



The Hidden Language of Your Nervous System

**An Entrepreneur's Guide to the
Magic of Brain State Awareness**

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THE HIDDEN LANGUAGE Of Your Nervous System

What You'll Learn

In this e-book, you'll discover why your nervous system so often runs the show behind the scenes, **and why for entrepreneurs in particular**, learning to work **with** your nervous system rather than against it, is critical if you want to **make better decisions, grow income sustainably, and build a business that supports the life you envision**.

Inspired by [Dr Becky Bailey's](#) Conscious Discipline Brain State Theory, this framework will help you recognise which part of your brain is active in any given moment, **your survival, emotional, or executive state**, and how to shift back to clarity when you need it most.

The best part is that once you see it, you can't unsee it, and **it becomes a lens through which you begin to experience life moving forward**. Let's begin with the part of your brain that reacts before you even know what's happening: the Survival Brain.

THE SURVIVAL BRAIN

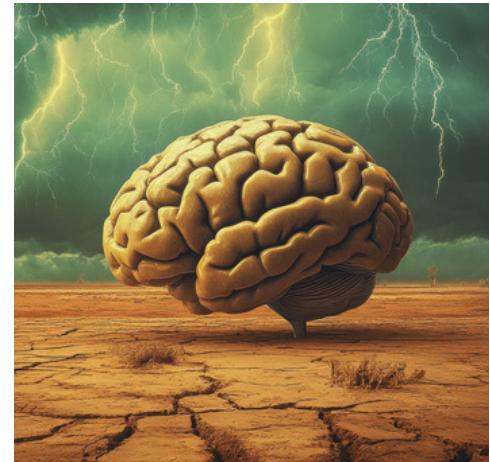
Asks: Am I Safe?

The Most Ancient Layer

The Survival Brain developed to help you stay alive. Run from a lion. Fight off an attacker. Escape a fire. It **doesn't** analyse. It **doesn't** think carefully. It **only** reacts.

But in today's world, we're not outrunning lions. We're managing cash flow, making high-impact decisions, and **carrying the weight of keeping a business afloat**.

And our screens don't do us any favours. AI disruption, global conflict, and a constant stream of alarming headlines flood our systems with threat signals, even when we're sitting safely at home or at our desks. **The problem:** Your nervous system **doesn't** know the difference.



To the Survival Brain,
a sudden dip in cash flow can feel as threatening as a physical attack.

And once Survival Brain is activated, all executive power goes offline.

THE SURVIVAL BRAIN

Asks: Am I Safe?

Signs of Survival Brain:

- You go blank or feel foggy
- You want to flee the situation
- You raise your voice, storm out, shut down, or overcompensate
- You feel panicked, trapped, or numb
- You can't access logic or empathy, everything feels urgent

What's happening here isn't a lack of control – **it's your body responding to a perceived threat.**

As Dr Stephen Porges, creator of **Polyvagal Theory** explains, our nervous systems are constantly scanning for cues of safety or danger, even **before** our conscious minds register what's going on.



When your system senses a threat (real or imagined) it reacts instantly, before logic can catch up.



Your Survival Brain Go-To Strategy

Each of us has “instinctive survival patterns” – ways the nervous system tries to protect us when it senses danger.

Any of these sound familiar?

Fight:

Arguing, blaming, or becoming defensive.

Freeze:

Shutting down, going numb, or losing motivation.

Flight:

Avoiding, overworking, or reaching for quick relief.

Appease:

People-pleasing, or silencing your truth.

- ✓ As trauma experts Dr Peter Levine (Somatic Experiencing) and Pete Walker (Complex PTSD: From Surviving to Thriving) describe, these are **deeply wired biological reflexes – not personality flaws**. They’re protective strategies the body uses to keep us safe. But when they get stuck on repeat, they drain our energy, affect how we show up with our people, and reduce the quality of our decision-making.

Reflect & Notice: (don't skip!)

- 1.** What are three modern day situations that trigger your Survival Brain?
- 2.** When you feel under pressure or overwhelmed, which protective pattern do you notice most – do you fight, flee, freeze, or appease?
- 3.** When did you first learn that strategy was necessary for you to cope or belong?



THE EMOTIONAL BRAIN Asks: Am I Loved?

The Storyteller Who Just Wants to Be Seen and Heard

If Survival Brain is your emergency responder, Emotional Brain is your heart. It processes feelings, relationships, memory, meaning. **It asks:** Am I loved? It seeks connection and validation.

The key: When the Emotional Brain feels safe, it opens and processes, allowing elevation back to your Executive Brain state where all the magic lives. When it feels unsafe, it closes, and throws you back into Survival.

So many of us entrepreneurs get stuck here, trying to ignore our feelings and just push through to get things done.



This brain state is very drama llama.

We label it “too much.”

But when you give emotions space, they can become magical portals back to clarity.

THE EMOTIONAL BRAIN

Asks: Am I Loved?

Signs of Emotional Brain:

- You're crying, spiralling, or talking about the same things over and over
- You're asking, "Why does this **always** happen to me?"
- You're speaking in absolutes: "Always, never, no one, everyone"
- You're craving connection but afraid to reach out
- You feel tender, messy, and unsure

How Emotion Moves

Emotions move through your system in one of two ways. Under pressure, they can trigger a reactive survival response. When you're regulated, they pass through more calmly, supporting clear thinking and better decisions.



Regulated Route



Emotion rises



Emotional brain processes



Executive Brain leads



Clarity restored

When Emotion Triggers Survival Mode

The reactive route is fast, automatic, and fear-based. Many of us default to this because, growing up, our big feelings weren't always met with patience or presence. **For us: emotion equals danger.**

So now, as adults, when emotion hits, our system reacts before we can think: **the body senses threat → the Survival Brain takes over → we go into fight, flight, freeze, or appease.**

In a regulated state, emotion reaches the part of the brain that makes sense of what we feel. As children, when someone stayed with our feelings instead of shutting them down, **our brains learned that emotion is safe.**

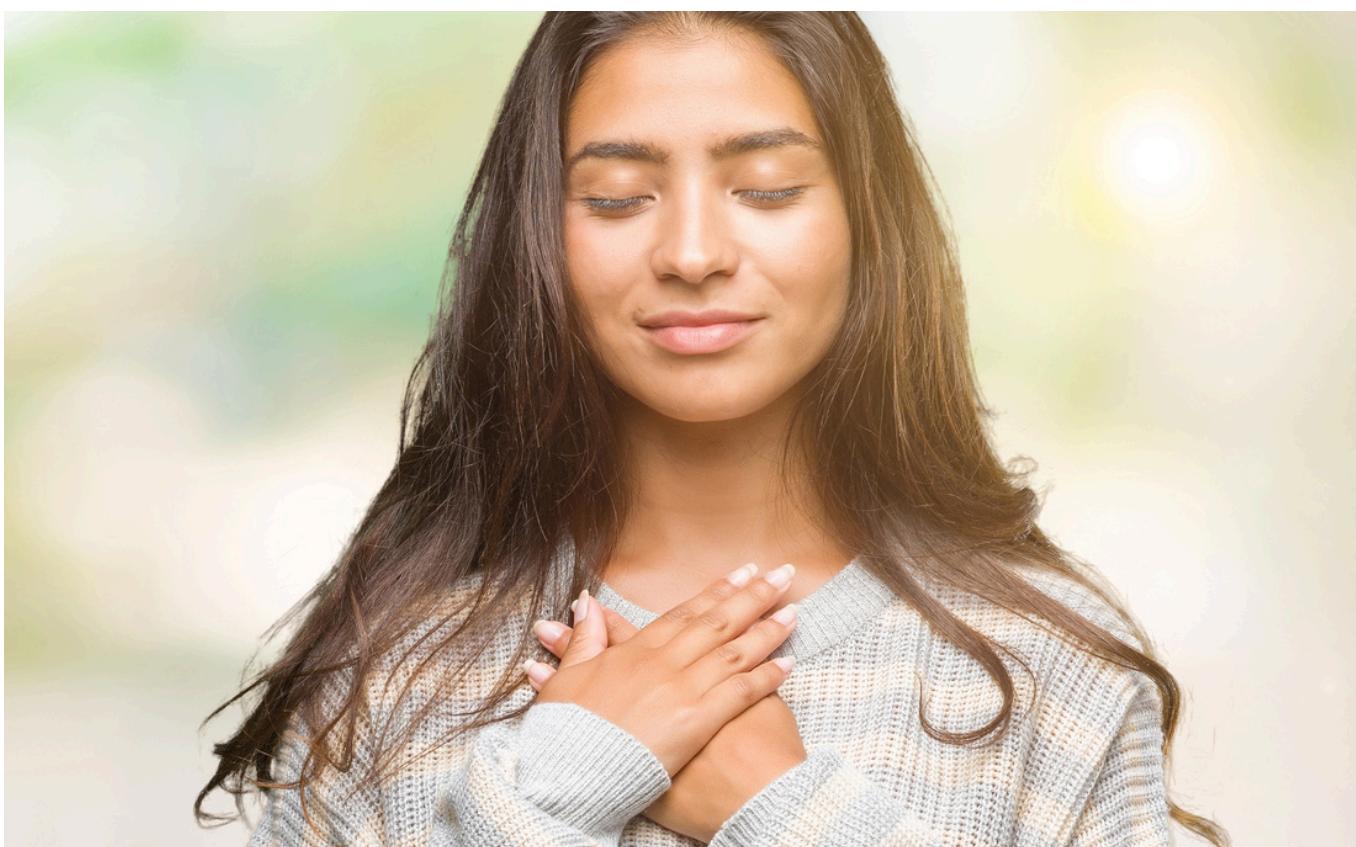
So now, when emotion hits: **the body notices → Emotional Brain processes → Executive Brain clarity comes back online.**

- ✓ As Dr Daniel Siegel and Dr Bruce Perry explain, **this is how integration happens:** the lower, survival parts of the brain connect with the upper, thinking regions, allowing us to move to regulation.

Learning to Feel Safe Under Pressure

Survival Brain is vital in real danger. **But as busy entrepreneurs, we often misread stress as threat.** A tough email, a rude client, a late payment, and suddenly we're operating from Survival Brain with no access to executive functioning.

Most of us were simply never shown how to feel safely. But now, we get to change that. With awareness and practice, your brain can learn that emotion **isn't** an emergency. When feelings arise, give them space, take a pause, and meet them with a moment of kindness. Feeling seen and acknowledged is often all the nervous system needs to shift out of protection and back into clarity.



Reflect & Notice: (don't skip!)

- 1. Have you ever been shamed for your feelings? How did that shape your wiring?**
- 2. What emotion feels hardest for you to sit with (anger, guilt, shame, sadness, injustice)?**
- 3. When you're emotional, how do others usually respond?**



THE EXECUTIVE BRAIN

Asks: What Can I Learn?

Your Inner Guide. Calm, Conscious, and Fully Resourced.

At the top of the brain's hierarchy sits your Executive Brain.

It's where **self-awareness, perspective, and conscious choice** live. From here, you are able to:

- Reflect before responding
- Access logic, perspective, long term thinking and creative problem solving
- Make decisions from clarity
- Lead, create, and relate from grounded presence

Executive Brain doesn't avoid emotion, it **integrates** it with awareness.



The Executive Brain State is the eagle in the sky.

Able to zoom out for perspective, but also dive in with precision when needed.

THE EXECUTIVE BRAIN

Asks: What Can I Learn?

Why Safety Comes Before Clarity and Perspective:

Each layer of the brain needs to feel safe **before** the next one can come online.

**Survival Brain needs physically safety or
→ you can't do emotion or access logic.**

**Emotional Brain needs emotional safety or
→ you can't rise to clarity or perspective.**

**And if Executive Brain is offline
→ you can't learn, create or lead effectively.**

As Dr Bruce Perry and Dr Daniel Siegel explain, the brain operates from the bottom up. ***Safety must be restored*** before logic or creativity can emerge.



Most entrepreneurs try to think their way out of stress.

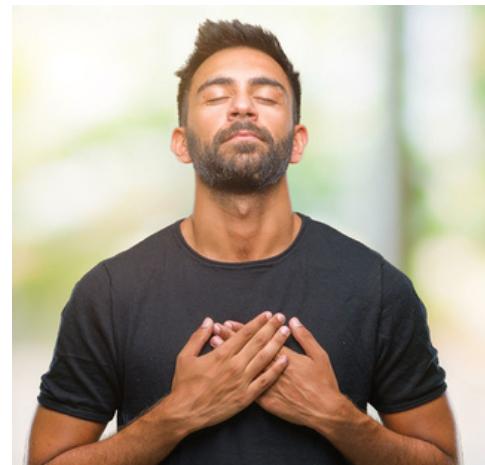
But the nervous system doesn't work that way.

You have to **move through** the states, not skip them.

WHAT TO DO In The Moment

How to Support Yourself in Each Brain State

Survival Brain → Pause and safety first.
Slow your exhale, wiggle your toes,
unclench your jaw, roll your shoulders.
Anchor your body. Let the threat
response settle. Let the body feel safe.



Emotional Brain → Name the emotion you feel, place a hand on your heart, breathe.
This small moment of acknowledgement calms the limbic system. Acknowledge the emotion without trying to fix it.

This is the arc your brain follows every time.

Executive Brain → Use the clarity wisely.
This is where you make **decisions you can trust**. It's where perspective, problem-solving, and grounded leadership live.

Once you know how to meet each state, everything becomes lighter, clearer, and far more workable.

Reflect & Notice: (don't skip!)

1. What helps you access perspective when you're overwhelmed?
2. When was the last time you felt like the best version of yourself? Calm, clear, effective. And what conditions made that possible?
3. What's one way your current lifestyle might be keeping you stuck in lower states?





Accessing the Magic of Brain State Awareness

By now you can probably see **how important it is for entrepreneurs to have brain state awareness on board**. All the books, podcasts and spreadsheets won't do much if you're stuck in a Survival Brain State, and making decisions from there.

Everything starts with awareness. Recognising when you've dropped out of capacity and knowing how to guide yourself back to clarity, confidence, and creative problem solving. From there, you lead with steadiness, make decisions that align with your bigger vision, and follow through in a way that actually supports the life and business you're working towards.



This Brain State Model is the map I follow in my deeper work. It helps entrepreneurs:

- **Feel calm, clear, and in control**, instead of being swept up by anxiety or old patterns.
- **Show up with more patience, presence, and connection**, especially in their relationships and parenting.
- **Move from feeling stuck to feeling purposeful**, with a clearer sense of direction.



If you're growing a business and want support navigating the inner demands that come with it, I offer 1:1 NeuroEmotional Coaching rooted in this work. [**Email me**](#) and let's explore next steps together.