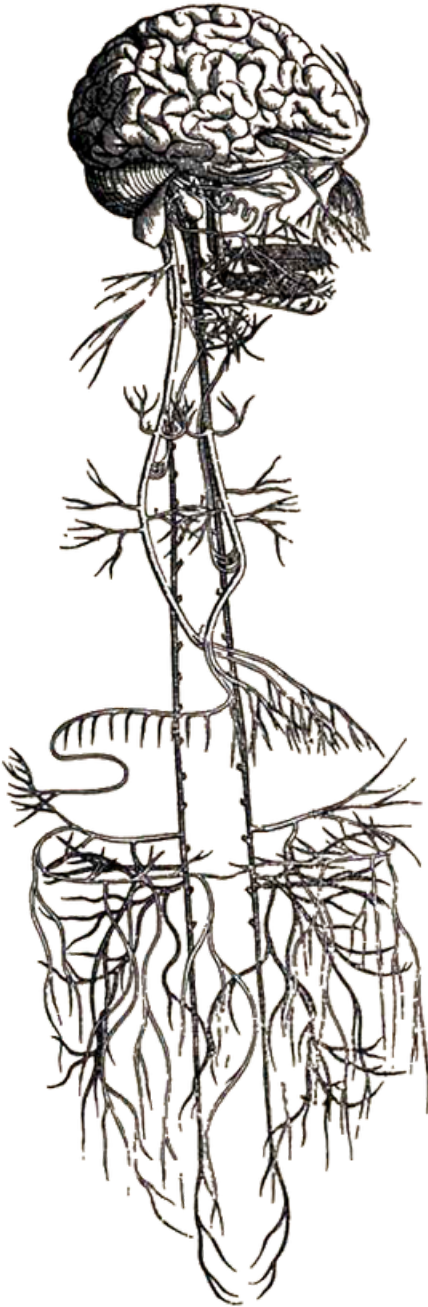




MEET YOUR VAGUS NERVE



What It Is

Your vagus nerve is one of the most important nerves in your body. It is a superhighway that sprawls out from the brain and into the body like an intricate network of roots - connecting the brain, heart, gut, immune system, and many other organs. These nerve networks act as lines of communication between the brain and body's many systems and organs.

What It Does

The vagus nerve is responsible for many of the "rest and digest" (parasympathetic) functions in the body. These include slowing your heart rate, regulating blood pressure, stimulating digestion, suppressing inflammation, and creating a shift in the body that helps reduce anxious or depressed mind states.

How Vagus Stimulation Reduces Stress

We can intentionally stimulate the vagus nerve by taking slow, deep, deliberate breaths from the belly. Diaphragmatic (deep) breathing can be done anytime, anywhere and helps immediately calm the nervous system and welcome relaxation into the body.

Deep breathing is often folded into meditation practice and is a concrete and effective way to lower stress levels (via vagus nerve stimulation). Instead of trying to "think" our way out of feeling stressed or anxious, we can stimulate the vagus nerve and send a signal to our nervous system that it's okay to relax or down shift. This, in turn, can help us feel calmer and more at ease.

Now you know why people say "take some deep breaths" when you're feeling stressed!