects of the three ABC States brought together

#### 3.1 Basic Dynamics within each of us

We are now in a position to look at these three Autonomic States together, as summarised in Figure 3.1 below.

<sup>9</sup> That we have produced live during the session (either on a flip chart or on a sheet of A4 when on Zoom) – as previously mentioned.

Serotonin	Autonomic State and Comments
<div data-bbox="485 188 676 277">Oxytocin</div> <div data-bbox="612 300 708 389">A1</div> <div data-bbox="38 322 213 434">Dopamine</div> <p><b>(A) AT EASE</b> coming naturally Relaxed "Shining" "positive Head to Foot" SOCIAL ENGAGEMENT FEELING SAFE</p>	<p><b>A Feeling Calm ("A1")</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feeling Cared for</li> <li>Wholesome Social Engagement</li> <li>Healthy /positive Eye contact</li> <li>Relaxed face</li> <li>Ability and desire to help others.</li> <li>Feeling Safe</li> <li>Oxytocin</li> <li>New Ventral Vagal Para-Sympathetic Nervous System (above diaphragm)</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="1187 232 1410 322">CARE and Nurturing</div> <div data-bbox="1347 322 1490 389">PLAY</div> <div data-bbox="1235 389 1442 479">Wholesome SEEKING</div> <div data-bbox="1027 456 1203 524">Vivencia</div>
<p><b>(B) Apprehensive ("BAD")</b> (e.g. for interview) WORRIED about things • BREATHING FASTER • STOMACH CHURNING • Tight in CHEST (PANIC) • NOT sleeping.</p> <p><b>SNS</b> Fight / Flight / Adrenaline DANGER (wild animals) CORTISOL</p> <p><b>(C) Feeling Low</b> • NOT GOOD ENOUGH • LOW Self-Esteem "Give-up-itis" <b>"CATASTROPHE"</b> Ancient P.S.N.S.</p> <div data-bbox="533 568 724 658">Adrenaline CORTISOL</div> <div data-bbox="533 860 724 972">LIFE THREAT Collapse FLOP</div>	<p><b>B for "BAD" or Beware:</b> activating our body and mind to Beware ("Bad" in sense of not feeling "good")</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flight / Fight</li> <li>Feelings in body.....variable. Include: tightness in chest... as if something happening (or about to happen); stomach churning; sweating; anxious; dry mouth.....</li> <li>Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS); <b>MOBILISATION in context of FEAR</b> and / or RAGE to Defend us from Danger</li> <li>Adrenaline</li> <li>Cortisol</li> <li>Hypervigilant states</li> <li>Difficulty in switching off</li> <li>During Covid era reduced social contact so increased isolation and possibly increased SNS activity<sup>10</sup></li> </ul> <div data-bbox="1299 680 1426 725">FEAR</div> <div data-bbox="1410 703 1522 748">RAGE</div>
<p>Most of us experience all three of these states from time to time, if not on a daily or weekly basis. B and C states are associated with distressing feelings and thoughts.</p> <p>Regular meditative practices – such as Autogenic Training help us to be in the A (A1) state more of the time.</p> <p>Note: The terms CARE, PLAY, FEAR, RAGE and SEEKING specifically refer to several of the Primary Process Emotions described by Panksepp [1998] located in the old mammalian brain (limbic system / amygdala) below the new brain (neo-cortex).</p>	<p><b>C for "Catastrophe" or "Collapse"</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Flop (freeze)</li> <li>Neuroception<sup>11</sup> and "Playing Dead" E.g. zebra; may poo. However, not actually "playing" as this process is unconscious.</li> <li>In humans may manifest as depression / despondency / low self-esteem</li> <li>Not feeling good enough</li> <li>Giving up</li> <li>Ancient Dorsal Vagal (PSNS)</li> <li>IMMOBILISATION with FEAR</li> </ul> <p>Dorsal Vagal (DV) mainly below diaphragm</p>
<p align="center"><b>Figure 3.1</b> <b>Schematic Summary of all three Autonomic States in terms of the ABC model</b> Sources include Porges 2011; Panksepp 1998; Frankl 1946</p>	

During Evolution these states developed from the bottom to the top. i.e. C first, then B, and finally in Mammals / humans the A state. This A State gave mammals, and especially primates, the capacity to care for their initially vulnerable off-spring; and this state facilitates feeling safe, being wholesomely Socially Engaged, and activates our CARE and nurturing circuits.

<sup>10</sup> Or increased C State (Dorsal Vagal) activity.

<sup>11</sup> Neuroception: the unconscious bodily processes that determine which Autonomic Nervous System state is appropriate: i.e. Life Threat then C State; Danger requiring perhaps flight / fight, B State; or safety and A State.

If we are in the C State, we have to pass through the B State to get to A. The reverse is more or less true – though if we are faced with severe and immediate Life Threat, then we may only be in the B state momentarily as the body rapidly [neurocepts](#) this Life Threat.

#### **4. Monitoring the ups and downs of our lives by being Mindful of our ABC state**

(Experiential Aspects of the three ABC States *continued*)

##### **4.1: Introduction**

With this background understanding of our present moment states, we can now begin to notice and become curious in the present moment as to which state we are in. Being, or becoming, aware of what A, B or C state we are in at any moment is a form of [meta-awareness](#) [Lapate et al 2016], and overlaps with being aware of our present moment feeling tone – *Vedanā* [see Williams and Penman 2023]; this is crucial for therapists, and can be of great value to those learning AT / mindfulness. This ability can empower us, enabling us to deflect B and C states when appropriate. For example:

- ✿ Befriending it; name it – as in “naming and taming” [Siegel 2010B p 116; 246 & 186<sup>ref 116</sup>; Lieberman et al 2007 ]. In this way, when specific feelings arise, we can say to ourselves: “irritation”; “hallo irritation, I see you are back again”; and / or
  - ✚ Practise a brief exercise as we realise a feeling of distress (associated with us being in the B or C state). For example, a Partial Exercise; a Memory Exercise<sup>12</sup>; or the Three Minute Exercise<sup>13</sup> – which all can facilitate a return to the A State.
- ✿ Befriend and savour a wholesome feeling – including gratitude [Voci et al 2019]; a sense of wonder. [See also web article: [A 13 e.g. EARTE No C 5 pp 25-30; and C 7 pp 39-43](#)].

These approaches overlap with tuning in to the “[feeling tone](#)” (*Vedanā*) within us, and the Deeper Mindfulness practices discussed in Williams’ and Penman’s recent book [Williams & Penman 2023].

\*\*\* \*\*

These ideas and exercises can become integrated with our way of being during the coming weeks and months, and lead on, when appropriate, to future discussions regarding Authentic Pride [cf Sanderson 2015 pp 33-40] and our Authentic Self. As indicated, the C state can be related to low self-esteem; and in this context, I have found the model of Christiane Sanderson based on “The Circle of Shame” most helpful [Sanderson 2015 e.g. pp 94-96; 2016]. I call this “Resilience Exercise to free us from inappropriate<sup>14</sup> Shame”; as implied, this is based on the Circle of Shame [op. cit.]. However, I do not introduce this Resilience Training Exercise regarding shame until we have, during a previous session, gone over the Circle of Authentic Pride together – and in this way established a firm foundation for their (the AT student’s) Authentic Pride, coming from within themselves and from who they are.

The type of low-self-esteem and / or shame in this context is not our fault, but rather a patterned negative Habit Energy [Hanh 2001<sup>TAB</sup>]. Kabat-Zinn expresses this idea succinctly:

<sup>12</sup> As taught by Luis de Rivera.

<sup>13</sup> Three Minute Exercise: this can be adapted for Autogenic Training and / or Mindfulness practices, and is based on the exercise outlined in Segal et al 2002 pp 184; 241, and e.g. pp 257-258.

<sup>14</sup> I had initially called this “inauthentic” shame. On reflection, I think this was a misnomer. The word “inappropriate” conveys the sense better.... that this form of shame, while feeling and being real to us, is inappropriate as it is not our fault ... but a result of some form of childhood trauma and / or later abuse by others; or the result of inadvertent and inappropriate adult attitudes that we may have unconsciously internalised.

Perhaps we just need little reminders from time to time that we are already dignified, deserving, worthy. Sometimes we don't feel that way because of the wounds and scars we carry from the past or because of the uncertainty of the future. It is doubtful that we came to feel underserving on our own. We were helped to feel unworthy. We were taught it in a thousand ways when we were little, and learned our lessons well.

Kabat-Zinn 1994 pp 107-108

There may seem to be here an implied criticism of our parents / caregivers as we were growing up. I think this is to misunderstand where Kabat-Zinn is coming from. It is more likely that our parents were themselves suffering from trans-generational negative Habit Energies that they were unaware of, and so these are passed on to us unconsciously. No blame<sup>15</sup>. Yet our response-ability, being aware of these dynamics, it not to pass on such negative Habit Energies to our offspring / future generations.

The Circle of Authentic Pride and Approaches to Shame issues are covered in the web article A13, Section 2, EARTE No C1 (pp 7-9) and EARTE No C 3 (pp 12-17) respectively.

#### 4.2: Clarity of thinking and being in the A, B and C states

When we are in Danger, the B state of flight and / or fight is activated. This can be vital for survival when we are in real danger. In the modern world, this B state is often activated when we are not in real physical danger (e.g. being chased by a bear), but rather as a result of things / processes we may find stressful – such as work, family, disquieting memories, and unemployment – that are at an unconscious level neurocepted as “Danger”. In this situation we cannot think straight; our amygdala is focused 100% on survival (running away, fighting), and the clear thinking part of our brain “closes down” [see also de Rivera 2018 pp 116-118]. So when stressed / emotionally upset, this is not a good time to make important decisions.

- Our Story – and therefore often our actions, follows our State [Dana 2018 p 36].
- Our story can easily become embroiled with the [Second Arrow](#).

In an analogous way, when we are in the C state, we cannot think clearly, or our mind may become “foggy”. This is the state that may be associated with: “depression, despondency, and / or low self-esteem”. Again, story, and therefore action or inaction, follows state.

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The A state that we share with mammals<sup>16</sup> facilitates sharing, CARE, wholesome Social Engagement and playfulness. The A state arises when we feel safe; when we feel safe, we can think clearly; at the same time we are in touch with our feelings – and also with the feelings of others.

In order to think clearly and come to wise decisions, we really need to be in, or moving towards, the A state. If we are not in the A state, we need to be aware – Mindful – that we are not in the A State. [Meta-awareness](#) is the ability to have insight into our own state at any time – including, for example, that we are inflicting the Second Arrow upon ourselves – an indication that we are in the B or C State.

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<sup>15</sup> This is also the modus operandi of Paul Gilbert. He comments that had he been born into a drug baron family in Mexico, he would probably now either be dead, or a drug baron himself – rather than a world expert on Compassion Focused Therapy [Gilbert 2016; also see Gilbert & Choden 2013]. Habit Energies / Procedural Learned Tendencies [Hanh 2001, Ogden 2009] are at work here with drug barons and their families.

<sup>16</sup> As we do with B and C states.



Our Story and our actions tend to follow our State. B and C States distort our thinking, just as ripples on a lake distort the reflections of trees and clouds and sky on the lake. In the A State, the lake becomes still, and our being and thinking can now truly reflect what is. Furthermore, our State affects others, and their state affects us. See Section 9: Appendix I: The effect of our A, B, and C states on others.

## 5. Resilience and the Window of Harmony – with reflections on the Window of Affective Tolerance

Ruminating and dwelling on the past tends to put us in the B or C state; this can often be associated with [Affective Stickiness](#) / [Afflictive Stickiness](#), and reduces our resilience [see web article B 25; and Davidson 2018]. To state the obvious: B and C states will reduce / encroach upon our ability to dwell in the A state. In Pat Ogden's terms, this reduces our Window of Tolerance [\[Siegel 1999\]](#); essentially the widow of tolerance is the zone in which we remain stable and in harmony – i.e. the A State. These dynamics are illustrated in Figure 5A.

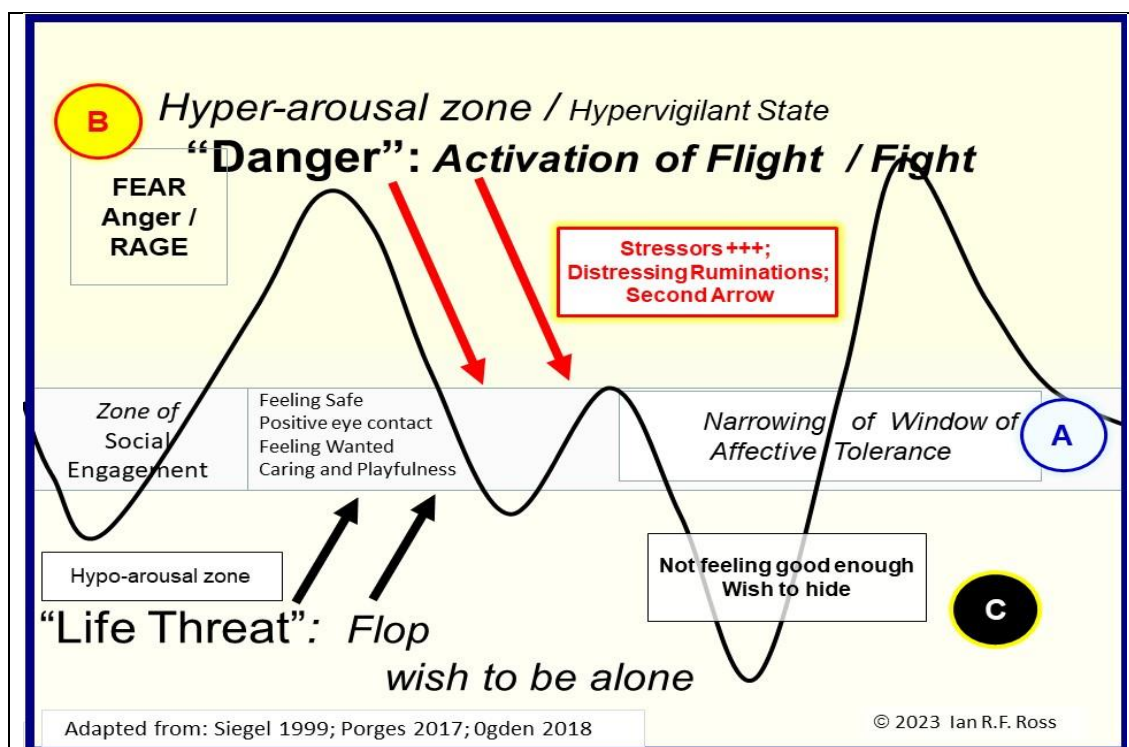


Figure 5A

Narrowing Window of Affective Tolerance  
B and C States squeezing A State narrow

### Comments on Figure 5A

- The B state and / or the C State predominate, associated with fear / anger / resentment; or not feeling good enough.
- These B and C States squeeze the A State, so that we no longer feel safe, and our responses lack wholesome social engagement..... Our Window of Tolerance has become greatly narrowed, so we are only in this state for short periods of time – as illustrated.
- In other words, most of the time we are in the B or C State; and are therefore no longer able to live and work and interact with others in a harmonious way.

On the other hand, if we have a friend with whom we can talk matters over, or we go for a walk in nature, or go for a swim, our B and C states will tend to dissolve, and we can then restore a wide zone of Affective Tolerance as we get back into, or towards, the A state. Mindfulness, regular meditation, Yoga, Tai



Chi and being in nature will facilitate being in the A state, and so, over a period of time, restoring a Wider Window of Affective Tolerance. These dynamics are shown schematically in Figure 5B.

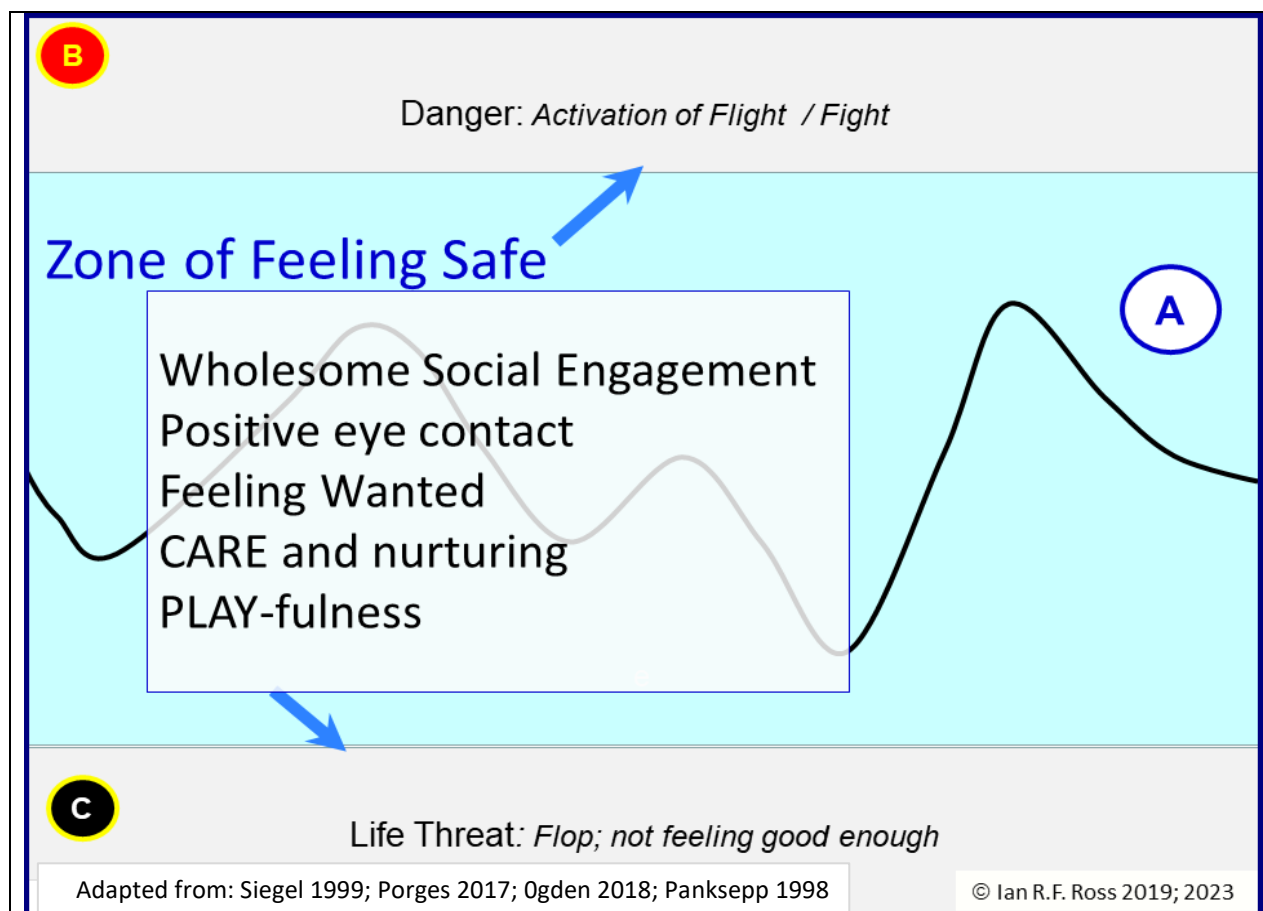


Figure 5B

### A Widening Window of Harmony (Affective Tolerance)

#### Comments on Figure 5B:

- i. As can be seen, the Window of Affective Tolerance has become much wider than in Figure 5A.
- ii. Meditation, being in nature, and feeling safe all facilitate this widening of the A Zone.
- iii. Childhood traumas and feeling unsafe may result in us having a narrower window.....
- iv. ....yet mindful counselling, mediation, Yoga, Tai Chi and analogous disciplines can enable us to widen our window.
- v. As we become increasingly in the Zone of Feeling Safe, this zone expands (as indicated by the wide blue-green zone and by the blue arrows) – thus reducing the B and C zones' grip upon us<sup>17</sup>. See also Winhall 2021.

The Widening Window of Affective  
Tolerance becoming  
a Widening Window of Harmony

As we become more skilled in meditative / mindfulness practices, our default State will increasingly become that of A, thus widening the window. In addition, the realisation that we are moving towards B or C

<sup>17</sup> Yet must remain latent for our own protection in times of real danger and life threat.

states (through meta-awareness) will allow us to offset this – e.g. with a Partial Exercise, the Three Minute Exercise [Segal et al 2002; 2013], or a simple One Minute Breathing Exercise.

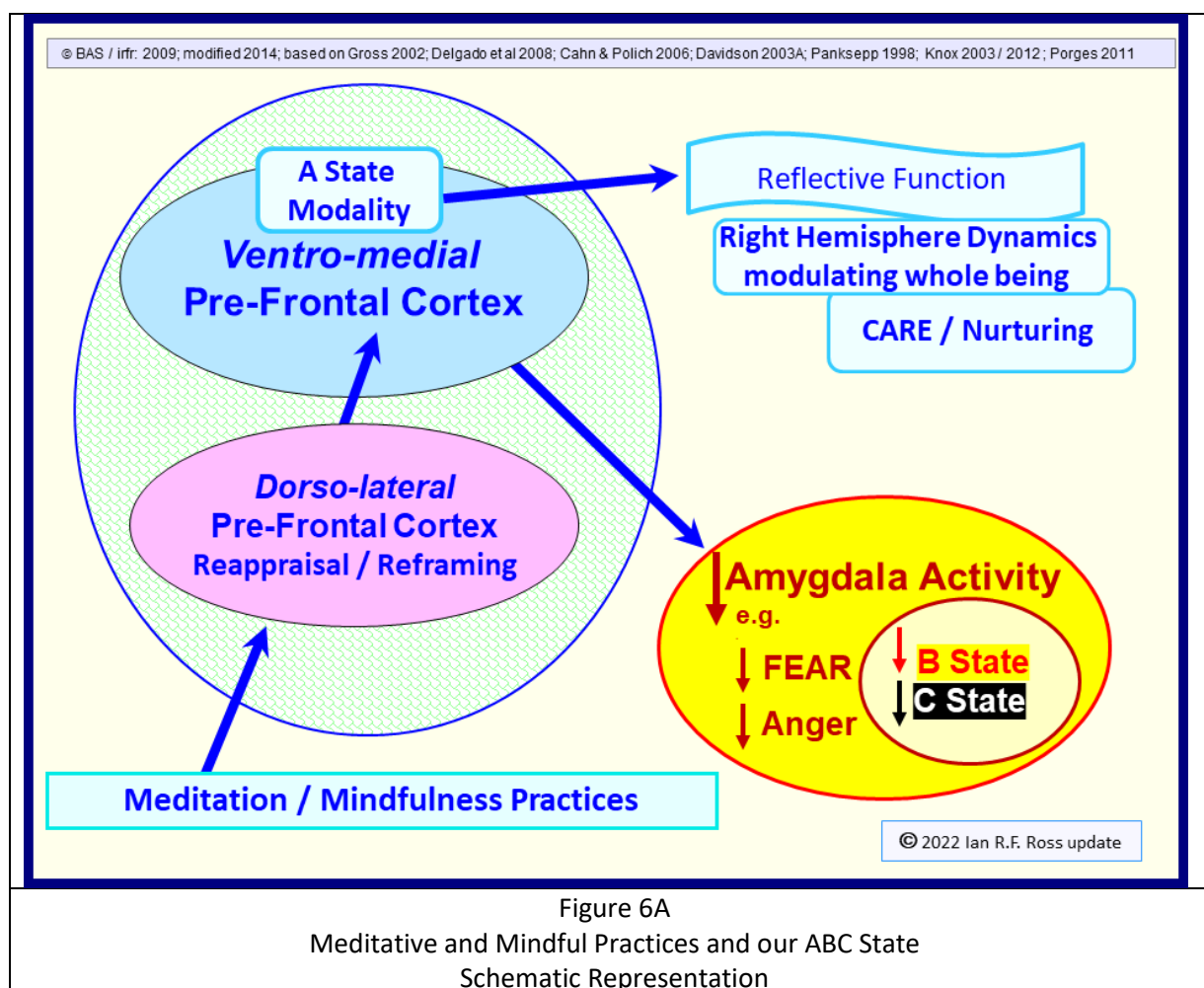
Further inter-related dynamics can be found in the Section 9,

- ❖ Appendix I: The effect of our A, B, and C states on others.
- ❖ Appendix II: A, B and C States and an overview of some relevant dynamics

## 6. Meditative Approaches and their effect on the A, B, and C States

### Introduction

In general terms, meditative and mindful practices facilitate the development of the A State, as summarised in Figure 6A.



### Reflections on the dynamics of Meditative States of Figure 6A:

- I. Meditative type practices bring about changes in our Pre-Frontal Cortex (PFC), indicated by the large outer, greenish-speckled oval on the left [e.g. Siegel 2007 pp 337-362].
- II. The Dorso-lateral PFC, with meditative / mindfulness input, facilitates reappraisal and reframing [Gross 2002; Cahn & Polich 2006; Delgado et al 2008].
  - ❖ Reframing enables us to see life and problems in a new light – that can transform our being. This is a consequence of us moving into the A state as a result of our meditative practices.

- Note: while we are in a B or C State, we are unable to reframe the matter because the B and C dynamics themselves are creating our present moment mental state / associated perceptions<sup>18</sup>.

III. The Ventro-Medial PFC has many positive effects on our well-being. For example:

- i. Messages are sent down to the amygdala, and reduce fear / anxiety and anger dynamics – and this is associated with a reduction in activity of our B and C States.
- ii. Separately messages are sent to other brain areas which:
  - ✿ Facilitate our Reflective Function [Knox 2013/ 2012]. This is crucial in terms of our personal growth and well-being; and facilitates the reframing process already mentioned, and, at the same time,
    - Activates our CARE and nurturing circuits and our wholesome Social Engagement modalities which inter-are with the A State. This leads to the release of:

✿ Oxytocin and other neuro-chemicals related to well-being; these act as specific antidotes to our B and C states, and so reduce fear, anxiety, irritability and anger dynamics [Panksepp 1998; Spinoza 1677 / 1994; Damasio 2003].

IV. All of the above are consistent with facilitating the nine crucial Middle Pre-Frontal Cortex functions described by Daniel Siegel [Siegel 2007 e.g. pp 337-345;]. These are listed below

Bodily Regulation	Emotional Balance	Fear Modulation
Attuned Communication	Response Flexibility	Empathy
Insight	Intuition	Compassion for all (Moral Awareness <sup>19</sup> )

Figure 6B

Nine Pre-Frontal Cortex Functions described by Siegel

[Siegel 2007; see also C2 on website for a summary of the nature of these nine]

\*\*\* \*\*

All of the above modalities are, as indicated, enhanced by the Pre-Frontal Cortex and / or interhemispheric communication – with especial emphasis that the Right Hemisphere is not oppressed; that is, it takes its rightful role of overseeing both left and right hemisphere dynamics [McGilchrist 2009] .

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## 7. Posture, our Present Moment ABC State..../

<sup>18</sup> In the case of severe trauma / PTSD, this is certainly an oversimplification. The amygdala holds the trauma at an unconscious level – so we hear a car back firing, and the body responds as if we are back in e.g. a previous war zone. Treatment here requires at least a partial extinction of that unconscious amygdala memory – which may require us to work through the feeling state (B and or C) for forty five minutes or longer in a therapy session with an expert in trauma treatment. With this memory having been extinguished (involving the Ventro-medial PFC), at least partially, we may then be in a much better space for reframing to occur [Gross 2002; Cahn & Polich 2006; Delgado et al 2008; Davidson 2003A; also see Ross 2010 pp 210-213; and more recently and importantly: throwing new light on these matters: Bessel van der Kolk 2014; Winhall 2021].

<sup>19</sup> Siegel calls this Moral Awareness; in the C2 web article I have called this Compassion for all. The reader is encouraged to reflect over the nine functions summarised in C2.

## 7. Posture, our Present Moment ABC State, and some concluding remarks

The body posture we adopt is important for our well-being, though we may not be aware of this. When we are angry, we may unconsciously make a fist [Kabat-Zinn 1994 p<sup>114</sup>]. If we carry a lot of anger (and so are often in the B State), our body posture may reflect this. Such body postures<sup>20</sup> water the seeds of discontent, jealousy, envy and a wish to get our own back. Watering such seeds is *not* conducive to restoring harmony.

When we greet an old friend, we may well do so with open arms and palms. This is an unconscious reflection of the A State we are in. [Mudras](#) are hand postures that reflect various states of being that originated in ancient Eastern Traditions including Hinduism, Jainism, and Buddhism that have symbolic or ritual significance. While some mudras involve the entire body, most are performed with the hands and fingers. During sitting meditation, having our palms facing down can have quite a different effect from having our palms facing the sky / ceiling. Both postures have their place [Kabat-Zinn 1994 pp 107-116]. If our inner child is hurting, we can gently place our hands on our chest / heart area, in a soothing way, just as a mother might cuddle her hurt daughter / son. See also Douglas-Klotz 1999 p 29 embracing an Aramaic understanding and illuminating perspective of Yeshua's teachings.

If we become irritated or angry with a work colleague or our partner, we can practise a hand posture. In India there is a lovely custom when greeting another person of gently putting our palms together in front of our heart, and bowing to them, the Anjali Mudra: this is bowing to the divine within the other person.....and it signifies an A State of Being.

### Anjali Mudra – further reflections

Our body posture can affect our mental state; so changing our posture, facial expression, and hand position can be of great benefit. The Anjali is one of these.

Anjali means "offering," and in India this mudra is often accompanied by the word "namaste."

#### An Explanation from a Yoga Master

The explanation given by Krishnamacharya is my favourite:

"This gesture signifies the potential for an intention to progress to greatest spiritual awakening. When done properly the palms are not flat against each other; the knuckles at the base of the fingers are bent a little, creating space between the palms and fingers of the two hands resembling a flower yet to open, symbolizing the opening of our hearts."

From <https://www.bodhisurfyoga.com/meaning-of-anjali-mudra> with thanks

Kabat-Zinn suggests that the next time we are angry we can adopt this position, and then become aware of any changes we feel within us that are coming about with this hand posture<sup>21</sup>. Making a fist in

<sup>20</sup> At an unconscious level.

<sup>21</sup> In some cultures this is a typical posture for the hands when praying. So where did this mudra come from? It seems to me that the essence of this mudra is, as it were, pointing to something beyond ourselves....cf. the finger pointing at the moon. If we find the posture helpful, then practise it in a heartfelt sense. Let us not get caught up in potential baggage or misconceptions as to why other traditions use it.

anger is usually an unconscious gesture that in evolutionary terms developed to protect us from danger. In the [Fight](#) [RAGE – Panksepp 1998] Response (SNS mobilisation <sup>[of muscles etc]</sup> when in danger), blood is preferentially directed in humans to the upper limbs [Ekman 2007<sup>pp 25-26</sup>] – we need to reflect on the implications of this. By way of contrast, in the [Flight](#) [FEAR – Panksepp 1998] Response blood is preferentially directed towards our legs, enabling us to flee with great alacrity [Ekman op. cit. <sup>page 20</sup>].

## Posture and State

Deb Dana comments [Dana 2018 p 36] that our Story follows our State (referring to the Autonomic A, B, or C state we are in). We can reframe, extrapolate, and expand from this and say:

- ❖ Our Posture reflects our Autonomic State
- ❖ Changing posture can change our State
- ❖ Mudras can be used specifically to change our inner state.

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Awareness of the State (A,B, or C) that we are in at any moment can allow us to become more mindful in the moment by moment, day by day ups and downs we have in life. It is a form of [meta-awareness](#) that we have the potential and ability to develop. If we are deep in the B or C state, it is difficult / impossible to have this impartial awareness of what is going on within, as we are being driven by these states – as illustrated in the [Zen Story of a man on a horse](#) (in glossary). However, as we develop our Meditative / Heart-Mindfulness<sup>22</sup> / Autogenic Skills, we can be more often in the A state.....and this will enable us to have a sense of when we may be verging on entering the B or C state; and then we can take appropriate action (e.g. Three Minute Exercise; Partial Exercise, or one of the PLAY-full EARTE practices (Expressive Autogenic Resilience Training Exercises – see articles in A11 <sup>Series A</sup> on website)<sup>23</sup>.

With the basis of this ABC Autonomic approach, we are then in a position to explore other relevant domains. For example, this model can become a prelude to working on three further related dynamics: our Authentic Self, the meaning of Authentic Pride, and, where appropriate, looking at low self-esteem matters. See, for example:

- Website article: A 13 <sup>Series C</sup>
  - i. Expressive ART Exercise No C1: Authentic Pride and Resilience Exercise
  - ii. Expressive ART Exercise No C2: Expressive Writing Reflecting on our Authentic Self and True Nature, and
  - iii. Expressive ART Exercise No C3: Shame and Building Resilience Exercise.

## 8. Epilogue /

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I have made this a foot note because I feel the hand posture per se is what is important, and not what some may feel is religious baggage and thus a hindrance to practising the mudra.

<sup>22</sup> Heart-Mindfulness: please see [Mindfulness](#) in Glossary for a fuller understanding to the true Buddhist meaning of this term.

<sup>23</sup> Especially, for example: EARTE No A 1: Playful Loosening Up Exercise and even more EARTE No A 1D Variation D, pp 9-10; the D here standing for Dancing.

## 8. Epilogue

### Hemispheric communications, Meditation, and Well-Being

It is now well recognised that the two side of the brain have distinct functions; for well-being, good, selective communication between the two hemispheres is vital [McGilchrist 2009; 2021]. One of the suggestions for the efficacy of Autogenic Training over the years has been that it facilitates inter-hemispheric communication – and indeed back in the 1980s, before I had even heard of AT, the logo of the British Autogenic Society (BAFATT as it was then) depicted hemispheric communication. These matters are discussed further in “A Neurological Model of AT” [Ross 2010 pp 30-32]; and in B 24: “Autogenic Switches and Well-Being” (this website).

Furthermore, Luis de Rivera’s more recent research indicates increased bilateral hemispheric activity during the practice of the Standard Autogenic Training sequence [Luis de Rivera 2018 e.g. pp 160-172, which includes two **fMRI** images from de Rivera’s research].

These two images are reproduced in the glossary entry:

❖ [Hemispheric Dynamics III \(pp 30-31\)](#)

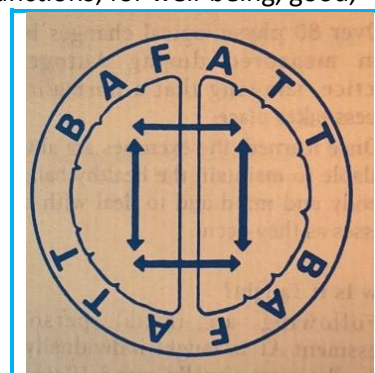


Figure 8  
BAFATT Logo in 1997  
British Association for Autogenic  
Training and Therapy  
(Now BAS)

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This deals with some of the underlying dynamics that  
can facilitate balance and harmony in those regularly practising Autogenic Training

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This article has reflected on our A, B and C states in the context of Meditative approaches and Well-Being. Meta-awareness is a skill that we can develop, and this can help us to become aware of what state we are in. If we are unable to do this, we will not be consciously aware of when we are in the B or C state, and therefore will feel that our “story” is well founded / correct; this can often be an erroneous view.

Appendix II summarises some of these and related dynamics discussed in this article.

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We cannot realise awareness of the state we are in when we are deeply entrenched in the B or C state. Meditative and Mindful approaches move us towards and into the A State; in this process, we can gradually develop the skill to realise when we are about to enter, or have just entered, the B or C State. It seems to me that this ability to be aware of the state we are in, and take appropriate action, facilitates our path towards wholeness and Well-Being.

Ian Ross  
Second Edition October 2023  
52 Hopetoun Terrace, Gullane,  
East Lothian,  
EH31 2DD  
Scotland  
[ross425@btinternet.com](mailto:ross425@btinternet.com)  
[www.atdynamics.co.uk](http://www.atdynamics.co.uk)



9. Appendix I:The effect of our A, B, and C states on others.....9.1: Transference of distressing state from one person to another

Our present moment state (A, B, or C), as outlined previously, affects ourselves. It also affects others. If someone comes into a room feeling fearful or angry (B State) this can, by a sort of affect contagion, result in others in the room feeling uneasy to. We can illustrate this schematically thus:

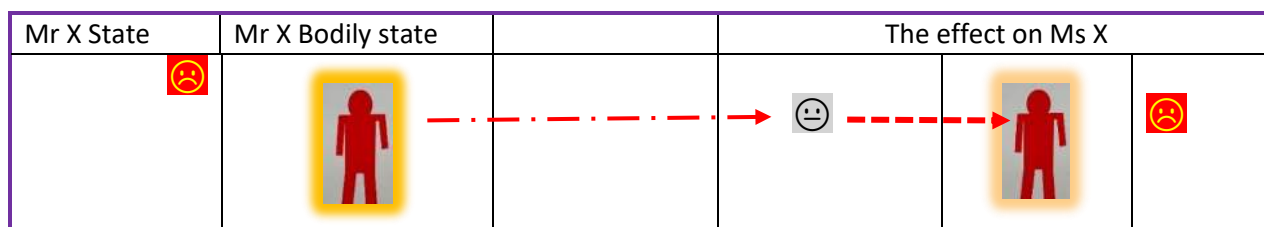




Figure 9.1

Unconscious transmission of distressing emotion / energy to another

Comments on Figure 9.1

- i. Mr X is already in the B state, notated as 
- ii. The State manifests not just in our mood or facial expression, but in
  - ❖ our whole body, as illustrated in
  - ❖ the representation of Mr X's whole body state – which is actually putting out some sort of field around the body – “metaphorically” cf. the work of Michael Faraday (1791 – 1867). See also [Field Forces](#).
- iii. This state is then transferred to Ms X, who was initially in a neutral state, notated as ; but, at an unconscious level she picks up in her body (neurocepts) the negative state of her partner, albeit to a lesser degree – as illustrated.
- iv. Mr X and Ms X are simply illustrations of this process. They could represent, for example, parent–child, child–parent, therapist–client, client–therapist interactions.
- v. Similar dynamics can also occur in group settings; Jung called this emotional contagion.



The projection of emotional contents always has a peculiar influence. Emotions are contagious because they are deeply rooted in the sympathetic system; hence the word sympathetic. Any process of an emotional kind immediately arouses a similar process in others. When you are in a crowd which is moved by emotion, you cannot fail to be roused by the same emotion..... Also, when you are in a crowd which is politically excited you can't help being excited too, even if you do not share their opinions at all, because emotion has this suggestive effect. The French psychologists have dealt with this “contagion mentale”; there are some very good books on the subject, especially *The Crowd: A Study of the Popular Mind*, by Le Bon.

In psychotherapy, even if the doctor is entirely detached from the emotional contents of the patient, the very fact that the patient has emotions has an effect on him. And it is a great mistake if the doctor thinks he can lift himself out of it. He cannot do more than become conscious of the fact that he is affected. If he does not see that, he is too aloof and then he talks beside the point. It is his duty to accept the emotions of the patient and mirror them. That is why I reject the idea of putting the patient upon a sofa and sitting beside him<sup>24</sup>. I put my patients in front of me and talk to them as one natural human being to another, and I expose myself completely and react with no restriction.

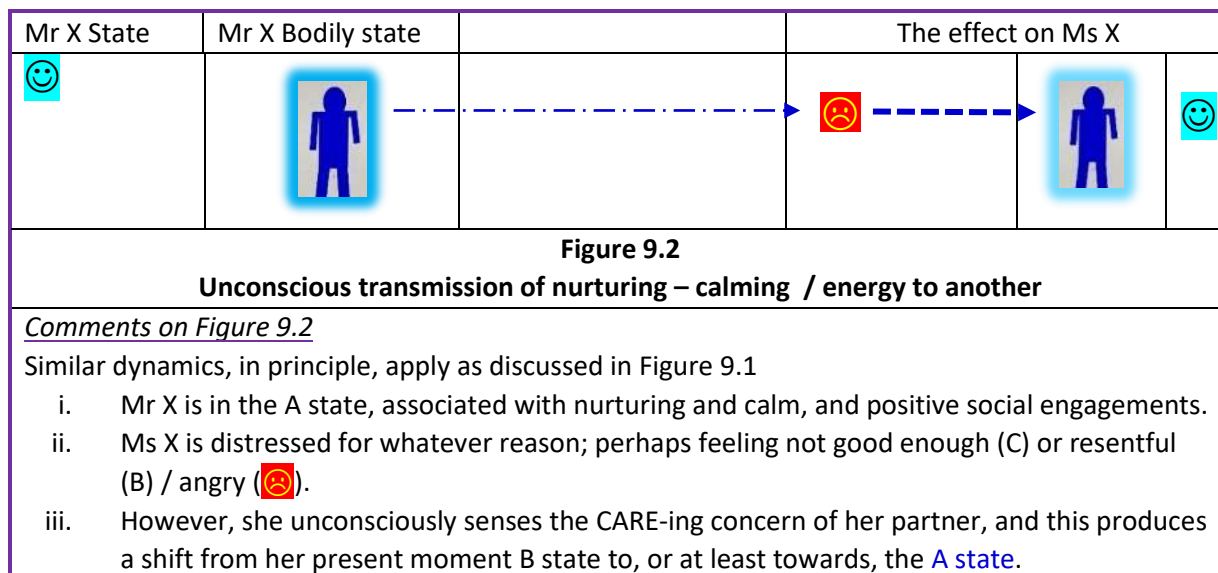
Jung, C.G. 1935/1976. The Tavistock lectures. Lecture V.  
IN: Collected Works, Volume 18; page 138; paragraphs 318-319

<sup>24</sup> Panksepp makes the same point in the context of psychotherapy and our Primary Process Emotions; in the therapeutic dyad, CARE, SEEKING, Separation Distress, PLAY, FEAR and RAGE inter-are [Panksepp 2014B].

This emotional contagion, and the importance of recognising it, is particularly important in the domain of trauma, abuse, and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. See van der Kolk 2014; Winhall 2021.




In view of our present day understanding of the Polyvagal Theory, Jung's reference to the sympathetic system can I think best be reframed in terms of the autonomic nervous system, thus embracing B, C and A States.

### 9.2: Transmission of Nurturing state from one person to another





Figures 9.1 and 9.2 are simply illustrative; in both case Ms X could be Mr X and vice-versa.

### 9.3: Taking good care of our own hurt inner child

When our inner child is hurting or distressed, we can put our hand on our heart in a nurturing way, just like a good enough mother [Winnicott 1965] would to her distressed child. In this context, our adult self is in the A  state, and so is in a position to take good care of the B  or C  state of our hurt inner child.

The two Figures below illustrated our hurt inner child in the form of a cuddly hedgehog.

	For further details and discussion, please see A 11 on website, Section EARTE No A9.1 and A9.2 pp 35-38.	
<b>Figure 9.3 A</b>	<b>References</b> Hanh, Thich Nhat: 2010. Reconciliation – Healing the Inner Child ISBN 978-1-935209-64-5 Hebb Donald O. 1949 Organization of Behavior: a neuropsychological theory ISBN 0-8058-4300-0 Winnicott D.W. 1965. The maturational process and the facilitating environment ISBN 0 946 439 84 2	<b>Figure 9.3 B</b>
A representation of our inner child – here as a cuddly hedgehog		Bringing our hurt inner child, here represented by the hedgehog, to our heart

The dynamics of sections 9.2 and 9.3 above facilitate widening our window of affective tolerance. For further details, please see Section 5 above: Resilience and the Window of Harmony – *with reflections on the Window of Affective Tolerance*.

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## 9. Appendix II:

### A, B and C States and an overview of some relevant dynamics

	Comment	Further comment	Autonomic State; Associated Primary Process Emotions
<b>A State</b>	<b>Feeling Safe</b> Associated with Wholesome Social Engagement. Relaxed state. Enhances a clear mind and clear thinking.	Facilitated by Meditation and being in Nature. Being in Present Moment Enhances <a href="#">meta-awareness</a> Associated with Right Hemisphere dynamics.	<b>A – Ventral Vagal PSNS<sup>22</sup></b> CARE /Nurturing PLAY (Hybrid state of A in combination with SNS activation when feeling Safe) [Dana 2018 p 178-183] Wholesome SEEKING [Porges 2011; Panksepp 1998]
<b>B State</b>	<b>Danger</b> May be real or imagined  In our modern world more usually activated when no real danger – yet neurocepted as real danger	More likely when we are afraid / anxious / angry. These can be activated by complexes [Jung], Habit Energies [Hanh] and Procedural Learned Tendencies [Ogden 2009; 2018]. Negative ruminations (and the <a href="#">Second Arrow</a> ) can trigger the B State	<b>B – Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS) in context of FEAR (or RAGE).</b>  i.e.: “mobilisation for flight or fight” when danger neurocepted.
<b>C State</b> See also Winhall 2021; Kock 2014	<b>Life Threat</b> In our modern world more usually activated when no real Life Threat.	Activated when not feeling good enough. Desire to hide.... run away and hide in cave. Can be associated with dissociation.	<b>C -Dorsal Vagal PSNS<sup>25</sup></b>
Left Hemisphere (LH) dynamics.	Closed analytical thinking and so inability to see the wider picture – are functions of the “grasping” LH [McGilchrist 2021].	Ruminative analytical thinking can be associated with Second Arrow.	Could be B or C state FEAR / RAGE  Clear sighted reflections are A States.
Right Hemisphere (RH) dynamics	Helps us to see the bigger picture; to see matters in their full context [McGilchrist 2021].	Meditation and being in Nature facilitate RH dynamics, and our ability to see matters from the other person’s perspective.	A State Feeling safe CARE and nurturing
Meditation / Mindfulness	Induces A state	Associated with increased Theta wave activity on EEG [Tang et al 2019; Dudeja 2017]	A State <i>Autogenic Discharges could be related to B or C States.</i>

### Figure Appendix II

#### A, B and C States and an overview of some relevant dynamics

For Hybrid States, please see [Polyvagal Theory Part II](#) in glossary

Appendix II continued /

<sup>25</sup> Para-Sympathetic Nervous System

Interlude re: The Autogenic Intentional Verbalisation of Anger (originally conceived by Luthe)

A brief comment re these exercises seems apposite. Autogenic Therapists teach and use these series of exercises to varying extents [Bird 2015 – pp 106-143]. In an ABC context some of these are seen by some therapists as problematic. For example, the Intentional Verbalisation of Anger [op. cit. pp 118-122]. It is one thing for these to be used on rare occasions. Yet, if we are repeatedly becoming irritated / angry, this is a reflection that we are repeatedly in the B State – and ‘action can follow State’ if we do not recognise our Autonomic State. So if we repeatedly use the Anger exercise to “off-load”, at one level we are reinforcing this state. “Neurones that Fire together Wire Together” – [Hebb 1949].

The teaching of spiritual leaders has much more been to understand what is happening and move into an A State, from which compassion is born. The Buddhist concept of [Changing the Peg](#) [Hanh 1998], the writings of Spinoza [1677] and Damasio [2003], are all unconsciously approaching the matter of distressed emotions from what we can now see from an ABC Autonomic perspective.

These dynamics are planned to be discussed in a future web article:

- ❖ F20: The First Eight Breathing Exercises on the Full Awareness of Breathing Sutra – and their associated Meditations.

\*\*\* \*\*

Mindful approaches facilitate enhancing Right Hemispheric dynamics\*\*; this is crucial for individual and collective Well-Being – in the context of families, societies, international relations and the future of our planet. [See also Eisenstein 2018].

\*\* Re: Mindful approaches facilitate enhancing Right Hemispheric dynamics

This is partly because being heart-mindful inter-is with being in the present moment in an experiential / vivencia sense; these are Right Hemisphere modalities. For example, watching a sunset, seeing the planet Mercury hide behind the moon (i.e. an eclipse of Mercury) early in the early hours of the morning; hearing a blackbird singing.

These are all examples of us being in the Being Mode of mental awareness, rather than the Doing (driven) Mode.

- ✿ Being in tune with another person also reflects bilateral Right Hemisphere dynamics – for example, a healthy mother-infant dyad, and the psychotherapeutic relationship [Schoore 2009; 2012; 2019] which are now increasingly seen as being efficacious thanks to Right to Right Hemisphere communication, rather than Left Brain analytical approaches. (see also: [Hemispheric Dynamics I and II](#) in Glossary, Figure Glossary G2).
- ✿ Meditation also facilitates being in tune with ourselves, our ancestors, and our hurt inner child, which is not possible in a Left Brain analytical, ruminating, second arrow mode.

Meditation enhances both Right Hemispheric dynamics, inter-hemispheric communication, feeling safe – and being in the A State.

\*\*\* \*\*

### 10. Thematically related articles

A7	Porges and The Polyvagal Theory – <i>Reflections on clinical and therapeutic significance</i>	2012
A8	The Polyvagal Theory and a more sympathetic awareness of the ANS (after Porges et al)	2012
A9	Emotions, Well-Being and Immune Function: <i>Awe and Shame as modulators of Being – for good or ill</i>	2015
A11	Expressive Autogenic Resilience Training Exercises Series A	2021
A13	Expressive <i>Autogenic Resilience Training</i> Exercises (EARTE): Series C including: ❖ EARTE: No C1: <i>Authentic Pride and Resilience Exercise</i> ❖ EARTE No C2: <i>Expressive Writing Reflecting on our Authentic Self and True Nature</i> ❖ EARTE No C3: <i>Shame and Building Resilience Exercise</i> ❖ EARTE No C5: <i>Gratitude</i> ❖ EARTE No C7: <i>Wonder and a sense of Awe</i>	2021
B 12	Affect Labelling, Autogenic Training, and reducing Emotional Distress	2011
B 15	Towards a Growth Mindset <i>based on the work of Dr Carol S. Dweck</i>	2014
B 17	Windows of Affective Tolerance: <i>Reflections on Childhood Distress, Procedural Learned Tendencies, and the Therapeutic Dyad in the context of Primary Process Emotions and the Polyvagal Theory</i> [based on Ogden 2006 / 2009]	2014
B18	The Space to Choose – <i>reflections on the gap between the stimulus and the response</i> (after Frankl)	2014
B19	Reflections on a Secure Base: <i>Bowlby, Ainsworth, Attachment and Well-Being</i>	2017
B20	Separation Distress and Well-Being – <i>Neuro-physiological reflections on developing a Secure Base</i>	2018
B22	A playfully sympathetic approach to the Polyvagal Theory – <i>An introduction to Flourishing Autogenically</i>	2022
B 24	Autogenic Switches and Well-Being. This deals with some of the underlying dynamics that can facilitate balance and harmony in those regularly practising Autogenic Training	2020
B 25	Themes of Neuroscience relevant to Well-Being – <i>Based on the work of Richard Davidson et al</i>	2022
B 26	Well-Being and Flourishing as a Skill we can Develop – <i>Based on the work of Richard Davidson</i>	2022
B 27	Three Key Types of Meditation and their varying and specific effects on Well-Being	2022
B 28	An Experiential Introduction to ABC States of the Polyvagal Theory – <i>An outline of a brief practical guide developed with students of AT</i>	This article 2 <sup>nd</sup> edition Oct 2023
B 29	Reflections on the Window of Affective Tolerance in the context of Trauma and Mindfulness	PENDING
C2	Mindsight – <i>our seventh sense and associated pre-frontal cortex functions</i> [based on Siegel 2010]	2011
C6 B	Integration and Well Being: <i>Dancing in the Flow of Integration</i>	2013
C7	Being in touch with our Feelings	2011
C 13	Shadow and Light of our Time	2023
D 11	Sukha: Paths of Well-Being, PSNS Afferents, and Inner Warmth: <i>from Dukkha to Sukha</i>	2017
E-03	Look at the Cypress Tree – Autonomic Afferents and Well-Being (Background Research Paper for a talk given to the British Autogenic Society 21st May 2016)	2016
F 1	An introduction to Autogenics 3.0 Based on the work of Luis de Rivera	2018
F 9	F 9: Constructive Feeling Meditation: Inter-Being Part I (A general introduction)	2022
F 11	Constructive Feeling Meditation: Inter-Being Part II Meditations in and around “Call me by my True Names”	2023
F 20	Sutra on The Full Awareness of Breathing embracing Meditative Practices in the here and now	PENDING
F 14	Meditation on Inner Aspects of Autogenics 3.0 Sequence	PENDING



## 11. Glossary

The purpose of this glossary is to go beyond what has been felt appropriate in the main article – for those interested in some of the background constructs. It is hoped that some of the entries below may also help to deepen our understanding of our ABC States – e.g. [Polyvagal Theory Part I and Part II](#) – and so may be of relevance to many.

<p>Affective / Afflictive Stickiness</p> <p>For a fuller exposition of this term, please see glossary of B 25</p>	<p>Affective Stickiness is the term Davidson uses to denote our tendency to dwell on distressing / negative events – and not let go of them [Davidson 2015]. This can result in distressing and unwholesome ruminations, ill-being, and reduced resilience.</p> <p>Of course, not all affects are unwholesome. For this reason, I find the term Afflictive Stickiness more pertinent – and it will be seen that in this article the two terms are used more or less interchangeably.</p> <p>The <a href="#">Second Arrow</a> will tend to increase Afflictive Stickiness, and so reduce resilience.</p>
<p>Autogenic Training, Well-Being and EEG changes</p>	<p>Autogenic Training (AT), developed by Schultz during the 1920 and 1930s, had been found to induce a profound relaxation of body and mind associated with the psycho-physiological shift (Umschaltung) [Luthe &amp; Schultz 1969 Volume 1 p 1]. This shift is towards the A state – with increased Para-Sympathetic Nervous System (PSNS) activity of the Ventral Vagal branch of the Vagus nerve.</p> <p>There is a succinct article in the Counselling Directory by Alice Greene which gives a wonderful overview of AT. The following is a brief extract:</p>

.....The practice of these core exercises leads to a state of altered consciousness, the Autogenic State (which is not identical to hypnosis, self- hypnosis or sleep). In this state the EEG changes closely resemble alpha wave meditation *shifting into the deep healing area of mind characterized by Theta waves. This deep relaxation accesses information from deeper levels to allow all kinds of brain-directed, self-regulatory processes of a normalising nature to spontaneously take place – promoting and supporting healthier mental and physical balance.*

This freed-up access to both feelings and memories, and intellectual and creative processes help resolve factors like unbalanced personality development, the effects of a selectively intellectual type of education, traumatic events, and suppressed emotions and reactions. Whereas preventing this free flow of information between the more emotional right brain and the more analytical left brain leads to chronic tension and distress.

*Whatever sort of therapy or drugs we use, we can say that the final common pathway of all these different approaches lies in the full restoration of our natural self-regulatory processes.* No one can heal a fractured bone, a disturbed mind or a broken heart... they heal themselves – if allowed to. While many drugs today interfere with this precise biological wisdom, AT helps both mind and body to get on with doing their own job.


Greene, Alice 2011  
Italics added by IR

<https://www.counselling-directory.org.uk/memberarticles/autogenic-training-for-profound-relaxation-and-stress-management>

True healing /



Glossary *continued*

<p>Autogenic Training, Well-Being and EEG changes <i>continued</i></p>	<p>True healing can only occur when the conditions of inner harmony are restored in body, mind, and spirit – that then restores “<i>our natural self-regulatory processes</i>”. Theta waves refer to a particular type of brain wave activity detected on EEG. The “deep healing area of mind characterised by Theta waves” is a theme taken up by Tudhope &amp; Draper in their recent book: “Achieving Equilibrium” – 2013.</p> <p>Further research on meditation and theta waves can be found in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Tang, Yi-Yuan; Tang, Rongziang; Rothbart, Mary K. &amp; Posners, Michael I. 2019 Frontal theta activity and white matter plasticity following mindfulness meditation 2019 published by Elsevier. See: <a href="https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31082635/">https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31082635/</a> or <a href="https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6778007/">https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6778007/</a></li> </ul>
<p>Autonomic Nervous System (ANS)</p> <p>Imported from B 22 with some minor changes</p>	<p>The Autonomic Nervous System has, historically, been divided into two fundamental parts, that of the Sympathetic Nervous System (SNS) that deals with danger in the context of the flight / fight response; and the Parasympathetic Nervous System (PSNS), which facilitates Rest, Repair and Recuperation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ However, this is not the full story, and this present article has looked at the ANS in the context of the <a href="#">Polyvagal Theory</a>, a summary of which appears in this Glossary on pp 35-38.</li> </ul>
<p>Awe</p> 	<p>Different emotions have different effects on our Well-Being and Immune System. Research has shown that one of the emotions that comes out best in this respect is a sense of Wonder (Awe) [Stellar et al 2015]; see also</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ A9 on website: Emotions, Well-Being and Immune Function: <i>Awe and Shame as modulators of Being – for good or ill.</i></li> </ul> <p>Also: Web article:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ A13: Expressive Autogenic Resilience Training Exercises (EARTE): Series C including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ EARTE No C5: Gratitude</li> <li>❖ EARTE No C7: Wonder and a sense of Awe pp 39-43</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>Awe continued:</b></p> <p>Awe is difficult to define, and the meaning of the word has changed over time. Related concepts are wonder, admiration, elevation, and the sublime. In <i>Awe: The Delights and Dangers of Our Eleventh Emotion</i>, neuropsychologist and positive psychology guru Paul Pearsall presents a phenomenological study of awe. He defines awe as an “overwhelming and bewildering sense of connection with a startling universe that is usually far beyond the narrow band of our consciousness.” Pearsall sees awe as the 11th emotion, beyond those now “scientifically” accepted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ i.e., love, fear, sadness, embarrassment, curiosity, pride, enjoyment, despair, guilt, and anger)<sup>[7]</sup>.</li> </ul> <p>Most definitions allow for awe to be a positive or a negative experience, but when asked to describe events that elicit awe, most people only cite positive experiences.<sup>[8]</sup> One definition of awe relevant to the research discussed later in this article is established by Monroy and Keltner: awe is defined as the perceived vastness and accommodation in shifting one's mentality regarding the world and deviating from one's usual frame of reference.<sup>[9]</sup></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><a href="#">Awe - Wikipedia</a></p> <p style="text-align: right;">For these references, please see original article</p> <p><b>Etymology:</b></p> <p>The term awe stems from the Old English word ege, meaning “terror, dread, awe,” which may have arisen from the Greek word áchos, meaning “pain.”<sup>[10]</sup> The word awesome originated from the word awe in the late 16th century, to mean “filled with awe.”<sup>[11]</sup> The word awful also originated from the word awe, to replace the Old English word egeful (“dreadful”).<sup>[12]</sup></p> <p style="text-align: right;"><a href="#">Awe - Wikipedia</a></p>	

Glossary *continued*

<p><u>Etymology of Awe continued:</u></p> <p>c. 1300, agheful, aueful, "worthy of respect or fear, striking with awe; causing dread," from aghe, an earlier form of awe (n.), + -ful.</p> <p><a href="#">awful   Etymology, origin and meaning of awful by etymonline</a></p> <p>See also <a href="#">Polyvagal Theory part II</a> p 36-38.</p>	
<p><b>Changing the Peg</b></p> <p>Abbreviated and renewed from web article E-03 glossary: Changing the Peg i.</p> <p>Dealing appropriately with distressing emotions, recognising and befriending them, is a way of composting our experiences. From the compost, new creations and growth can occur in the coming Spring.</p>	<p>A concept from Buddhist psychology. It is suggested that “negative” mind states, including both destructive and distressing emotions, can best be overcome by changing our inner mental / feeling state to one of a positive (wholesome) emotion /affect (Hanh 1998 p 207-209). This switch in our being state is called changing the peg. Interestingly, Spinoza developed a similar concept in which he stated that we can only overcome a negative affect not by reason alone, but by “reason-induced-emotion” [Spinoza 1677; Damasio 2003 p 11-12].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Studies in neuro-science support this concept; positive affects tend to act as antidotes to the informational substances associated with such distressing mind states as anxiety, grief, and anger [Panksepp 1998; Ross 2010 p 272].</li> </ul> <div style="border: 1px solid #00FFFF; border-radius: 15px; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Going for a walk in Nature can be a way of Changing the Peg. On such a walk, “fallen from heaven” may manifest with a sacred sense of <a href="#">Inter-Being</a>.</li> <li>❖ Learning from the Polyvagal Theory and embracing the ABC model can be way of implicitly Changing the Peg</li> </ul> </div>
<p><b>EEG</b> Electroencephalography</p>	<p>An EEG “is a method to record an electrogram of the spontaneous electrical activity of the brain” [<a href="#">Electroencephalography - Wikipedia</a>].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Some of the first EEGs were on animals: for example Richard Caton, a physician practising in Liverpool, on rabbits and monkeys (1842–1926).</li> <li>❖ The first person to record EEGs in humans was Hans Berger (1924), a German physiologist and psychiatrist (1873–1941).</li> </ul> <p>There are several different waves identified on EEG, and these include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✚ Delta, theta, alpha, beta, gamma and mu (listed in order of increasing frequency – Hz).</li> </ul> <p>Some brain waves are associated with meditation / Autogenic Training – e.g. <a href="#">Theta</a>.</p>
<p><b>Feeling Tone</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Vedanā</li> </ul>	<p>A term used extensively by William and Penman in their recent book “Deeper Mindfulness” [Williams &amp; Penman 2023].</p> <p>“The psychological faculty of experiencing sensations. Vedanā is the faculty that is said to “taste” or “relish” experience, and these experiences are classified into three kinds: as pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral.....” [Keown 2003 p 324].</p> <p>This overlaps with some aspects of <a href="#">meta-awareness</a> – and in the context of ABC states discussed in this article, to recognising which state we are in.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Please see fuller exposition in glossary entrance: <a href="#">Vedanā</a></li> </ul>
<p><b>Field Forces /</b></p>	

Glossary *continued*

<p>Field Forces</p> <p>apropos whole article and especially appendix I</p>	<p>When reviewing this article for the second edition, I was struck by Section 9.1 and 9.2 on 'Transmission of state from one person to another', and this struck a chord within my memory, and a wonderful article that I read over thirty years ago by Patrick Pietroni [Pietroni 1987] that referred to a British 19<sup>th</sup> Century scientist. The article is still readily available on the web, and here is the passage that has been resonating within me all these years.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid blue; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Michael Faraday, to his dying day, insisted that field forces were at work around each of us. It is more accurate to describe matter as a concentration of field force or energy, or, as Einstein<sup>29</sup> wrote:</p> <div style="border: 1px dashed green; padding: 5px; margin: 5px 0;"> <p>'We may therefore regard matter as being constituted by the regions of space in which the field is extremely intense. There is no place in this new kind of physics both for field and matter, for field is the only reality'</p> </div> <p style="text-align: right;">Pietroni 1987 p 359</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><sup>29</sup> Einstein A. The principle of relativity. New York: Dover, 1952</p> </div>
<p>Hemispheric Dynamics I</p> <p>Functions of both hemispheres represented pictorially from a playful perspective</p>	<p>A somewhat light-hearted caricature of the Two Hemispheres; yet making an important point. Those embedded in the Left Hemisphere are neuro-physiologically unable to see the bigger picture, and the true nature of our lives, life, Mother Earth and the cosmos.</p> <p>Image from: <a href="https://www.vincegowmon.com/the-right-brain-develops-first/">https://www.vincegowmon.com/the-right-brain-develops-first/</a> with thanks</p> <div data-bbox="871 1043 1436 1635" data-label="Image"> </div> <p style="text-align: center;">Figure Glossary G-1 A Playful Image of Right and Left Hemisphere Dynamics and potential bridges between</p>
<p>Hemispheric Dynamics II /</p>	

Glossary *continued*Hemispheric  
Dynamics IIMother Infant  
Dyad,  
Psychotherapy, and  
the A State

The good-enough parent [Winnicott 1960] establishes an on-going relationship with her / his child that is rooted in the A State. Obviously, all infants and children experience distress from time to time while growing up – and in those moments it is crucial that the parent, in general, is able to remain, by and large, in the A State. This is fundamental to the health and well-being of the mother-infant dyad [Schoore 2003; Porges 2011].

Overlapping with this is the emotional and implicit wholesome bonding that is going on, which in essence involves

Right Brain to Right Brain communication [e.g. Schoore 2003A, 2003B, 2003C; 2012; 2019], and this is illustrated in Figure G-2.



Figure Glossary G 2

Right Brain to Right Brain Communication of the  
Mother-Infant Dyad

Image from Schoore 2019 Front Cover; illustration by  
Beth Schoore, which itself is based on Dumas 2011

In conclusion, the healthy development of the infant and child depends on these Right Hemisphere to Right Hemisphere communications within a general milieu of an Autonomic A State <sup>Ventral Vagal</sup> [Porges 2011]. Schoore's perspective here is fundamental:

.....the highest human functions – stress regulation, intersubjectivity, humour, empathy, compassion, morality and creativity – are right brain functions. I am also suggesting that an expanded capacity for right and not left brain processing lies at the core of clinical experience [Schoore 2012 p 7<sup>26</sup>].

In other words, not only is Right Hemisphere to Right Hemisphere Communication Vital for the Mother-Child Dyad Development, but similar dynamics are involved – and vital for – efficacious psychotherapy. Implicitly this means also that psychotherapy does not primarily work through Left Brain dynamics.

Meditative approaches facilitate the A State and feeling safe within – which can then allow increasing mindfulness to flourish. This is especially the case when meditative approaches embrace three key forms of meditation, Focused Meditation, Mindfulness, and Loving Kindness Compassion [Ricard; Lutz, and Davidson 2014; Davidson 2022; see also B 27 on Website ]. Certain forms of Autogenic Training embrace all these three modalities [e.g. de Rivera 2018; Wallnöfer 2000].

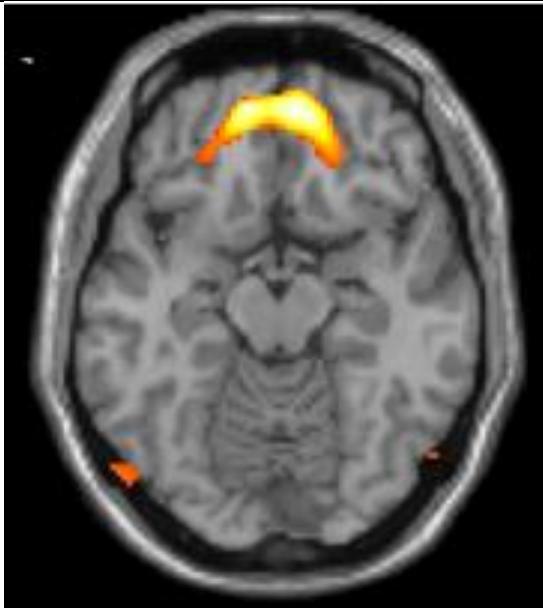
Certain ancient meditative traditions in essence offer a type of internal psychotherapy by embracing our A and other Autonomic States in a befriending and mindful way – involving Right Hemisphere Dynamics, and then working on them with compassion and understanding, as a good enough mother does with her child.

09-12-2022

## Hemispheric Dynamics III /

<sup>26</sup> The title of this book is of significance: The SCIENCE of the ART of PSYCHOTHERAPY. ART here also stands for Affect Regulation Therapy – which in effect is what psychotherapy is about.

Glossary *continued*

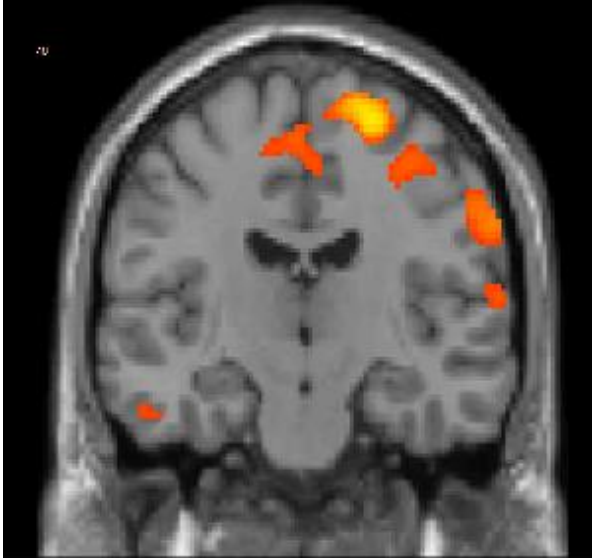
<p>Hemispheric Dynamics III</p> <p>Hemispheric Communication in Autogenic Training</p> <p>Adapted from B 24 on web – which delves deeper into these dynamics</p>	<p>Research during the last decade has confirmed that there is an increased balance in hemispheric activity during Autogenic Training, as outlined below by de Rivera:</p> <div data-bbox="448 338 1401 624" style="border: 1px solid magenta; padding: 10px;"> <p>Now, our fMRI studies confirm that there is a shift from the usual left-brain cognitive dominance to right-brain cognitive dominance during the autogenic state. The frequent repetition (activation) of the Second Autogenic Switch enhances interhemispheric cooperation and explains other interesting effects of autogenics, like Autogenic Neutralisation, increased self-awareness, the emergence of repressed memories, and the unification of consciousness.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">de Rivera 2018 p 70</p> </div> <p>In health, there is good communication between the two hemispheres. If we become entrapped in analytical thinking and left brain modes, these communications become impaired<sup>27</sup>.</p> <p>Figure Glossary 3A and 3B highlight some of the brain areas actually activated during Autogenic Training by skilled practitioners – that is the bedrock of increased hemispheric communication and concordance.</p> <div data-bbox="395 893 940 1498">  </div> <div data-bbox="970 927 1437 1294"> <p>Glossary Figure G-3A (Figure 7.2A in B 24 article)</p> <p>fMRI transverse view of the brain during the Autogenic State, showing bilateral activation of both sides of the frontal lobe</p> <p>[de Rivera 2018 p 163; and <a href="http://www.icat.world">www.icat.world</a> ; and <a href="https://icat.world/tabs-tenerife-autogenic-brain-scan/">https://icat.world/tabs-tenerife-autogenic-brain-scan/</a>]</p> </div>
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Hemispheric Dynamics III continued /

Glossary *continued*



<sup>27</sup> More specifically, the Left Hemisphere (LH) has failed to report its analytical type findings to the Right Hemisphere (RH); the latter specialises in being able to see the bigger / whole picture. McGilchrist sees this as a major failing of Western Culture during recent centuries, and this has become worse in recent decades. The result is that, in general terms, our culture has lost sight of its roots, and hence the present “matter with things” [McGilchrist 2009; 2021].



<p>Hemispheric Dynamics III <i>continued</i></p>	<p>Glossary Figure G-3B Figure 7.2B in B 24 article; text below adapted from B 24.</p> <p>fMRI coronal view of the brain during the Autogenic State, showing activation of Right Frontal Lobe and insular From Luis de Rivera 2018 p 70; and <a href="http://www.icat.world">www.icat.world</a>; <a href="https://icat.world/tabs-tenerife-autogenic-brain-scan/">https://icat.world/tabs-tenerife-autogenic-brain-scan/</a></p>	
<p>Inter-Being</p> <p>See also glossary of B-27 on website</p>	<p>Thich Nhat Hanh give a lovely introduction to Inter-Being.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid #00AEEF; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>If you are a poet, you'll see clearly that there is a cloud floating in this sheet of paper. Without a cloud, there will be no rain; without rain, the trees cannot grow; and without trees, we cannot make paper. The cloud is essential for the paper to exist. If the cloud is not here, the sheet of paper cannot be here either. So we can say that the cloud and the paper "inter are."</p> <p>Interbeing is a word that is not in the dictionary yet, but if we combine the prefix "inter" with the verb "to be", we have a new verb, "inter-be".</p> <p>If we look into this sheet of paper even more deeply, we can see the sunshine in it. If the sunshine is not there, the forest cannot grow. In fact nothing can grow. Even we cannot grow without sunshine. And so, we know that the sunshine is also in this sheet of paper. The paper and the sunshine inter-are. And if we continue to look, we can see the logger who cut the tree and brought it to the mill to be transformed into paper. And we see wheat. We know that the logger cannot exist without his daily bread, and therefore the wheat that became his bread is also in this sheet of paper. And the logger's father and mother are in it too. When we look in this way, we see that without all these things, this sheet of paper cannot exist.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Hanh 2012 The Pocket Thich Nhat Hanh pp 55-56</p> </div> <p>Breath Awareness in any form of meditation can be a wonderful way into an experiential sense of Inter-Being.</p>	
<p>Jen /</p>		



<p>Jen</p> <p>Adapted from Glossary of B 26</p>	<p>In ancient China, there was a quality that was considered higher than any other; it was not, for example, courage, or beauty, or perseverance. It was Jen.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>This quality was known as Jen, which can perhaps best be translated as human-heartedness</p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Watts 1995; page 25).</p> </div> <p>We can get more in touch with the sacred and human-heartedness within each of us by mental training** which facilitates our CARE / nurturing circuits [Panksepp 1998], and activates our positive (wholesome) emotions through the increased activity of our Ventral Vagal para-sympathetic nervous system afferents [Porges 2011] resulting in the A State.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>** We should I think regard this phrase: “<a href="#">Mental Training</a>” as a misnomer. Ruth Sewell, and Autogenic Therapist colleague, has suggested the phrase:  <span style="color: blue;">✿ <a href="#">Reflective and Awareness Building</a></span> (practices).  Please see glossary entry for this.</p> </div>
<p>Mental Training</p> <p>See also: <a href="#">Reflective and Awareness Building Practices</a></p>	<p>Mental Training for personal (and professional) development is crucial for our wholeness. Some regard the term Mental Training as being rather cognitive / analytical / Left Brain. For these reasons, a more appropriate phrase is:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p style="color: blue; text-align: center;"><a href="#">Reflective and Awareness Building (Practices)</a></p> <p style="text-align: right;">Ruth Sewell</p> </div> <p>Please see glossary entry for this.</p>
<p>Meta-awareness I (meta-attention)</p>	<p>“Being able to track the quality of one’s own awareness – for example, noticing when your mind wanders or you’ve made a mistake.” [ Lapate et al 2016].</p>
<p>Meta-awareness II</p> <p>Adapted from glossary of B 26</p> <p>Automatic Pilot: see Williams and Penman 2011 – e.g. pp 36-38. Automatic Pilot can overlap with the driven mode.</p> <p>Also see: <a href="#">Zen Story of a man on a horse</a> in glossary</p>	<p>A complementary perspective on meta-awareness is given by Dahl et al.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “....An awareness of the processes of conscious experience , such as recognition that one is expressing an emotion, a thought, or a sensory perception as it occurs in real time.</li> <li>○ It “is involved when one suddenly recognises an emotion before it provokes a reaction, for example, and also when one suddenly realises that one has been ‘on autopilot’ while engaged in a daily routine.”</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">[Dahl, Wilson-Mendenhall, and Davidson 2020 p 32198]</p> <p>The ability to realise, to recognise, that we are entering the B state before we become entrapped in it and react inappropriately, is an important form of meta-awareness. In this way we can prevent ourselves inadvertently responding on “automatic pilot”.</p>
<p>Mindfulness</p> <p><b>Heart-Mind-Fullness</b></p> <p>(From a Buddhist Perspective)</p>	<p>The term Mindfulness is really a misnomer. The Sanskrit term is smriti, meaning “remembering”. The Chinese character for this term embraces both heart and mind. Mindfulness that is not heart-felt is not true Mindfulness. True Mindfulness arises from the Autonomic A State <sup>Ventral Vagal</sup>, thus embracing Social Engagement with ourselves and others. A better term would be Heart-Mindfulness or Mind-Heart-Fullness. [See for example: Hanh 1999 pp 64-65]. See also:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✿ <a href="#">Jen</a>;</li> <li>✿ <a href="#">Ubuntu</a></li> <li>✿ <a href="#">Inter-Being</a></li> </ul>
<p>Mudra /</p>	

Mudra	The following extract is from Wikipedia:		
<div>A mudra .....is a symbolic or ritual gesture or pose in Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism. While some mudras involve the entire body, most are performed with the hands and fingers. As well as being spiritual gestures employed in the iconography and spiritual practice of Indian religions, mudras have meaning in many forms of Indian dance, and yoga. The range of mudras used in each field (and religion) differs, but with some overlap. In addition, many of the Buddhist mudras are used outside South Asia, and have developed different local forms elsewhere. <a href="https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mudra">https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mudra</a></div>			
<div>A typical hand mudra is the one that is commonly given in Eastern / Indian culture when two people greet each other. ✿ The hands are place palms together in a somewhat cupped fashion over one’s heart, with a gentle bow to the other person, signifying bowing to the spiritual / divine nature of the other being. This could also be taken to be bowing to the Jen / human-heartedness within the other (and ourselves).</div>		<div>Glossary Figure G-4A The Namaskara or Anjali Mudra See also: <a href="#">Mudras: Meaning of Sacred Hand Gestures - Tibetan Nuns Project (tnp.org)</a></div>	
<div>We can sometimes get a better feel of what something is by looking at what it is not. Figure G-4B is a representation of an incorrect Anjali Mudra, ✚ It will be seen that the hands appear much flatter.</div>		<div>Glossary Figure G-4B Not Quite Correct Anjali Mudra</div>	
Neuroception	<div>Neuroception is the ability of the animal / mammal / human to detect safety, danger, or life threat. This occurs at an unconscious level. Our responses, feelings, and behaviour are largely dependent upon which state we are in – i.e. A, B, or C. Our ✦ “Story follows our State” [Dana 2018]. This is the result of our perceptions, feelings and thoughts being, to a large extent, dependent upon the State we are in at that moment. Note that neuroception is not always correct; e.g. when a stick is mistaken for a snake; or when a snake is mistaken for stick. ✦ During evolution there was a tendency for a stick being mistaken for a snake more often than a snake to be mistaken for a stick. ✦ Reason: the latter did not survive.  Childhood trauma and or abuse of children can lead to disturbing <u>adult</u> Habit Energies that result in inappropriate neuroception – e.g. when any adult (male or female) may be pattern matched (neurocepted) by the <u>subject</u> with a previous memory (unconscious) of a threatening parent, and this inappropriately triggers a FEAR or RAGE response.</div>		
Polyvagal /			

Glossary *continued*

<p>Polyvagal Theory</p> <p>Part I: <u>A brief introduction in somewhat technical terms</u></p> <p>Adapted from E-03 glossary Part I</p> <p>Dates of age of systems from Levine 2018 p 14-15</p> <p>* i.e. 100 million years old in the later group of “social mammals” [Levine 2018 p 15]</p>	<p>The Poly-Vagal Theory had been developed by Porges over the last four decades or so. In essence, it can be described in terms of three components of the Autonomic Nervous System [Porges 2011].</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="408 322 1458 394"> <tr> <td><b>I. The Primitive Para-Sympathetic Nervous PSNS (Dorsal Vagal)</b> dating back to the evolution of vertebrates (unmyelinated)</td><td><b>600 million years old</b></td></tr> </table> <p>This is the system that operates when an organism is severely threatened and feigns death / flops; and is associated with behaviour shutdown. In essence, it is <u>Immobilisation associated with FEAR</u> in extreme life threatening situations – e.g. a zebra being chased by a lion.</p> <p>This system worked well for reptiles, but is potentially lethal for mammals – as the shutting down of systems can threaten the integrity of the mammalian brain which is very sensitive to reductions in oxygen supply.</p> <p>❖ In this article this has been described as the <b>C State</b>.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*** **</p> <p>Please note: <u>The primitive PSNS also forms the basis of Immobilisation associated with feeling Safe:</u></p> <p>❖ i.e. without fear. This is vital for all of us in both intimacy and nursing mothers (i.e. the mother-infant dyad). See Part II.</p> <div data-bbox="464 882 1458 1149" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>The above is an oversimplification of the Dorsal Vagal branch of the Polyvagal Theory. When we are not under any Life Threat – i.e. most of the time, the Dorsal Vagal branch of the Vagus nerve, which is operating mainly below the diaphragm, is attending to vital organ functions – such as the liver, spleen, and pancreas, and at the same time optimising such processes as digestion and peristalsis of the gut.</p> <p>For further details, please see:</p> <p>❖ Web article: B 22:</p> <p>📖 Section 9: Appendix B: Early Diagram of Vagus Nerve Figure 9B p 22</p> </div> <table border="1" data-bbox="427 1178 1458 1218"> <tr> <td><b>II. The SNS (Sympathetic Nervous System) flight / fight system</b></td><td><b>400 million years old</b></td></tr> </table> <p>This is in essence the <u>Mobilisation with FEAR system</u> – e.g. when we are in danger and the body responds by mobilising our muscular system to defend ourselves – by fighting or fleeing.</p> <p>❖ In this article this has been described as the <b>B State</b>.</p> <p>The stressors and strains of modern day life, especially if these have been significant in childhood, can lead to hypervigilant states often associated with anxiety – and bodily symptoms such as tension headaches, Irritable Bowel Syndrome, and non-cardiac chest pain.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="427 1480 1458 1520"> <tr> <td><b>III. The Myelinated Ventral Vagal PSNS</b></td><td><b>200 -100* million years old</b></td></tr> </table> <p>The myelinated Ventral Vagal system evolved in mammals and is fundamental to Social Engagement / Social Communication – especially in “the social mammals”. This involves, for example:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊗ Facial Expression</li> <li>⊗ Listening</li> <li>⊗ Vocalisation</li> </ul> <p>❖ The myelinated vagal system is activated when our body neurocepts safety.</p> <p>❖ In this article this has been described as the <b>A State</b>.</p> <p>Note that PLAY technically involves a hybrid state of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Mobilisation of the B State in the context of feeling safe (i.e. no FEAR) integrated with</li> <li>❖ The A State allowing for playfulness and social engagement [Dana 2018 pp 178-190].</li> </ul>	<b>I. The Primitive Para-Sympathetic Nervous PSNS (Dorsal Vagal)</b> dating back to the evolution of vertebrates (unmyelinated)	<b>600 million years old</b>	<b>II. The SNS (Sympathetic Nervous System) flight / fight system</b>	<b>400 million years old</b>	<b>III. The Myelinated Ventral Vagal PSNS</b>	<b>200 -100* million years old</b>
<b>I. The Primitive Para-Sympathetic Nervous PSNS (Dorsal Vagal)</b> dating back to the evolution of vertebrates (unmyelinated)	<b>600 million years old</b>						
<b>II. The SNS (Sympathetic Nervous System) flight / fight system</b>	<b>400 million years old</b>						
<b>III. The Myelinated Ventral Vagal PSNS</b>	<b>200 -100* million years old</b>						
Polyvagal Theory Part II /							

Glossary *continued*

<p>Polyvagal Theory Part II <u>Hybrid</u> <u>Autonomic States</u></p>	<p>As implied above, the A, B and C states outlined in this paper are an oversimplification; but act as a good working model for our initial understanding and feeling of most day to day states. But note:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The central theme of this article is not that we understand these States from an analytical (left brain) perspective; but rather that we <u>vivencia</u> them moment by moment in our lives – so that we are attuned (in a <u>meta-awareness</u> sense) to what state we are in <u>at the time</u> (i.e. as far as this is possible).</li> <li>❖ Without this, this article simply adds to the literature of these A, B and C states without any practical implications for ourselves and those we see.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">*** **</p> <p>There are a number of vital autonomic states that are hybrid; that is, they have more than one state operating at one time and in specific ways<sup>28</sup>. Here we will cover some of these:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>PLAY</li> <li>Intimacy of mother – infant dyad</li> <li>Intimacy of sexual union</li> <li>Other forms of intimacy</li> <li>Awe / a Sense of Wonder</li> </ol>
<p>Suggested further reading: Panksepp &amp; Biven 2012 Chapter 10: PLAY-full Dreamlike Circuits of the Brain – <i>The Ancestral Sources of Social Joy and Laughter</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>I. PLAY</u></b></p> <p>PLAY is only possible when we are feeling safe and wholesomely Socially Engaged; yet we also need the energy for action and movement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Energy for this type of action and movement – i.e. when we are feeling safe, is provided by the SNS in the context of MOBILISATION (of our muscles etc) in the context of feeling safe – i.e. no FEAR.</li> <li>❖ So it is a hybrid A State inter-linking with B (i.e. <u>mobilisation in context of safety</u>) when feeling SAFE.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">This allows us to dance and play with others.</p> <p>PLAY is one of the seven primary process emotions that we share with other mammals.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Play only occurs when one is safe, secure, and feeling good, which makes play an exceptionally sensitive measure for all things bad.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Panksepp &amp; Biven 2012, p 355 Quoted by Dana 2018 p 179</p> </div> <p>Children growing up in a fraught environment will often be in a B or C state, and so may seldom, if ever, feel safe enough to PLAY. Lack of ability to play is an indication that things have been bad for the child. Panksepp and Biven go on to say:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <p>Play, however, is also a robust system: If young animals are healthy and feeling good, they almost invariably play together when given the chance.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Panksepp &amp; Biven 2012 p 355</p> </div> <p>Many come to Mindfulness and Autogenic Courses who have lost the sense of play, and the wonder of being playful. Gentle playful movement during sessions can help to unlock the suppressors of play.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ See website article: A11: Expressive <u>Autogenic Resilience Training</u> Exercises Series A, for example: EARTE No A 1 <u>D</u> Variation D: Playful Loosening Up Exercise [PLUE-D] p 10. (The <u>D</u> stands for Dance / Dancing.)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: center;">II. Intimacy /</p>

<sup>28</sup> Embracing hybrid states can be problematic if we have suffered severe trauma and / or childhood neglect / abuse. This is essentially because hybrid states require a sharing of different states and thus require a flexibility in Being – and a flowing in the A Zone of the Window of Affective Tolerance (see section 5 pp 14-16). Mindful approaches that widen this window can empower these potentially problematic hybrid states.

Glossary *continued*

<p>Polyvagal Theory Part II <a href="#">Hybrid Autonomic States</a> <i>continued....</i></p> <p>Suggested further reading: Dana 2018 Chapter 14: Intertwined States – pp 178-191</p>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>II. Intimacy Introduction</u></b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>We depend on each other for survival. We need to be able to disarm our defences and come into a shared experience of safe immobilisation, first to meet our early nurturing needs and then for ongoing moments of intimate connection.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Dana 2018 p 183</p> </div> <p>Intimacy requires a good deal of stillness; yet being still is also a feature of the flop response to Life Threat (<b>C State</b>.)</p> <p>For intimacy, we need to be able to immobilise while feeling safe. This means a hybrid autonomic state of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Wholesome Social Engagement (A) with</li> <li>❖ Immobilisation and feeling safe (C without FEAR; i.e. <u>C with feeling Safe</u>).</li> </ul>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>II. Intimacy of mother – infant dyad</u></b></p> <p>This is a hybrid state, as discussed above, and includes nursing mothers. When breast feeding, we need to be still – and so, in general terms, immobile. Yet this is the C state in the context of when feeling Safe, that is, when C is combined with the A State and so a feeling of safety.</p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>III. Intimacy of Sexual Union</u></b></p> <p>The intimacy of a wholesome sexual union requires:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) A tender dance of our LUST (sexual) circuits with our CARE and nurturing Circuits [Panksepp 1998]; and</li> <li>b) A simultaneous tender dance of our A state with C<sup>29</sup> when feeling Safe (i.e. a hybrid autonomic state).</li> </ol> <p>Love without understanding is not true love; Lust without nurturing and CARE can lead to rape; CARE without LUST circuits operating may result in impotency.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c) A bio-dance of neuropeptides such as oxytocin and endogenous opioids [Panksepp and Biven 2012 p 260].</li> </ol> <p>These are complex neurophysiologies – and if we are blessed with a fulfilling sexual life, it is thanks to a large extent to these dancing neurophysiologies. In this sense it is nothing to do with Ego; hence gratitude is not misplaced – <b>and is very appropriate.</b></p>
	<p style="text-align: center;"><b><u>IV. Other forms of intimacy</u></b></p> <p>There are many other forms of intimacy that embrace hybrid autonomic states. Deb Dana reflects:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>Experiences of immobilisation without fear show up in many (other) forms.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ The act of sitting in silence with someone without feeling the need to fill the space with words is a measure of feeling safe with stillness.</li> <li>❖ The ability for self-reflection requires turning inward and becoming quiet.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Dana 2018 p 183; bullet points added by IR</p> </div> <p>Both of these are hybrid states of A, and C when feeling safe. Meditation can be problematic to start with if we have suffered significant trauma. See for example: Thubten 2019 A; 2019 YT. However, with persistence such teething problems can usually be overcome.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">V AWE and a sense /</p>

<sup>29</sup> This is immobilisation (relatively speaking) without fear; i.e. when feeling Safe, which allows A State to be active.



Glossary *continued*

Polyvagal Theory Part II  
Hybrid Autonomic States *continued....*

**V. AWE and a sense of WONDER**

Dwell on the beauty of life.  
Watch the stars, and  
see yourself running with them.

Marcus Aurelius  
Quoted by Dana 2018 p 187

A sense of Awe and Wonder is important for our Well-Being [Stellar et al 2015]. In the modern western world it is easy to lose touch with our sense of wonder and awe.

Awe is a somewhat ambivalent concept in that it can be associated with both a sense of dread / fear – and at the same time of wonder and mystery. It manifests with an interlinking of the

❖ B state (a sense of danger / dread / perhaps unease) and

❖ A state [Dana 2018].

Deb Dana comments:

Awe graces us not through material things or social interactions but rather through information rich experiences like those found in nature, art and music [Shiota et al 2009]. We feel awe in response to mountains, storms, oceans, the repetition of waves, and the patterns of nature [Keltner & Haidt 2003].

Dana 2018 p 187

“Still small voice  
within”

This voice may be  
non-verbal; from  
the body; from  
the heart.

“There is a voice  
that doesn’t use  
words. Listen”

Rumi

Quoted by Dana  
2018 p 35

The implications of this are that we tend to experience a sense of awe and mystery when alone. The sense of dread / mystery may partly be that we feel that we are on hallowed ground; and partly the realisation of our own smallness..... compared with mother earth – and the vast and boundless cosmos. Yet this may give rise to the “still small voice within” – of the cosmos as it were speaking to us through the awe.

After reflecting on these matters this morning (16-06-2023) I went for short walk, and these words came to me:

✿ Awe decouples us from Ego, and  
flows us into Inter-Being.

If, for whatever reason, we have no close relationship, being in nature can ground us, and a sense of wonder and interlinking arise – and from there a realisation of [inter-being](#).

The most beautiful emotion we can experience is the mysterious.  
It is the power of all true art and science.  
He to whom this emotion is a stranger, who can no longer pause to  
wonder and stand rapt in awe,  
is as good as dead.

Albert Einstein

If we are feeling grounded, we are in the domain of the A State.

We can enable our sense of awe by being in nature regularly, and each day be mindful of anything that brings a sense of wonder. In addition, during meditation we can reflect back on a previous experience of wonder / awe, and this will act as a neuro-signature [Benson & Stark 1996] that re-creates the original [vivencia](#) (live experience).

For Etymology of Awe, please see glossary entry for [Awe](#)

See also: F7 on  
Web: Meditation  
on Five Sounds  
that can Heal the  
World  
(Meditation on  
Constructive  
Feelings Series)

Glossary *continued*

<b>Reflective and Awareness Building (Practices)</b> (Cf. "Mental Training")	<p>We often talk about mental training, yet in the context of psychotherapies and Autogenic Training, Ruth Sewell has pointed out this is not really appropriate. This glossary entry briefly reflects on these matters.</p> <p>Some year ago Howard Cutler, in conversations with the Dalai Lama, subsequently wrote:</p>
	<div data-bbox="264 383 1401 730" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>The systematic training of the mind – the cultivation of happiness, the genuine inner transformation by deliberately selecting and focusing on positive mental states and challenging negative mental states, is possible because of the very structure and function of the brain..... Neuroscientists have documented the fact that the brain can design new patterns, new combinations of nerve cells and neurotransmitters (chemicals that transmit messages between nerve cells) in response to new input. In fact, our brains are malleable, ever changing, reconfiguring their wiring according to new thoughts and experiences.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Howard Cutler 1998 p 31 (in conversations with the Dali Lama) Quoted in Ross 2010 p 138</p> </div> <p>This is a wonderful and far reaching perspective. We can go further still by adopting Ruth Sewell's phrase for such learnings and growth as:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">❖ Reflective and Awareness Building (Practices).</p> <p>In previous articles I have usually used the term Mental Training. Ruth Sewell, a therapist with an integrative approach (including Autogenic Psychotherapy) in Exeter, U.K., has – as indicated above, reservations about the phrase 'Mental Training': "I resist this term as it is, potentially, a fierce/controlling term and strongly indicating a heavy cognitive bias. I don't have a specific replacement, but I tend to go for reflective and awareness building...". This phrase "Reflective and Awareness Building" seems very apposite, and links in with Luis de Rivera's:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">❖ "Amplified State of Consciousness Induction Therapies" [de Rivera 2018 p 17].</p> <p>Much has been written in recent years about the Left and Right Hemispheres of the brain [e.g. McGilchrist 2009; 2021]. If we are not careful, we can get hung up on this and equate the Left Hemisphere with unwholesomeness. Bernie, my wife, often comments on this – and the fact that for health and wholeness we need both. And this is what McGilchrist is saying; in recent centuries, the problem arises when individuals / societies / cultures become dominated by a Left Brain analytic perspective. Howard Cutler in his conversations with the Dalai Lami, (and vice versa) creates a very nice balance regarding these dynamics. We need both heart and mind. <a href="#">Mindfulness</a> is really a misnomer; it would be better rendered Heart-Mind-ness, or <a href="#">Heart-Mind-Fullness</a>, for example.</p> <p>✿ See also: Rossi 2002 p XV; Ross 2010 pp 113-114; and <a href="#">mindfulness in glossary above</a> (p 33); and for a fuller discussion and exposition of the term, please see:</p> <p>✿ B 26 on website in glossary: Mindfulness (embracing Mind-Heart-full-ness and Awareness – pp 64-66).</p>
<b>Second Arrow</b>  Imported from glossary of B26 with some minor changes	<p>There are many things in life that can result in us suffering. In Buddhist psychology the perceived cause is sometime referred to as the 'first arrow'. However, what can cause us to suffer deeply is not this, but rather <i>what our minds tend to make of this</i>. For example:</p> <p>☼ We may get a bad cold; and start to say to ourselves: "Why me? Why should this happen to me right now at this important time in my life?" (Suggesting that we have become embroiled in the B State).</p> <p>☼ We may be irritated by someone at college, at work, or in the family – and embark on negative ruminations about them in which we plot to get our own back – feeding the "negative wolf" within [Fredrickson 2009 p 179] with hatred and ill will towards the other. (Again we have become entangled in B dynamics.)</p> <p>❖ These are both examples of our response (the second arrow) inflicting more suffering within us than the original event / incident.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Meditation, Autogenic Training, and other Mental Training approaches, can help us to prevent or deflect this second arrow from penetrating. This ability is associated with a growing <a href="#">meta-awareness</a>.</p>


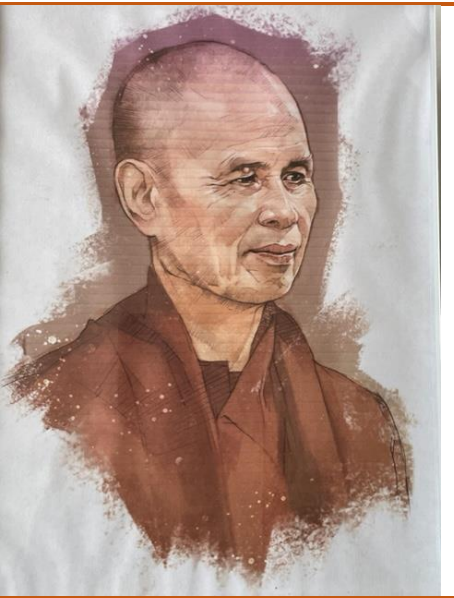
<p>Theta waves on EEG</p>	<p>There are several types of brain wave activity found on <a href="#">EEG</a>.</p> <p>Regarding theta waves, I have found the following extract from a recent paper helpful:</p> <div data-bbox="448 304 1437 741" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p><u>Theta Waves (4-8 Hz):</u></p> <p>Theta Brain Waves occur most often in sleep but are also dominant during deep meditation. In theta we are in a dream; vivid imagery, intuition and information beyond normal consciousness awareness. It helps us improve our intuition, creativity, and makes us feel more natural.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Too much Theta Waves activity associated with : ADHD, depression, hyperactivity, impulsivity, and inattentiveness.</li> <li>❖ Too little Theta Waves activity associated with: Anxiety, poor emotional awareness, and stress.</li> <li>❖ Optimal Theta Waves associated with Flow State, Creativity, emotional connection, intuition, and relaxation</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Dudeja 2017 p 25 section 4.4 Bullet points added by IR</p> </div> <p>Theta waves are associated with: meditation, intuition, and memory [Dudeja 2017].</p>
<p>Ubuntu</p> <p>Based on glossary entry of B 26</p> <p>See also <a href="#">Jen</a></p> <p>Also see: Ngomane 2019</p> <p>Ubuntu is only possible in a community / culture in which the essential Autonomic default position is that of being the A State (Ventral Vagal).</p>	<p>An African concept that in essence is a reflection of <a href="#">Inter-Being</a> [Hanh 2012 p 55-58]. The spirit of ubuntu can perhaps best be described in the following short story:</p> <div data-bbox="448 913 1437 1323" style="border: 2px solid purple; padding: 10px;"> <p>An anthropologist once proposed a game to some children of an African tribe. He put a basket of fruit near a tree and told them that whoever got there first won all the sweet fruits. When he gave them the signal to run, they took each other's hands, running together, and then sat down in a circle and enjoyed their fruits.</p> <p>The anthropologist was perplexed, and asked them why they chose to run as a group when they could have had more fruit individually. After some silence, one child spoke up and said:</p> <p style="text-align: center;">☸ “UBUNTU. How can one of us be happy if all the other ones are sad?”</p> <p>‘UBUNTU’ in the Xhosa culture means: “I am because we are.”</p> </div> <p><i>What follows below has been added as a result of Annie Sturgeon<sup>30</sup> asking me the difference between Jen and Ubuntu; this is a good question, and this is my formulation:</i></p> <p>The concept of ubuntu overlaps with, yet is not the same as, <a href="#">Jen</a>.</p> <p>If we are born into a society where ubuntu is the quintessence of the communities of that culture, then, in general terms, Jen will develop naturally [Ngomane 2019].</p> <p>If, on the other hand, we are born into a culture in which individualism, “me first”, and ego dominate, then there may be no sense of ubuntu, and Jen will not naturally develop. That is to say, Jen will not develop as a natural and wholesome Habit Energy [Hanh 1998; and see Glossary of D11 on web]; rather, it will have to be worked on by each person – as part of the maturational process of life.</p> <p>Meditation facilitates this process as it enables us to be in the Ventral Vagal A modality much more of the time, and therefore feel safe – leading to wholesome social engagement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ Generally speaking, activation of our SNS (mobilisation in the context of fear) and Dorsal Vagal (life threat, not feeling good enough) will block Jen.</li> <li>☸ On the other hand, Ubuntu and the realisation of Inter-Being inter-are.</li> </ul>
<p>Vedana /</p>	

<sup>30</sup> Annie is an Autogenic Therapist, colleague and friend.

<p>Vedanā A Sanskrit / Pali word: वेदना</p> <p>“A flavour of Awareness” Williams &amp; Penman 2023 p 4</p>	<p>Keown gives a helpful definition:</p> <div data-bbox="526 264 1362 443" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>The psychological faculty of experiencing sensations. Vedanā is the faculty that is said to “taste” or “relish” experience, and these experiences are classified into three kinds: as pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral.....”</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Keown 2003 p 324</p> </div>
<p>There is not really an equivalent word in English. However, a good sense of Vedanā is “Feeling Tone”, and this is repeatedly referred to by Williams &amp; Penman in their recent book “Deeper Mindfulness” [2023]. In this they suggest that we can enhance our mindfulness practice.....</p> <div data-bbox="223 595 1362 1003" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>.....There is a way of taking mindfulness to the next level, of going deeper and unleashing more of your potential, by exploring another frontier of mindfulness known as Vedanā or feeling tone.....</p> <p>Although it is an often over-looked aspect of meditation, feeling tone is, in fact, one of the four original foundations of mindfulness. These are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>🌀 mindfulness of the body and breath;</li> <li>🌀 mindfulness of feelings and sensation (or Vedanā);</li> <li>🌀 mindfulness of the mind or consciousness; and</li> <li>🌀 mindfulness of the ever changing nature of the world and what helps and hinders your journey through it.</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">Williams &amp; Penman 2023 p 3.</p> </div> <p>Vedanā is a live experience, and so in some ways it overlaps with <a href="#">Vivencia</a>; it is a present moment faculty grounded in Right Hemisphere Dynamics [McGilchrist 2009; 2011]. Williams and Penman go on to say:</p> <div data-bbox="239 1126 1342 1379" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>It is a quality of awareness that can only be experienced, not pinned down with precision. It is a feeling, almost a background ‘colour’, that tinges our experience of the world – of mindfulness itself. For this reason, Vedanā is often translated as <i>feeling tone</i>..... we are referring to a flavour of awareness, and not a rigid concept that can be hedged in by words and definitions. Feeling tone is something you feel in mind, body and ‘spirit’, but it is a true quality and will always remain slightly ineffable.</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Williams &amp; Penman 2023 p 4</p> </div> <p>In some respects this is exactly what we mean, in Autogenic Training, by Passive Concentration [de Rivera 2018 p 36***] – or what I prefer to call Mindful Concentration in the context of non-striving and non-judgment; and in this way it can enhance our meditation in terms of Passive Acceptance<sup>31</sup> [de Rivera 2018 p 36], or Mindful Acceptance.</p> <div data-bbox="223 1547 1378 1624" style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 10px;"> <p>*** “Passive Concentration: Focalizing attention on a particular object, idea, image, sensation and so on, without any demand, expectation, controversy.” [de Rivera 2018 p 36]</p> </div> <p>Luis de Rivera’s Feeling Meditation (Feeling the Feeling) is, I think, a form of Vedanā – and in which we experience the feeling tone with acceptance and non-judgment.</p> <p>See also: <a href="#">Vivencia</a> and web article:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ F 5A: Feeling the Feeling Meditation I</li> </ul> <p>And forthcoming web article:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>❖ F 20: <sup>(pending)</sup> Sutra on The Full Awareness of Breathing embracing Meditative Practices in the here and now</li> </ul> <p>Vivencia /</p>	

<sup>31</sup> “Passive acceptance: Receptive awareness of something as it is. Being aware without expectation, evaluation, judgement or intent to change.” [de Rivera 2018 p 37; see also pp 148-149]

## Glossary continued

<div>Vivencia</div> <div>Adapted from website article F1</div>  <div>Glossary Figure G-5 Vivencia Moment</div>	<p>A Spanish term used by Luis de Rivera that does not have an exact English translation [de Rivera 2018]. It is sometimes rendered as “Live Experience” with perhaps added associations of numinous.</p> <p>Such live experiences are the opposite of left-brain analytical thinking. If we go out in the country at night and look at the starry heavens, or the emerging bud of a tree in spring, then we can have a live experience if we are there in that present moment.</p> <p>The non-striving focused attention of the Standard Exercises in AT allows us to tune into the live-experience of the body at that moment, and in each subsequent moment.</p> <p>Modern urban life, with all its hustles and bustles, may result in us having days on end without vivencia, without being in the present moment. Yet, whatever age we live in, this is also an attitude of mind [see, for example, Frankl 1946].</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊗ Well-Being (partly) depends upon us having daily wholesome live experiences.</li> <li>⊗ This can involve reframing what at other times might feel mundane.</li> </ul>
<div>Zen Story of a man on a horse</div> <div style="margin-top: 20px;">Portrait: Thich Nhat Hahn – from Plum Village, France.</div>	<p>As discussed in this article, our “story”, and so by extrapolation our actions and being, are driven by our State – and this includes being in the driven mode. This can manifest when we have neurocepted<sup>32</sup> danger and so are moving into the B Autonomic (SNS) mode. While in the B State (and the C State), our thoughts and actions will follow the State. In this sense, and at these times, we are not in control ..... There is a fitting story about this, pertinent to all of us:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid orange; padding: 10px; margin: 10px 0;"> <p>There is a Zen story about a man riding a horse that is galloping very quickly. Another man, standing alongside the road, yells at him, "Where are you going?" and the man on the horse yells back, "I don't know. Ask the horse."</p> <p>I think that is our situation. We are riding many horses that we cannot control. The proliferation of armaments, for instance, is a horse. We have all tried our best, but we cannot control these horses.</p> <p>Hanh 1987 p 65</p> <p>Source also at Vaison la Romaine September 2023 with the aid of: <a href="https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/7499864-there-is-a-z">https://www.goodreads.com/quotes/7499864-there-is-a-z</a></p> </div>  <p>Heart-Mindfulness, being in the present moment, and a meta-awareness of our ABC state can facilitate our CARE, PLAY and wholesome SEEKING Primary Process Emotions [Panksepp 1998] – so that we can get off this driven horse – and be: be with our Innate Goodness [Davidson 2018, and also on web:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>⊗ B 25: Four Key Themes of Neuroscience relevant to our Well-Being].</li> </ul>

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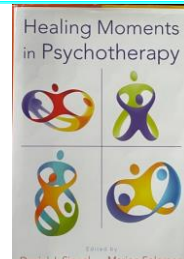
<sup>32</sup> Verb derived from neuroception - IR



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Scotland, UK.  
[ross425@btinternet.com](mailto:ross425@btinternet.com)  
[www.atdynamics.co.uk](http://www.atdynamics.co.uk)