

WINDOW OF Tolerance

Each person has a specific threshold for handling stress and trauma, known as the Window of Tolerance. A wider window indicates greater tolerance for stressful events and challenging situations. A narrower window suggests lower tolerance for stress and difficulties. This window is not fixed—persistent stress and trauma can narrow the window, while safe connections and healing can widen it.

SYMPATHETIC SYSTEM ACTIVATED: STATE OF HYPERAROUSAL

- Intense feelings of anxiety, possibly leading to panic attacks.
- Feeling overwhelmed and out of control.
- The urge to either fight or escape the situation.



DYSREGULATION

- Feelings of frustration and agitation increase.
- Uncomfortable feelings begin to rise, but control is still maintained.



**PARASYMPATHETIC SYSTEM
ACTIVATED (DORSAL VAGAL NERVE):
STATE OF HYPOAROUSAL**

- Feeling safe, calm, and present.
- Remaining in full control.



**FACTORS THAT NARROW
YOUR WINDOW**



- Stress
- Trauma
- Triggers
- Anxiety
- Rejection
- Abandonment



**FACTORS THAT WIDEN
YOUR WINDOW**



- Mindfulness practices
- Grounding techniques
- Gratitude exercises
- Positive internal dialogue
- Deep breathing

DYSREGULATION



- Approaching the point of shutting down.
- Uncomfortable emotions rising, but control is still maintained.

PARASYMPATHETIC SYSTEM ACTIVATED (DORSAL VAGAL NERVE): STATE OF HYPOAROUSAL

- Experiencing physical numbness and a frozen state.
- Feeling disconnected and mentally distant.
- Low energy and extreme lethargy.



WINDOW OF TOLERANCE

Identify the symptoms at each stage.
Mark the ones that apply and add your own if necessary.

WHAT AM I FEELING?

WHAT CAN I DO?

WINDOW OF TOLERANCE

- Recognize the symptoms at each stage.
- Circle the ones relevant to you and add your own

SIGNS OF HYPERAROUSAL

Sweating, feeling angry, frustration, throwing or breaking objects, name-calling, fighting, experiencing hot flushes, running away, feeling out of control, emotional outbursts, trouble sleeping, agitation, tension, difficulty concentrating, memory issues.

MY WINDOW STARTS TO CLOSE WHEN...

- Physical pain
- Emotional pain
- Stress
- Overwhelm
- Exhaustion
- Fatigue

SIGNS OF HYPERAROUSAL

Feeling numb, frozen, detached, difficulty engaging in conversations, trouble focusing, memory difficulties, turning to substances, canceling commitments, isolating yourself, overeating, and not responding to others.

WINDOW OF TOLERANCE

COPING SKILLS CHECKLIST



- Eat three healthy meals
- Sleep 7+ hours
- Drink fresh water
- Get some fresh air
- Practice mindfulness
- Write three things you're grateful for
- Brush your teeth
- Take a warm shower
- Make your bed
- Read a book
- Listen to music
- Spend time with friends
- Tidy up a small area
- Take a break from social media
- Ask for a hug
- Be with family
- Engage in a hobby
- Journal your thoughts
- Say five things you love about yourself
- Get some exercise
- Wash your hair
- Have a cup of tea
- Embrace quiet moments
- Try something new
- Color or draw
- Cook your favorite meal