



Empowered Educators

**BUILDING EMOTIONAL REGULATION THROUGH
SELF AWARENESS**

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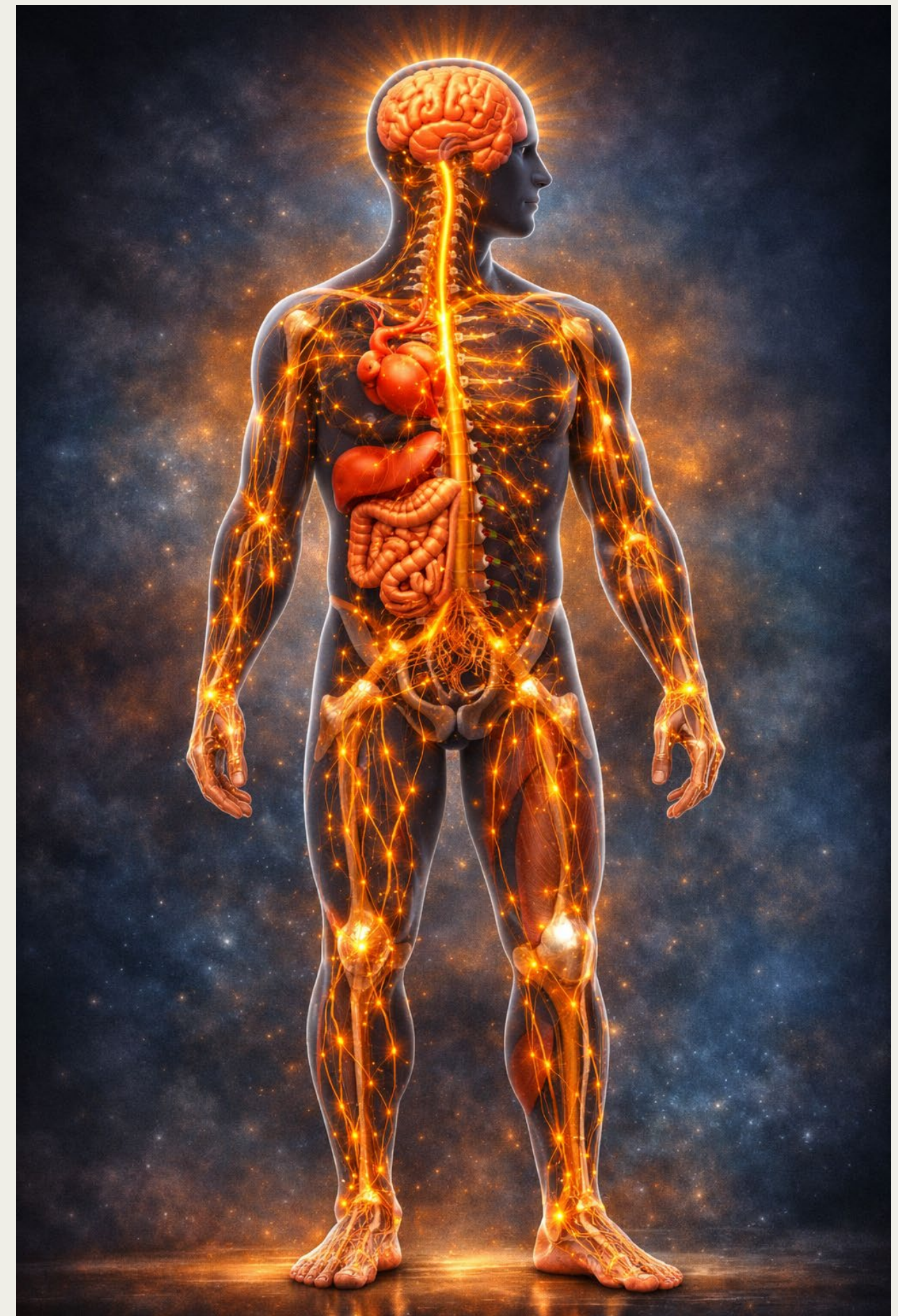


THE QUESTION

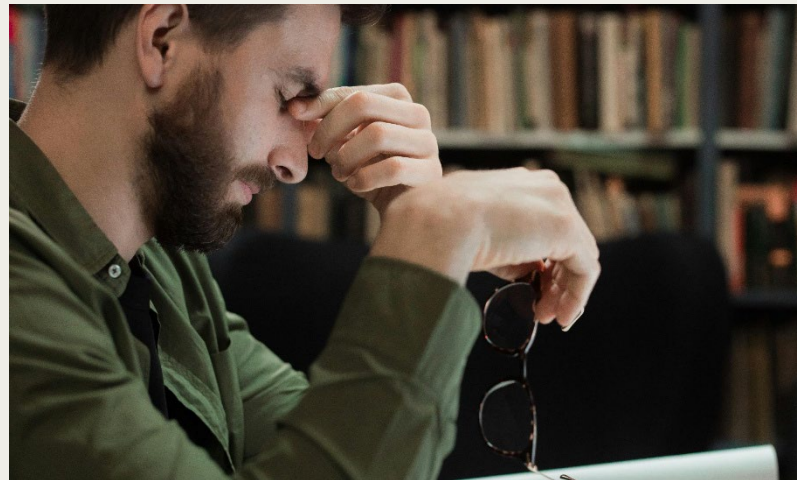
Why aren't we safeguarding the most valuable resource in education?



We talk about “teacher stress” but skip over one of the most human parts of it: our nervous system.



WHY NERVOUS SYSTEM AWARENESS MATTERS



Because stress isn't just a mindset issue — it's a biological response. And if we don't understand the system behind it, we can't change it.



Because until leaders understand how the nervous system works, they can't meaningfully support teachers to regulate, recover, or stay well.



Because teacher stress isn't a character flaw — it's a nervous system response to chronic demand. Naming it is the first step to changing it.



Because real wellbeing starts with understanding what's happening in the brain and body, not just what's happening in the workload.

Educators are frequently expected to calm dysregulated students – often without ever being taught how to regulate themselves during ongoing stress.



STRESSORS

Events, internal or external, that activate an autonomic stress reaction in your body



STRESS

Neurological and physiological reactions to encountering a perceived threat

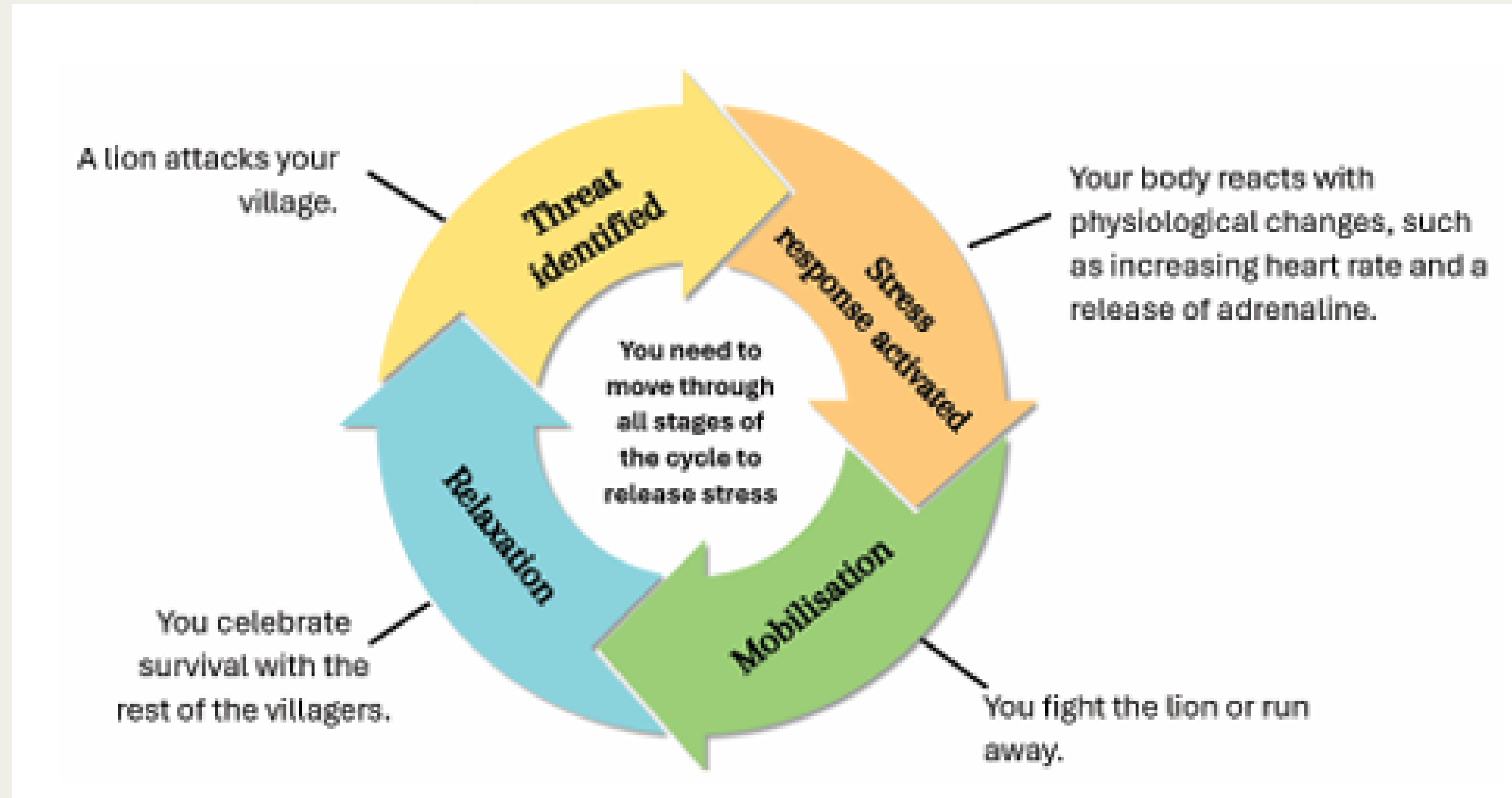




“The good news is that stress is not the problem. It’s how we deal with stress – not what causes it – that releases the stress, completes the cycle, and ultimately, keeps us from burning out. You can’t control every external stressor that comes your way. The goal isn’t to live in a state of perpetual balance and peace and calm; the goal is to move through stress to calm, so that you’re ready for the next stressor, and to move from effort to rest and back again.”

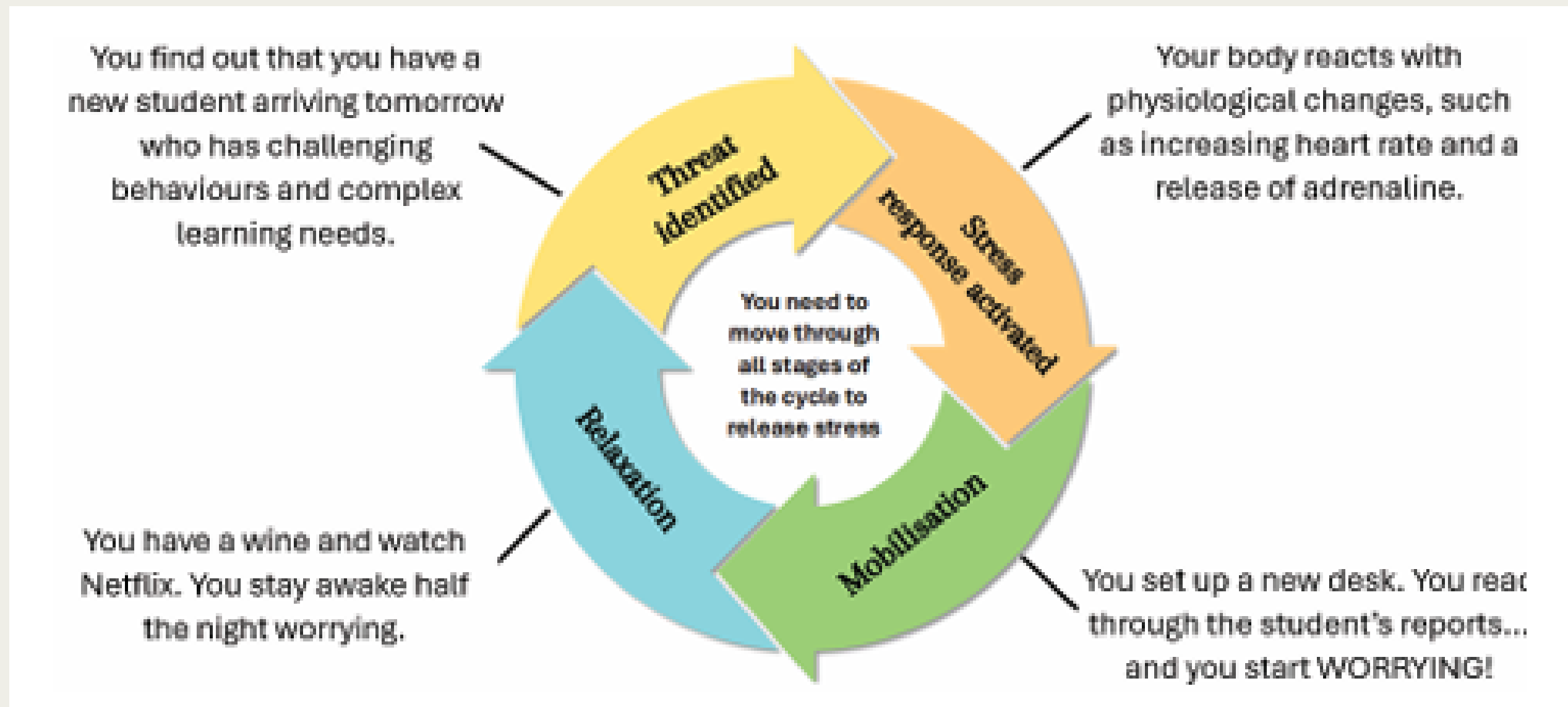
Emily & Amelia Nagoski – ‘Burnout :The Secret to Unlocking the Stress Cycle’

THE STRESS RESPONSE CYCLE



THE STRESS RESPONSE CYCLE

- TEACHER EXAMPLE

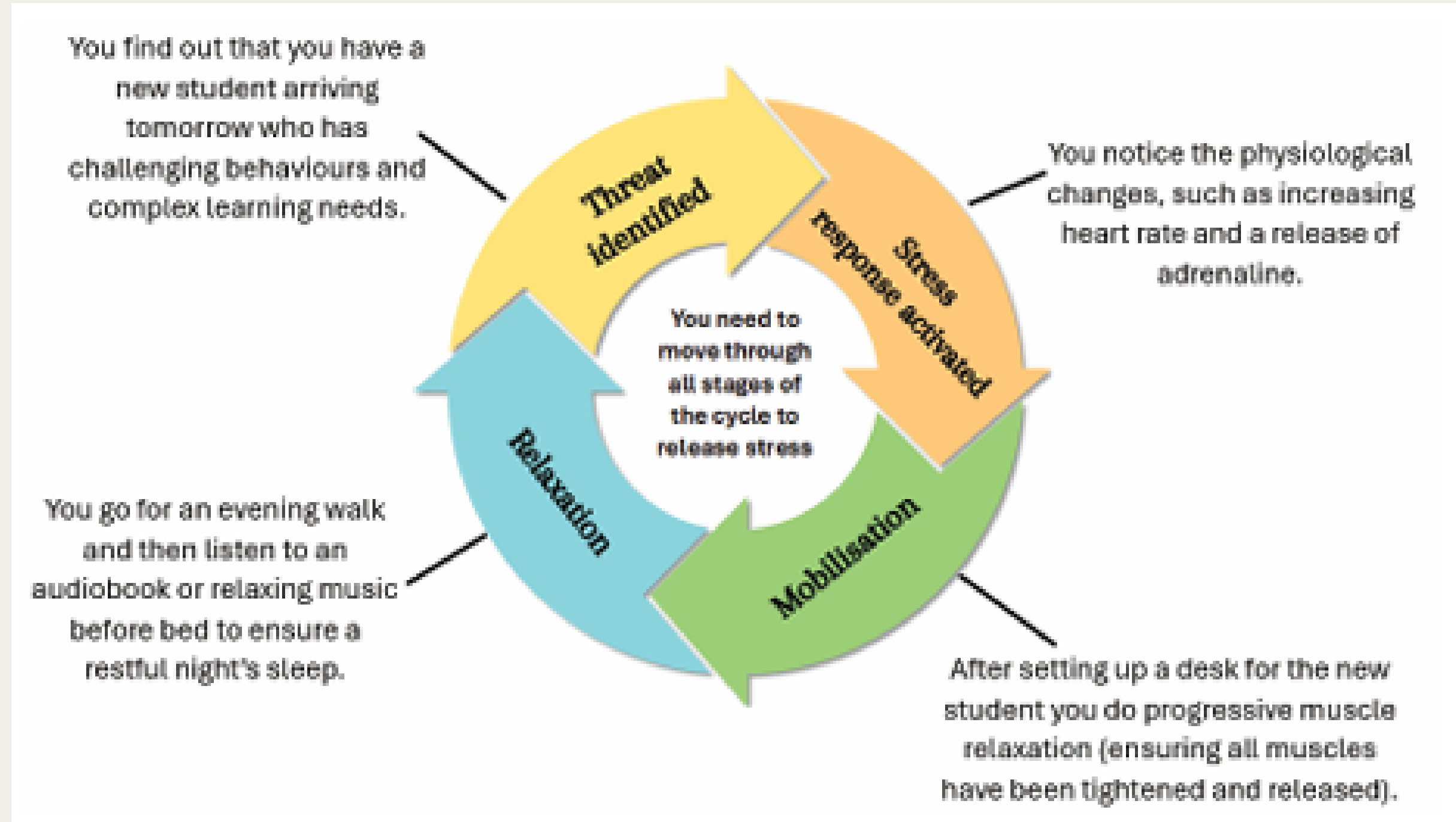


YOU CAN'T "THINK" YOUR WAY OUT OF A DYSREGULATED NERVOUS SYSTEM





COMPLETING THE STRESS RESPONSE CYCLE



WAYS TO COMPLETE YOUR STRESS RESPONSE CYCLE AND REGULATE YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM



The 54321 Grounding Exercise



5

See



4

Hear



3

Touch



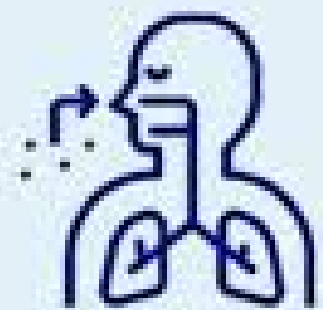
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Smell

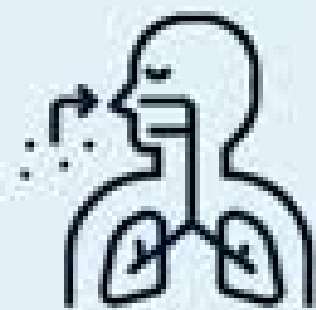


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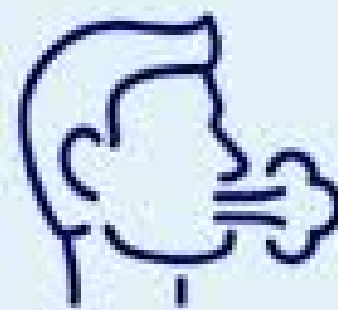
Taste



Inhale through
nose
Regular breath



Inhale through
nose again
shorter breath

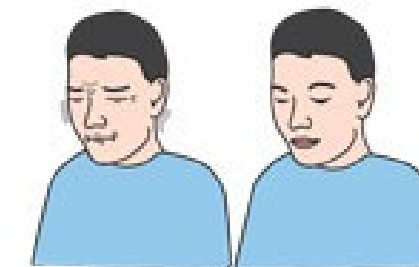


Exhale through
mouth
long breath

1. SIT
ON A CHAIR.



2. SCRUNCH
UP YOUR
FACE...



THEN
RELAX
IT.

3. TENSE
YOUR
ARMS...



THEN
RELAX
THEM.

4. TENSE UP YOUR
SHOULDERS
AND CHEST...



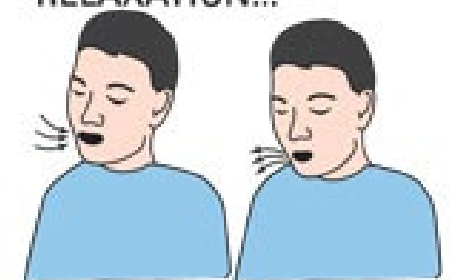
THEN
RELAX
THEM.

5. TENSE UP
YOUR LEGS...



THEN RELAX!

6. BREATHE
IN
RELAXATION...



BREATHE OUT
TENSION.



BENEFITS OF TEACHER REGULATION

“They are looking to us to help give them a sense of safety. When they sense we are stressed out, their nervous system reacts to our stress. When they sense our anxiety, they become anxious with us. Even if you think you’ve put the best smile on you can, it won’t help. The brain’s stress response threat-detection system doesn’t tend to fall for tricks.”

Joe Brummer – ‘Building a trauma informed positive school’



CHOOSING REGULATION



STUDENTS RESPOND TO YOUR CALM
ENERGY AND ARE ENGAGED IN THE
LESSON

NOT MEETING NEEDS



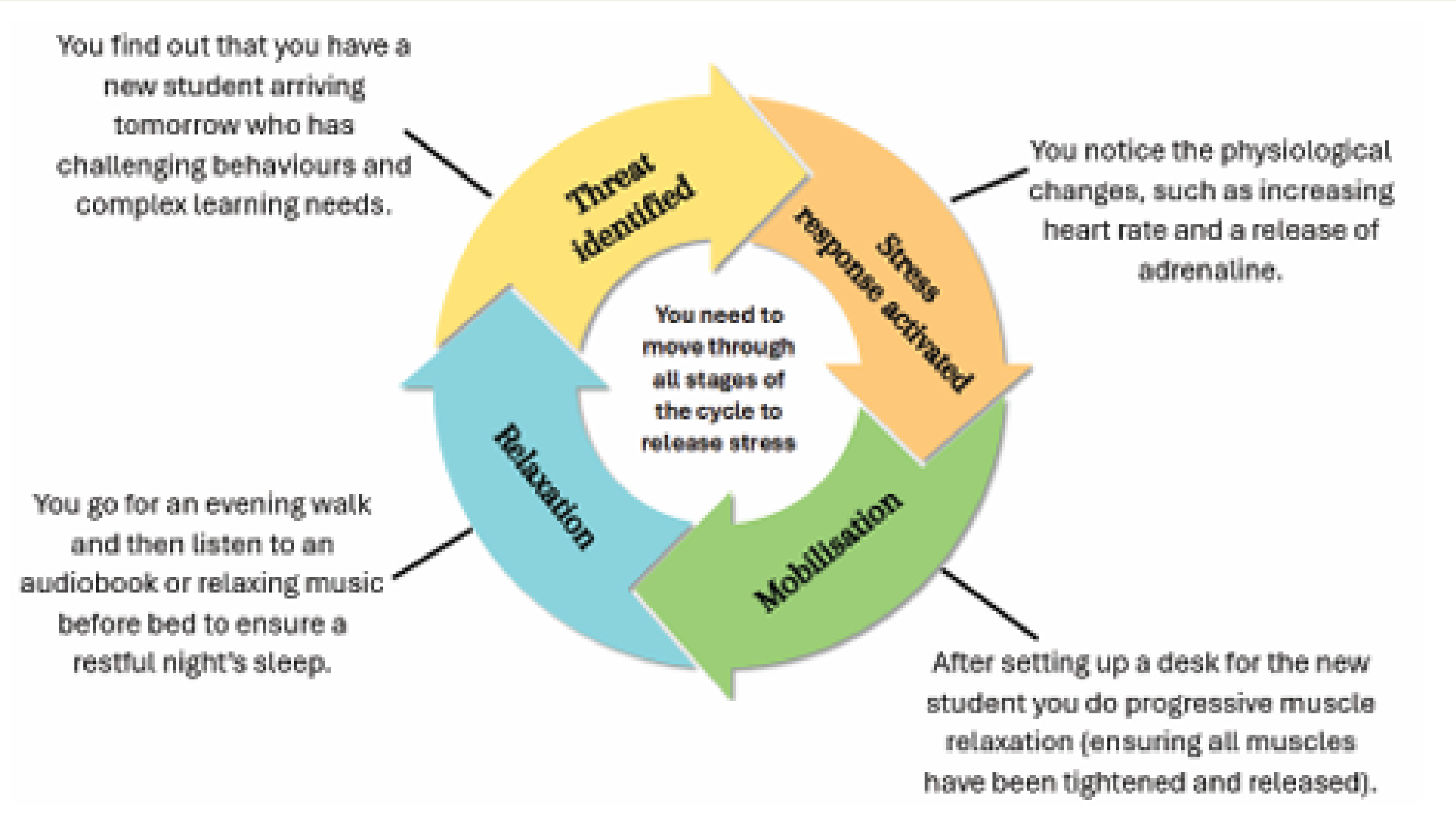
STUDENTS RESPOND TO YOUR
IRRITABILITY AND ARE RESTLESS AND
DISENGAGED

REFLECTION & DISCUSSION

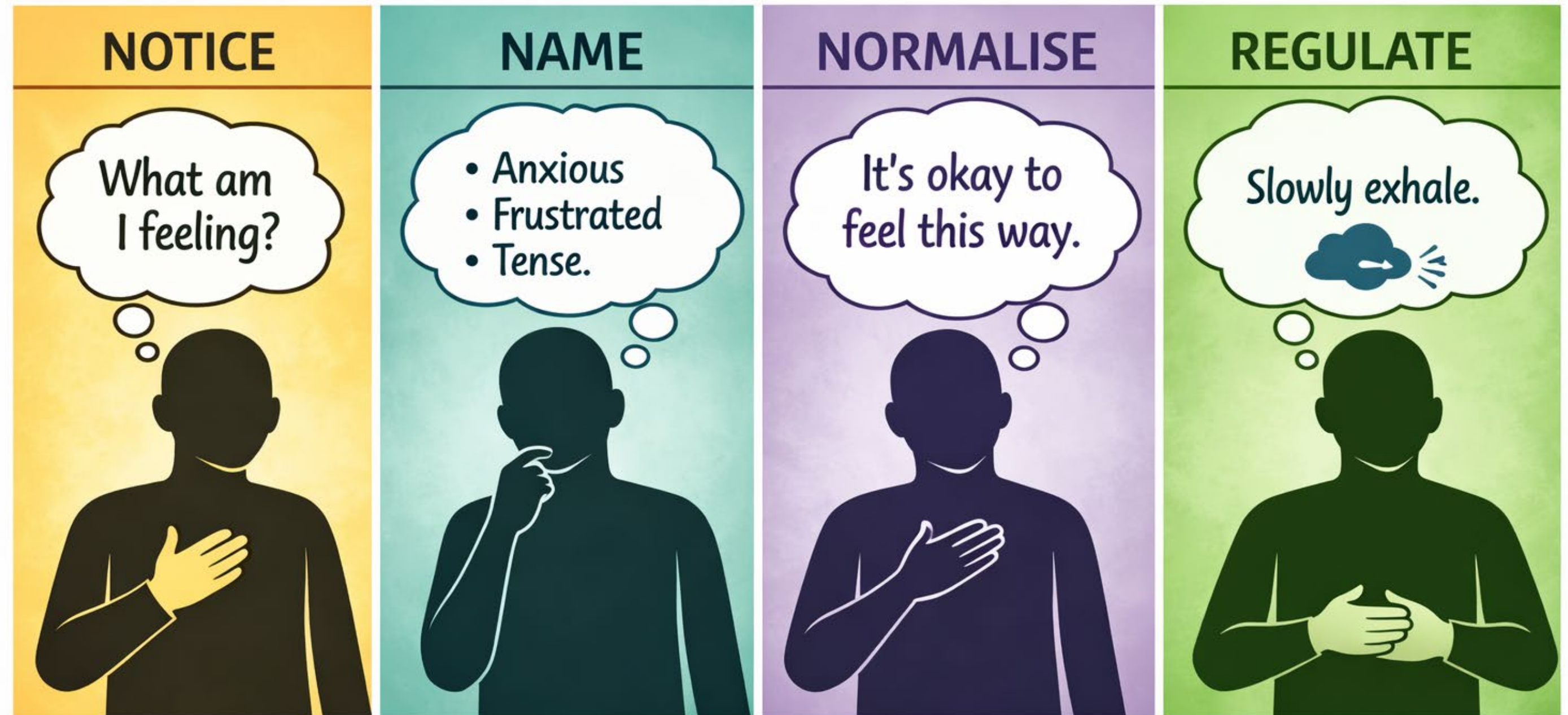
1. Which outcome was better for the students?
2. Which outcome was better for the teacher?
3. Do you consider either of the choices to be selfish?
4. Who was disadvantaged when the teacher chose not to meet their needs- the teacher, the students or both?



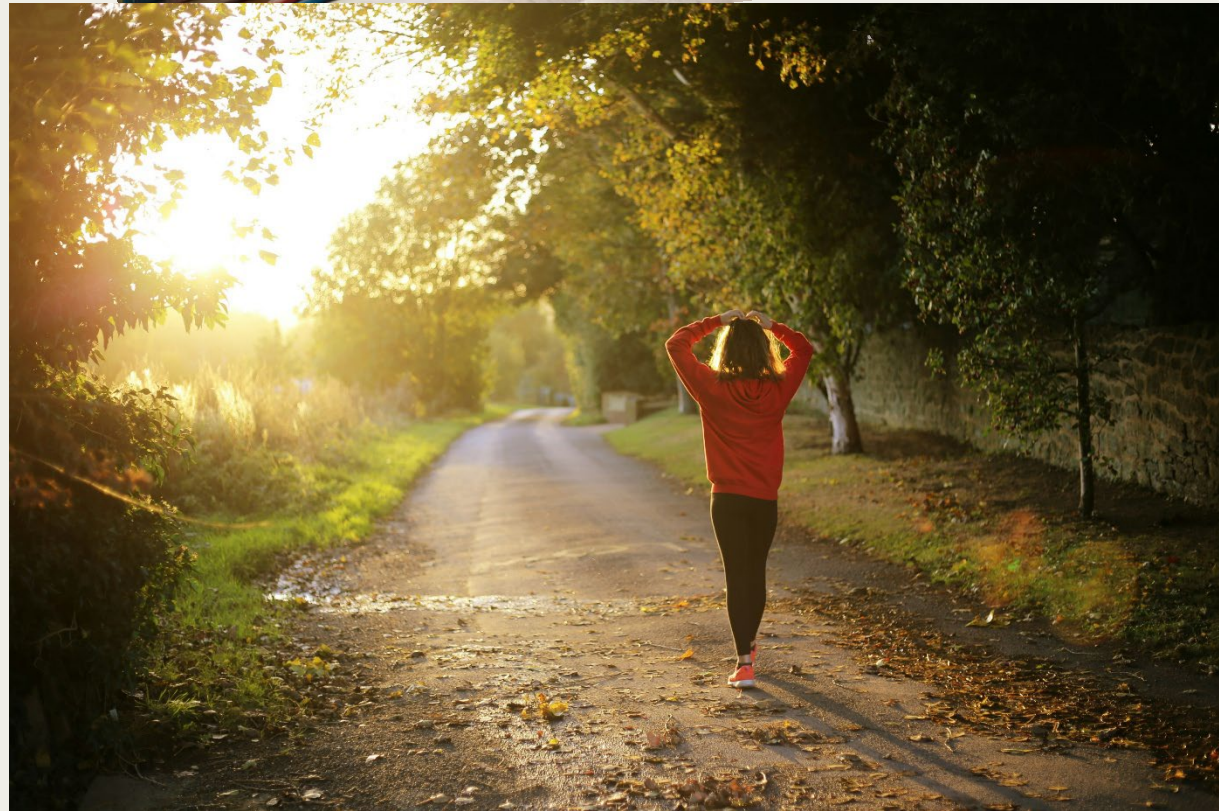
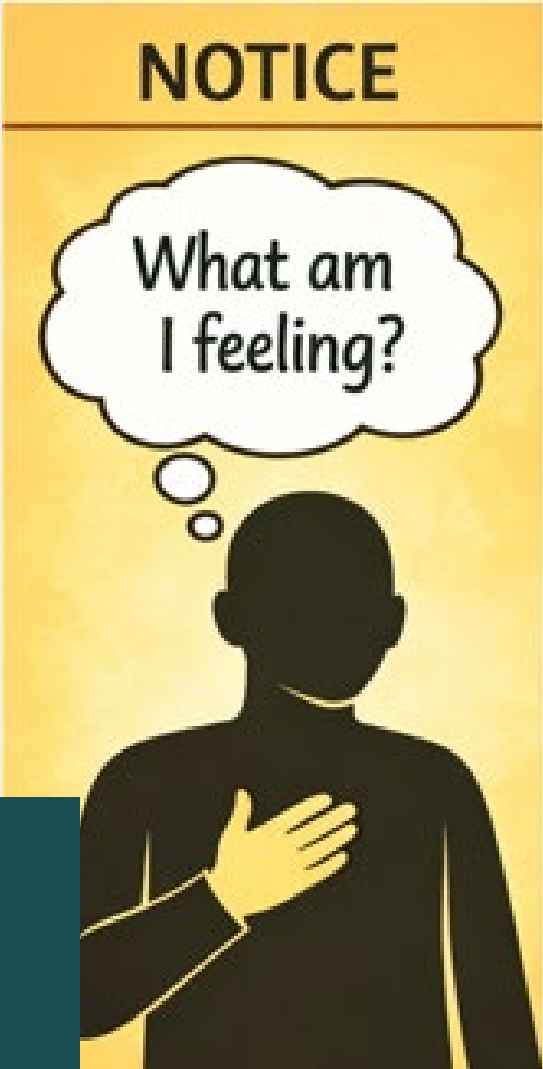
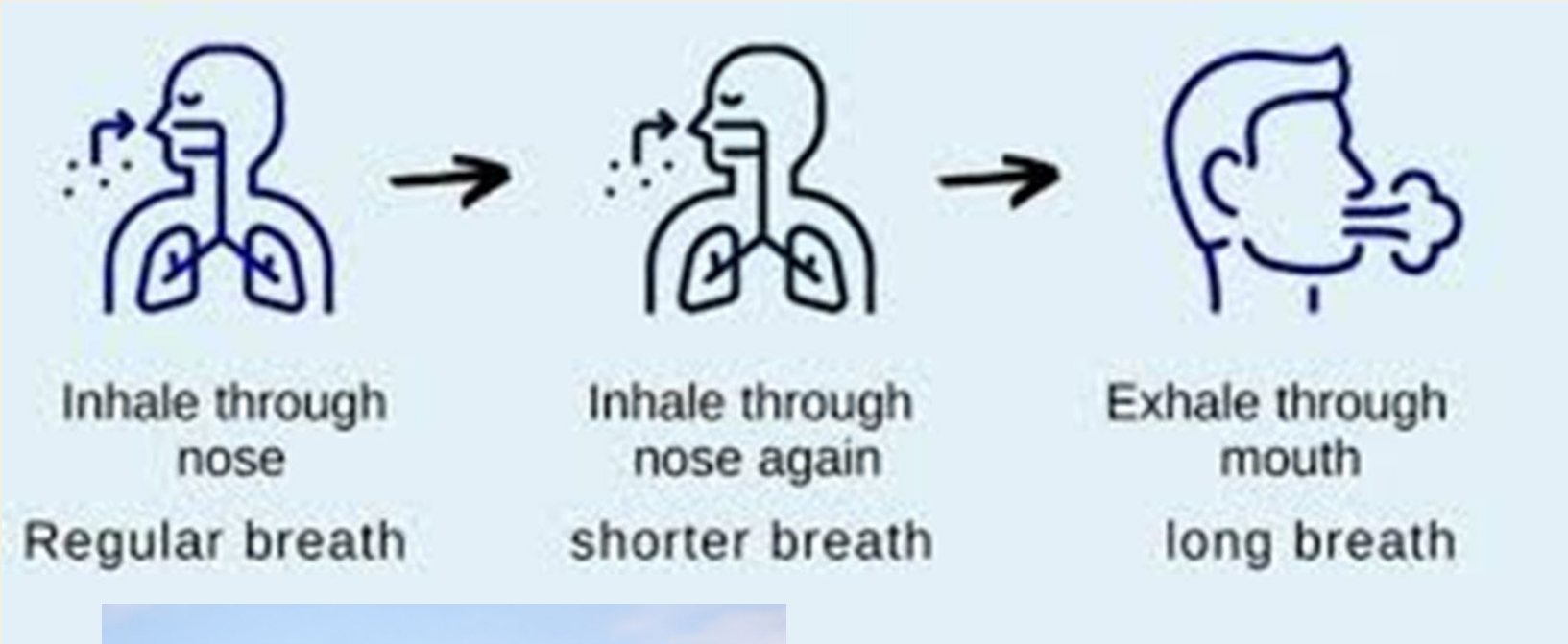
AWARENESS IS KEY



PAUSE II



ONE SMALL ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR WELLBEING





Thank you!

For more on supporting educators
with nervous system regulation and
stress management, explore
[The Teacher Wellbeing Academy](#).