



PARENT SELF-CARE GUIDE

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THIS GUIDE IS CENTRED ON IDEAS FROM COMPASSION FOCUSED THERAPY. PROFESSOR PAUL GILBERT IS THE FOUNDER OF COMPASSION-FOCUSED THERAPY. HE PROPOSED THAT WE ARE ALWAYS IN ONE OF THREE "SYSTEMS". THESE SYSTEMS EVOLVED THOUSANDS OF YEARS AGO TO KEEP US ALIVE AS A SPECIES.



THE GREEN (SOOTHING) SYSTEM LETS US REST AND RECOVER. WHEN WE ARE IN THIS STATE WE FEEL RELAXED AND CALM.

THE BLUE (DRIVE) SYSTEM CAUSES US TO FEEL FOCUSED AND ALERT. FOR EXAMPLE, IN AN IMPORTANT MEETING WE WOULD WANT TO BE IN THIS SYSTEM.

THE RED (THREAT) SYSTEM IS ACTIVATED WHEN WE FEEL UNDER THREAT. IT TRIGGERS OUR SURVIVAL RESPONSE (FIGHT OR FLIGHT) TO GET US TO SAFETY.

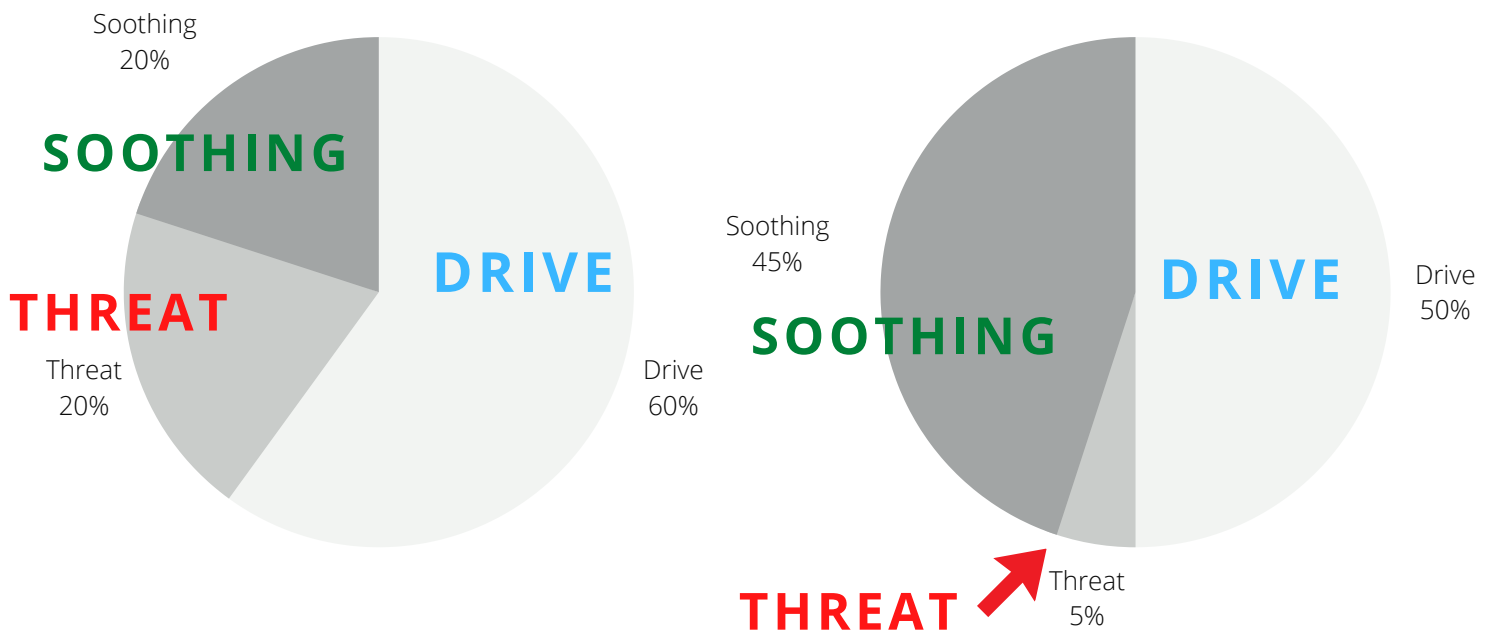


IN MODERN LIFE WE ARE OFTEN IN THE BLUE AND RED SYSTEMS MUCH MORE THAN IS HEALTHY.

IN EARLY HUMANS THE RED (THREAT) SYSTEM WAS ONLY ACTIVATED IN LIFE OR DEATH SITUATIONS (E.G. WHEN WE WERE CHASED BY A PREDATOR). IN MODERN HUMANS THE THREAT SYSTEM CAN BE ACTIVATED TOO OFTEN BY THE MULTIPLE STRESSES AND WORRIES WE FACE.

ALTHOUGH THE BLUE (DRIVE) STATE CAN BE A POSITIVE STATE, OFTEN WE STAY IN IT TOO LONG. FOR EXAMPLE, MANY OF US WORK LONG HOURS. IF WE STAY IN THIS SYSTEM TOO LONG THE NERVOUS SYSTEM CAN BECOME OVERLOADED (OVERTIRED), AND WILL TRIGGER THE "EMERGENCY" THREAT SYSTEM (RED).

QUESTION: HOW MUCH OF YOUR TIME DO YOU THINK YOU SPEND IN EACH SYSTEM?
HERE ARE SOME EXAMPLES

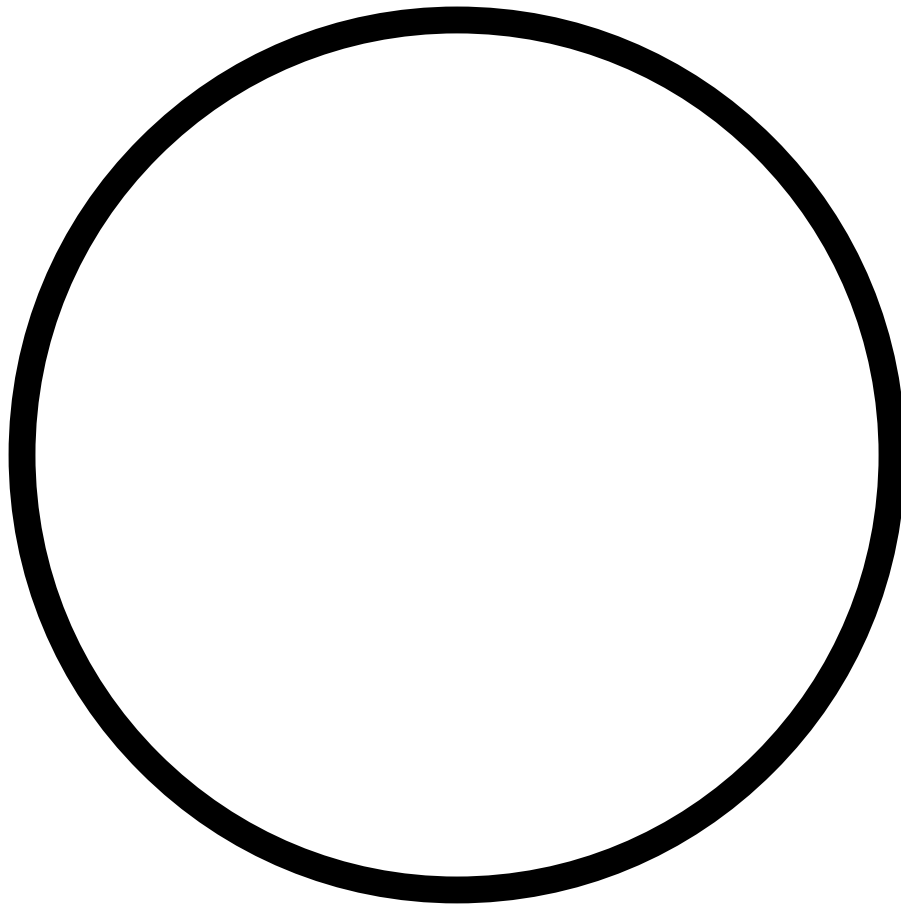


WHICH PIE CHART LOOKS HEALTHIER TO YOU?



ARE YOUR SYSTEMS BALANCED?

ESTIMATE BELOW HOW MUCH TIME YOU SPEND IN EACH SYSTEM BY
CREATING YOUR OWN PIE CHART



DRIVE SYSTEM



THREAT SYSTEM

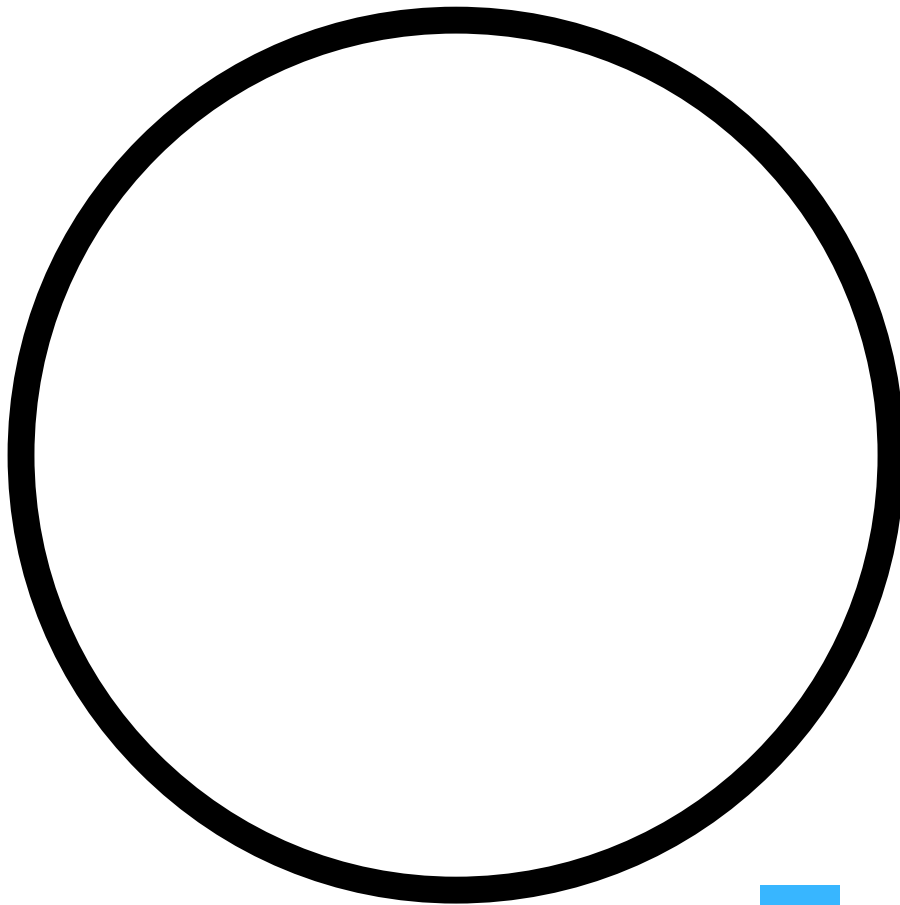


SOOTHING SYSTEM



WHAT WOULD BE THE IDEAL BALANCE FOR YOU?

HOW WOULD YOU LIKE THINGS TO BE? CREATE YOUR "IDEAL BALANCE"
PIE CHART BELOW. HOW DIFFERENT IS THE PIE CHART BELOW, FROM
YOUR FIRST PIE CHART?



DRIVE SYSTEM



THREAT SYSTEM



SOOTHING SYSTEM



MOVING BETWEEN SYSTEMS

IT'S EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO BE ABLE TO MOVE BETWEEN SYSTEMS. IN PARTICULAR YOU NEED TO BE ABLE TO MOVE FROM THE **RED** TO THE **GREEN**, AND FROM THE **BLUE** TO THE **GREEN**.

ON THE FOLLOWING PAGES YOU WILL FIND A CHECKLIST OF ACTIVITIES TO TRY. THESE ARE NOT EXHAUSTIVE LISTS AND YOU MAY FIND THAT YOU ARE ALREADY USING STRATEGIES TO MOVE BETWEEN "STATES". YOU MAY DECIDE TO DEVELOP NEW STRATEGIES BASED ON THOSE SUGGESTED.

YOU SHOULD AIM TO DEVELOP YOUR OWN "MENU" OF STRATEGIES. IDEALLY, YOU WILL KEEP YOUR MENU SOMEWHERE PROMINENT (SUCH AS ON A WALL), TO ENSURE YOU ARE REGULARLY REMINDED OF YOUR STRATEGIES.



EVIDENCE-BASED IDEAS TO HELP YOU MOVE FROM RED TO GREEN



TATF
THEY ARE THE FUTURE

I ALREADY
DO THIS

PLAN TO TRY
IMMEDIATELY

PLAN TO
TRY IN THE
FUTURE

DON'T
PLAN
TO TRY

DELIBERATELY SLOW YOUR
BREATHING (5 SECONDS IN,
5 SECONDS OUT)



ENGAGE IN A RHYTHMIC
ACTIVITY E.G. SWINGING
ON A HAMMOCK, ROCKING
IN A ROCKING CHAIR



SOFTEN YOUR WHOLE
BODY, WHILST AT THE
SAME TIME SOFTENING
YOUR GAZE



SPLASH YOUR FACE WITH
ICE-COLD WATER



APPLY PHYSICAL
PRESSURE E.G. FOOT/HAND
MASSAGE OR PRESSING
AGAINST A WALL



TRY "SUKHASANA WITH
FORWARD BEND" YOGA
POSE



EVIDENCE-BASED IDEAS TO HELP YOU MOVE FROM BLUE TO GREEN



TATF
THEY ARE THE FUTURE

I ALREADY
DO THIS

PLAN TO TRY
IMMEDIATELY

PLAN TO
TRY IN THE
FUTURE

DON'T
PLAN
TO TRY

STRETCH YOUR ARMS UP
HIGH, AND STRETCH YOUR
LEGS. ROTATE YOUR WRISTS
AND ANKLES



PACE SLOWLY FOR 5
MINUTES



SCHEDULE "GREEN TIME"
FOCUSED ON RELAXING
SENSATIONS SUCH AS A
WARM BATH



READ A FICTION BOOK
(NOT TOO EXCITING)



ENGAGE IN AN ACTIVITY
THAT USES HANDS MORE
THAN BRAIN EG
GARDENING, WOODWORK



COLOUR A MANDALA



PLANNER



CHANGES I CAN MAKE TO SHIFT THE BALANCE IN MY PIE CHART (E.G. FINISH WORK ON TIME)

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RED TO GREEN: MY STRATEGIES

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BLUE TO GREEN: MY STRATEGIES SCHEDULE AS MANY AS YOU CAN INTO YOUR DAY

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NOTES
