Four Gentle Practices for Nervous System Regulation

These gentle practices offer opportunities to slow down and notice how your body responds. Choose what feels comfortable; they are not a replacement for evaluation or treatment.

1. The physiological sigh

Breathe in comfortably through your nose, add a small second inhale, and exhale slowly through your mouth. Repeat once or twice without forcing your breath.

2. Slow, extended exhales

Inhale gently for about 4 seconds and exhale for about 6 seconds. Continue for 1–2 minutes if comfortable. Return to normal breathing if lightheaded.

3. Gentle eye-gaze exercise

With your head supported and facing forward, look gently to the right for up to 30 seconds. Return to center, then repeat to the left. A sigh, swallow, or yawn may occur but is not necessary. Optional: extend your tongue gently opposite your gaze, a variation learned during clinical training.

4. Qigong-inspired ear massage

Separate your index and middle fingers into a V. Place each ear between the fingers, with one finger in front and one behind. Gently move your fingers up and down around the ears for 30–60 seconds, breathing naturally.

Pause & reflect

Which practice did you try? What did you notice before and afterward?

A gentle reminder

Stop if symptoms worsen or you feel dizzy or uncomfortable. Avoid massage over tender or swollen areas. These techniques may support relaxation, but specific eye-gaze and ear-massage methods are not established treatments for dysautonomia.

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