

The autonomic ladder in keywords

Keywords

What do we show?

- **Able to connect**
- Spontaneous, playful, creative and curious behaviour
- Lively eyes, relaxed and expressive face
- Supple and relaxed body, diaphragmatic breathing.
- Clear thinking
- Feels and indicates what is needed
- Indicates boundaries while in touch with themselves and others
- Deals with loss and setbacks in a positive way (growth mindset online)
- Can feel and (to some extent) regulate emotions

Keywords

- **Moving away from stressor**, such as: backing away, turning away, looking away, standing up, walking away, etc.
- Shallow breathing
- Seeking distraction
- Making excuses
- Laughing away or changing the subject

Keywords

- **Moving towards stressor**, such as: straightening up, tilting chin, leaning forwards, etc.
- Shallow breathing
- **Verbally or non-verbally attack**, such as: push someone away, throw something, snarl or yell, raise the voice, impatience, irritation, judging;
- Looking angry (frowning), pinching lips together, clenching jaws, making fists

Keywords

- **Unable to stop**, keep busy, keep running around
- Brusque and restless movements, such as standing up, sitting down again, walking back and forth
- **Tense posture**, shallow breathing
- Behaviour: controlling, nagging, compelling
- Perfectionism, worry
- Unable to relax
- Sleep problems
- Disordered eating pattern
- fixed or skittish gaze
- short fuse, irritable

Keywords

- **Deer in the headlights**: frozen and startled, eyes wide open, gazing, motionless, pale face, bated breath, anxious
- Unable to think, speechless
- Fluttering heart
- Extremely high muscle tension

Keywords

- **Motionless or slow movements (paralysed)**
- Averted eyes of unseeing eye, lifeless eyes, gazing, expressionless face
- Passive, indifferent and/or numb
- Hunched shoulders, weak muscle tone and slumped posture
- Apathic
- Isolated, out of touch with self and other

