

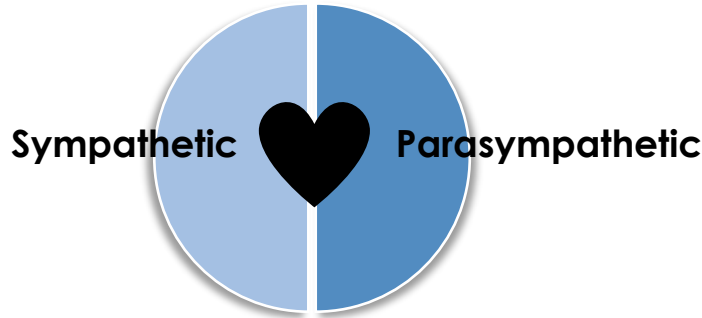
Heart Rate Variability (HRV)

Heart rate variability is closely linked to your heart rate, in particular how long it takes your heart to return to a steady rate after exercise or experiencing a fright. It is dependent on a key part your nervous system called the autonomic nervous system, which monitors the balance between relaxation and movement. Anxiety and stress can reduce our heart rate variability.

The autonomic nervous system is made up of two main branches:

Responsible for fight or flight reactions, such as:

- Rapid breathing
- Increased heart rate
- Dilated pupils
- Inhibiting stomach activity to divert energy to other areas



Responsible for the mechanisms we need to rest and digest, such as:

- Restful breathing
- Resting heart rate
- Constricted pupils
- Enables stomach activity and optimal functioning of other organs

These systems are in competition and send signals to your heart at the same time. The sympathetic nervous system is telling your heart to beat faster while the parasympathetic nervous system is telling your heart to slow down. High heart rate variability is dependent on your nervous system's ability to balance these signals to help your body and mind adapt to the environment and perform at its best.

High HRV

- Shows the body is ready to respond to potential threats and rapidly return to steady regular beats
- Linked to better physical and mental health

Low HRV

- Associated with being in fight/flight mode and taking longer to recover
- Lowers our resilience and our ability to cope with stressors

What can help improve HRV?

Healthy Lifestyle



Take care of your physical health by eating a healthy diet, staying hydrated and getting enough sleep

Exercises



Such as practicing deep breathing, yoga, compassionate self-talk and exercising in nature

Proactive Stress Management



Such as practicing mindful breathing exercises, mindfulness, grounding techniques, and self-care

For more free resources, please visit our website;

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0300 303 5233 | enquiry@psychologyassociates.org.uk