TLC Resource Guide

Nervous System Health & Resilience

Find Your Way Back to Calm.

A Whole-Person Focused Guide to Understanding and Supporting Your Nervous System



Welcome

If you've been referred to this guide, there's a good chance life has felt somewhat overwhelming lately. Maybe you're feeling anxious much of the time. Maybe you're exhausted even after sleeping. Maybe you feel like you're constantly "on edge," have difficulty concentrating, or simply don't feel like yourself anymore.

You are not alone.

Many people assume these experiences mean something is wrong with them. Often, however, these experiences are signs that your nervous system has been working incredibly hard to protect you.

We believe understanding what's happening is often the first step toward healing. This guide is designed to help you better understand your nervous system, explore practical ways to support it, and discover the many paths available toward greater resilience.

I Feel...

You may recognize yourself in some of these experiences:

☐ I feel anxious, tense, or constantly on alert.

☐ I feel exhausted, even after sleeping.

☐ I don't feel motivated to do things I used to enjoy.

☐ I panic more easily than I used to.

☐ I have trouble sleeping or experience frequent nightmares.

☐ I feel emotionally overwhelmed.

☐ I can't seem to turn my brain off.

☐ I feel stuck.

☐ My body always feels tight.

☐ I feel like I'm surviving rather than living.

☐ Work or caregiving has completely drained me.

☐ I've been through something difficult and don't feel like I've recovered.

☐ I know I should take care of myself, but I can't seem to get started.

Whether these feelings developed gradually over months or appeared after a difficult event, they can all be signs that your nervous system has been carrying more than it was designed to carry.

🌿 Pause & Notice

Which of those experiences or another named experience feels most familiar right now?

You don't have to solve anything today. Simply noticing is an important first step.

What's Happening?

Your nervous system's primary job is not to make you happy. Its primary job is to keep you alive.

When your brain senses danger—whether it's trauma, chronic stress, grief, burnout, relationship conflict, financial pressure, illness, or years of carrying too much—it begins making adjustments to help you cope. Often those protective responses become the symptoms you notice.

Sometimes those protective responses continue long after the danger has passed. Your nervous system becomes very good at protecting you but not very good at knowing when it's safe to relax.

Symptoms can look like:

• constant worry

• difficulty sleeping

• muscle tension

• panic

• emotional numbness

• digestive changes

• low energy

• irritability

• brain fog

• difficulty concentrating

It’s vital for you to understand that these aren't signs that you're broken. They're signs that your nervous system has been working overtime. Research continues to show that chronic stress can affect nearly every system in the body: from sleep and mood to digestion, hormones, immune function, and memory.

The encouraging news is that the brain and nervous system remain capable of change throughout life. This ability, called **neuroplasticity**, means **healing and greater resilience are possible.**

What We Want You to Know

Our providers shared several messages they hope every client understands.

Your nervous system is adapting—not failing.

Many of the symptoms you're experiencing are your body's attempt to cope with prolonged stress.

There are more options than you may realize.

Medication can be incredibly helpful for some people, but it is only one of many evidence-informed approaches that support healing.

Healing isn't about finding one magic solution.

It often comes from building a collection of tools that support one another over time.

One of our therapists described it this way: *"Mental health isn't something you finish. It's more like physical health. You continue caring for it, and over time you build a life that becomes more resilient."*

What Healing Often Looks Like

One of the biggest misconceptions about healing is that it happens all at once.

Many people expect to wake up one day and suddenly feel "back to normal." More often, healing happens gradually through many small changes that build on one another over time.

Your nervous system is learning that it doesn't have to stay in survival mode all the time. As that happens, you may begin to notice subtle shifts long before you feel completely different.

You might notice...

When your nervous system has been under chronic stress...	**As resilience begins to grow...**
You react quickly to stress.	You find yourself pausing before reacting.
Your body feels tense much of the time.	You notice moments when your body naturally relaxes.
Your mind races constantly.	Quiet moments become a little easier to find.
Sleep feels difficult or restless.	You begin sleeping more deeply or waking feeling slightly more refreshed.
Everyday tasks feel overwhelming.	Difficult days become a little more manageable.
You feel emotionally exhausted.	You begin to have more energy for the people and activities you care about.
Small setbacks derail your whole day.	You recover from stressful moments more quickly.
You feel disconnected from yourself.	You begin noticing what you need and responding with greater compassion.
It feels like you're just surviving.	You start making choices that help you feel more like yourself again.

🌿 Pause & Notice

As you think about the past few weeks or months, have you noticed any small signs of healing—even if they seem minor?

Perhaps you've caught yourself taking a deeper breath.

Maybe you've laughed more easily.

Perhaps you've had one better night's sleep.

Maybe you reached out to someone instead of isolating.

These moments matter.

Healing is often less about eliminating every difficult feeling and more about gradually expanding your capacity to move through life's challenges with greater flexibility, self-awareness, and resilience.

A Gentle Reminder

Progress is rarely a straight line.

Some days you may feel stronger, while other days old patterns may return. That doesn't mean you've lost the progress you've made. Healing often unfolds in cycles, with each experience offering another opportunity to practice the tools and supports that help your nervous system feel safe.

Be patient with yourself.

Every small step toward caring for your nervous system is a meaningful investment in your long-term wellbeing.

What Helps?

There isn't one perfect path toward nervous system health. Most people benefit from combining several supportive practices over time.

😴 Sleep

Healthy sleep gives the brain time to restore and regulate stress hormones. Starting a sleep hygiene practice might be a good place to begin. This can include things like making your

bedroom darker and cooler at night, wearing an eye mask when it's time to go to sleep, reducing blue light from electronics an hour or so before bedtime, having a regular bedtime, and creating a simple bedtime routine.

🚶 Movement

Walking, stretching, yoga, hiking, dancing, or strength training all help regulate the nervous system. Even a little bit each day.

🥗 Nutrition

Regular meals, hydration, adequate protein, and good nutrition help stabilize energy and mood. Start small by focusing on one thing at a time.

🌲 Time Outdoors

Nature has consistently been shown to reduce stress and improve emotional wellbeing. Even taking a few minutes a day to sit outside and relax can be helpful.

🧘 Mindfulness & Breathwork

Mindfulness

Mindfulness helps us notice our experiences with curiosity rather than judgment. Mindfulness is a practice of directing one's attention consciously. If you do it enough, you get good at becoming aware and staying in the present moment. It can be practiced in small ways:

- noticing your breath
- paying attention while walking
- observing thoughts without following them
- paying attention to your senses while eating or drinking something
- scanning your body for felt sensations
- listening to a piece of music and picking out the nuances in it

It does not need to be perfect. The beauty of this practice is that not only does it make you more aware and give you more choices, but it also allows you to really engage in the present moment in a meaningful way.

We hold group mindfulness classes at TLC once every few months that can help you gain confidence in your practice.

You can read more about what mindfulness is here.

You can read more about the mindfulness classes we offer at TLC here.

Grab a cup of tea or something else and click here for a short guided mindful tea time.

Breathwork

By utilizing a continuous, rhythmic breathing pattern, you can bypass the analytical mind to release stored tension in the body, quiet the "monkey mind," and improve your nervous system's natural resilience.

Whether you are a beginner or looking to deepen your emotional awareness, the breathwork class we offer at TLC is a guided journey that offers a safe path to balance your nervous system, and reconnect with your body's innate wisdom.

You can read more about breathwork here.

You can read more about our Breathwork Class at TLC here.

Here is a 3-minute Breath Break video for you.

❤️ Safe Relationships

Feeling understood by others is one of the strongest regulators of the human nervous system. Look for relationships where you can express yourself and communicate comfortably.

💬 Therapy

Counseling can help you understand patterns, process difficult experiences, and develop practical tools for healing.

Approaches may include:

• EMDR

• Mind Body Bridging

• Mindfulness

• Distress Tolerance Skills

• Trauma-informed therapy

💊 Medication

Medication can sometimes reduce symptoms enough to make other forms of healing more accessible.

🎨 Creative Expression

Writing, art, music, gardening, woodworking, photography, or other creative activities can help process emotion in ways words sometimes cannot.

How TLC Can Support You

Healing often works best when multiple forms of support work together. We have carefully curated our services to be able to work together for different needs.

Instead of asking:

"Which service do I need?"

consider asking:

"What kind of support does my nervous system need right now?"

Nervous System Support

• ILF Neurofeedback

• Breathwork Class

• Mindfulness Class

Individual Support

• Counseling

• Medication Management

Meaning & Integration

• Spiritual Care if you are going through a big life transition or grief experience,

• Ketamine Integration if you have been on Ketamine and need help with integrating your experience.

Medical & Wellness Support

• Pharmacogenomic Testing to help determine which medications might be most effective for you.

• Psychological Testing and Evaluation

• Nutritional Support

• Hormonal Evaluation

Community & Connection

Healing often happens in community, even if that feels a bit difficult right now.

Groups, classes, and community experiences provide opportunities to learn, connect, and grow alongside others. Check our calendar each month for groups and classes to attend. You might want to check into your local recreation center or social media events as well to see if there are some groups, classes, or community events that might feel supportive. Here is a list of groups we have each month at TLC:

• Mindfulness Classes

• Breathwork Experiences

• Integration Groups

• Grief Support Groups

• Drum Journey

• Death Café

• Community Education Events

You can read more about each one here.

Finding Your Next Step with TLC

If you're noticing...	**You might consider exploring...**
Constant anxiety or feeling on edge	ILF Neurofeedback
Trauma, depression, or emotional patterns	Individual Counseling
Questions about medication	Medication Management
Grief, life transition, or questions of meaning	Free Spiritual Care consultation with Jude
Several concerns happening together	Talk with your TLC provider about creating a personalized care plan.

Continue the Conversation

If one or more of these next steps resonated with you, we'd be honored to help you explore them. You don't have to figure everything out before reaching out.

Our team can answer your questions, help you understand your options, and work with you to determine what kind of support might be the best fit for your needs.

Call our office at 385-272-4292 to schedule an appointment or consultation. Together, we'll help you explore next steps that might benefit you and your unique needs.

🌿 Reflection

Pause & Notice

What part of this guide is feeling most meaningful to you? What stood out? What are you curious about?

Imagine Experiencing...

As you begin to practice some of these tools and small changes, you might start noticing small improvements.

Imagine waking up and noticing your body feels just a little quieter.

Imagine recovering from stressful days more quickly.

Imagine sleeping more deeply.

Imagine slowly learning to trust your body again.

Imagine having more energy for the people and activities that matter most.

This is what nervous system resilience often feels like. Not the absence of stress, but growing confidence that you can move through it.

Looking Ahead

What is one small act of care you could offer your nervous system this week?

Remember: Small, consistent practices often create lasting change.

Additional Resources

Books

The Body Keeps the Score — Bessel van der Kolk

Burnout — Emily & Amelia Nagoski

Anchored — Deb Dana

Blogs

- Let's Talk Nervous System Needs
- Let's Talk Therapy 2.0
- Let's Talk Nervous System Regulation
- Let's Talk Energy
- Let's Talk Neurofeedback
- Let's Talk Breathwork

Podcasts

Huberman Lab

Ten Percent Happier

Apps

Insight Timer

Calm

UCLA Mindful

Experience TLC

Healing doesn't happen all at once.

It happens through hundreds of small moments of support, insight, connection, and care.

As you continue working with your TLC provider, stay curious. Ask questions. Explore the approaches that feel like the best fit for you.

Together, we'll help you build a collection of tools that supports not only symptom relief, but greater resilience, wellbeing, and hope.

Continue to return to this resource guide, as it will continue to grow with more information, tools, and exercises you can try.