

**DISCOVER THE CAUSE
OF YOUR CHRONIC
ILLNESS**

**FOUR STEPS TO YOUR
SELF-HEALING
JOURNEY**

HAZEL COTTON

Hello,

WELCOME!

I'm so excited that you're here!

I'm Hazel, and I'm in the final phase of my recovery from Chronic Fatigue Syndrome and Long Covid. I spent years surviving in the corporate world, pushing through exhaustion, and unknowingly perpetuating my symptoms. I've walked the same path you're on now, and I understand the complexities and frustrations that come with a stress-related chronic illness.

I've created this educational guide for anyone ready to understand why they are ill, to explore how their childhood and past experiences have shaped their current health, and to learn how to self-heal.

If you're nodding along, then hello friend! You're not alone, and I am here to help you break free from the cycle of chronic illness. This journey is all about empowering you to step into a fully healthy version of yourself, so you can reclaim your health and start living the life you've always dreamed of.

Let's embark on this transformative journey together, and start paving the way toward a healthier, more vibrant you!



Are you ready?

LET'S BEGIN!

*Hazel
Kx*

Instagram: @rebalancewith.hazel

TikTok: @rebalancewith.hazel

Website: www.rebalancewithhazel.com

I'm a Nervous System Practitioner

I help women with stress related chronic conditions such as CFS, Long Covid & Anxiety shift out of survivor mode and reclaim their health and their lives by self-healing. I am a:







☀️ Certified Nervous System Regulation Practitioner

☀️ Trauma Informed Practitioner in training.

YOU CAN TRANSFORM FROM THE STRESSED MOLTEN VOLCANO TO ENJOYING MEADOWS AND LIVING A HEALTHY AND FULFILLED LIFE



HERE IS WHAT WE ARE GOING TO EXPLORE IN THIS EDUCATIONAL GUIDE

-  Why you are here
-  What is trauma?
-  What is the autonomic nervous system?
-  How are trauma and the autonomic nervous system related?
-  Can you heal and recover from your chronic illness?
-  Four steps to easily regulate your nervous system yourself

FIRST LET'S SET THE SCENE



You have probably found this resource because either you or someone you know is suffering. The suffering may have been going on for years, and you feel like you have tried everything. You've been to the GP, you've been sent for loads of tests and they have all come back negative. You may have been offered medication or CBT, but if that didn't seem like a good fit for you, you were sent away.

If you were fortunate to have the funds, you have probably tried multiple different treatments and supplements. Some may have worked in some capacity, but still you feel rotten. You feel like you are missing out on so much that life has to offer. You want to get better but don't know how.

Does any of this sound familiar?

BY THE TIME YOU HAVE FINISHED READING THIS GUIDE, YOU SHOULD FEEL INFORMED ABOUT WHY YOU HAVE YOUR SYMPTOMS AND HOW YOU CAN START TO SELF-HEAL

There is little known about the connection between **trauma**, the **autonomic nervous system** and **chronic illness**. If you take a look at the leading charity websites for chronic conditions such as chronic fatigue, ME, Long Covid and fibromyalgia you won't see the nervous system mentioned. This is despite ME/CFS being categorised as A neurological condition. They state that there is no known cure and few people fully recover. Only symptom management options are suggested and these are limited to CBT, medication and dietary information. **Is it any wonder that being diagnosed with one of these conditions can feel like life sentence?**

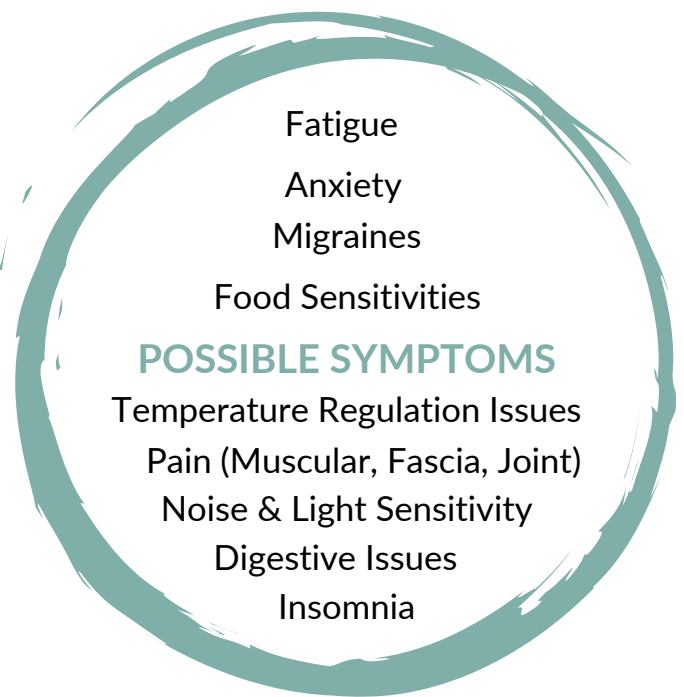
But infact, your symptoms are as a result of your autonomic nervous system being imbalanced (also referred to as dysregulated). We will get into the how and why later.

LET'S GET STARTED

You might be wondering why there is a picture of a molten volcano on the front cover. Well, it's because an imbalanced nervous system can be likened to a volcano. The volcano bubbles and erupts, then bubbles and erupts again. Just like your symptoms.

But there is a way to stop the cycle and stop those symptoms from erupting which are impacting your quality of life.

So let's look at what it means to have an imbalanced nervous system. It can cause a myriad of symptoms which are associated with a number of chronic conditions.



WHAT IS TRAUMA?

And what's it got to do with why you feel so unwell?

Trauma is an emotive word and conjures up all kinds of thoughts and images. Peter Levine says it is 'Anything that has been too much, too fast or too soon.' But it is also when something has been 'too little, for too long'.

So often it isn't what happened to you, *it is what didn't happen to you.* In many cases, people who have mental or physical chronic illnesses, have experienced some kind of early adversity, whether they are aware of it or not.



It is important to understand what we mean by trauma. There is physical trauma you might initially think of like sexual abuse or war horrors. However, trauma can also be emotional and psychological and is sometimes as a result of a lack of co-regulation from our caregivers in our formative years. This type of trauma can be a little trickier to spot but it isn't any less real.

The impact of trauma has been neglected by conventional medical institutions and the impact is an epidemic of sick people who cannot be cured by swallowing a pill or talking therapy. People are unaware of 'why' they are ill. A cynic might think that perhaps this is why there has been a lack of necessary focus and funding.

Here are some examples of trauma that you may not have considered:

- Growing up with parents, who despite their best efforts, just didn't know how to emotionally connect.
- The old 'children should be seen, not heard' routine, leading to bottled up feelings.
- Tricky births, or babies who arrived earlier than expected.
- Parents who were sick and couldn't give their child the attention they needed, or when the child had to step up and be the grown-up.
- Living in a house where mum or dad had a little too much 'fun' with alcohol or drugs.
- Homes that felt more like a battlefield than a safe haven, including the child being left to their own devices for long periods of time.
- Parents who got carried away with their own dreams and forgot about their kid's needs, living vicariously through their child.
- Run-ins with nasty viruses or uninvited mould guests.

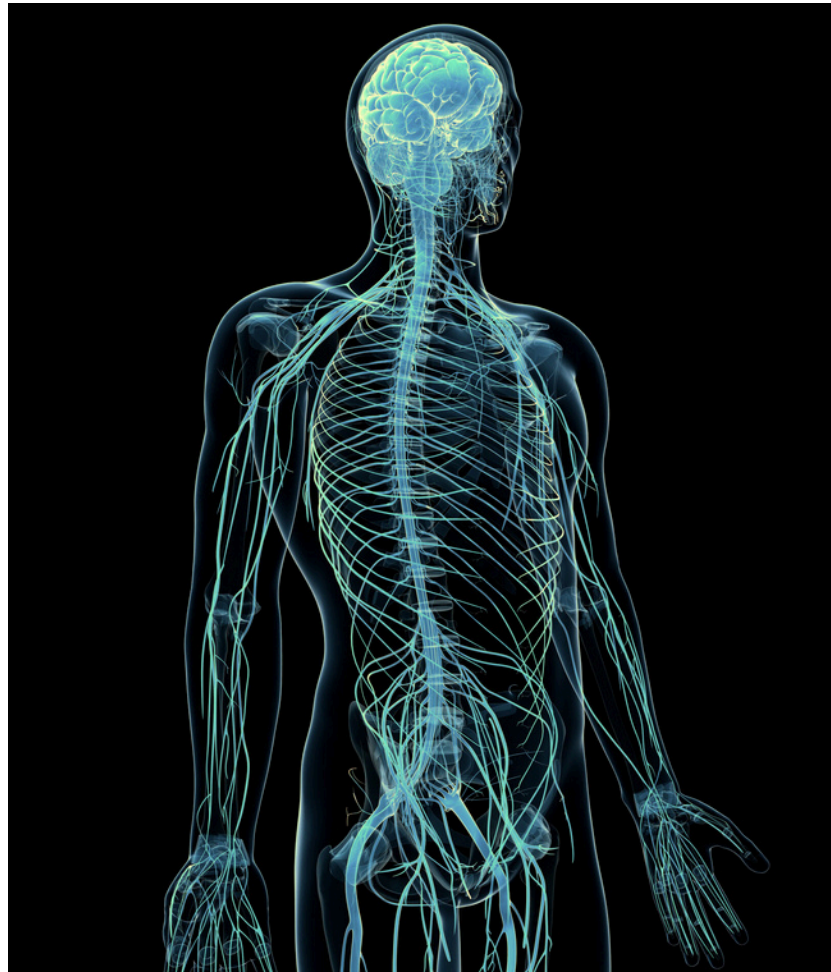
Do any of these resonate with you?

WHAT IS THE AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM?

And what part does it play in your symptoms?

Think of the autonomic nervous system (ANS) as the behind-the-scenes maestro of your body's involuntary functions—it's responsible for all the things your body does without conscious thought, such as regulating your heartbeat, controlling breathing, digesting your lunch, and even causing butterflies in your stomach when you're nervous. It constantly responds to both internal and external conditions, adjusting bodily functions to maintain balance.

The ANS, working in conjunction with the Vagus Nerve, plays a crucial role in our body's safety mechanisms, triggering protective responses to perceived danger or stress, and helping us to calm down and restore balance after the threat has passed.



The ANS is always working, even when you're asleep and it's split into three parts:

- **Sympathetic nervous system** - this is like the adrenaline junkie of the body. It kicks into gear when you're stressed or sense danger, pumping up your heart rate and getting you ready for action.
- **Parasympathetic nervous system** - this is your chill-out guru. It's all about bringing your body back to its zen state after the sympathetic system has had its fun.
- **Enteric nervous system** - this is your unsung hero that keeps your digestion on track.

In a healthy person, the sympathetic and parasympathetic systems are a bit like an old married couple — they might seem like they are disgruntled, but actually, they balance each other out perfectly.

However, when these systems are out of balance, havoc can be created in the body.

OK, SO HOW ARE TRAUMA AND THE AUTONOMIC NERVOUS SYSTEM RELATED?

And how is that causing your symptoms?

Have you ever noticed that some people can handle stress better than others? It's like people are hardwired to either fight, run for the hills or freeze on the spot.

When we are in stressful situations, our bodies have a built-in autopilot mode that kicks in to protect us. Our initial response is to fight or run, but sometimes we don't know how to handle those situations and if that's the case, we go into shut down mode. A bit like a computer going into sleep mode to keep it from overheating.



When animals like zebra and deer experience stress, such as being chased by a predator, they have an **innate self-regulating process** to return to a state that maintains stability while also adjusting to conditions that are best for its survival. However, humans aren't so lucky, **we aren't born knowing how to manage stress, we learn it from our caregivers.** They're the ones who teach us how to handle external stressors and our own internal reactions and sensations. So if we don't get it, there is a problem. Who said humans were the superior race?

If a baby cries and is ignored, or when a child isn't give the emotional support and guidance it needs, then the nervous system starts getting disrupted. The caregiver isn't aware that their actions are having this internal impact on their bundle of joy, they are just doing all they know how. However, this can have devastating consequences for the child later in life because **the only way the nervous system has learnt to deal with stress is just to shut down.** It's the only protection it knows. Your nervous system has become dysregulated



Another thing that happens when the body is stressed is that it produces the stress hormone cortisol. Too much cortisol is bad news as it causes inflammation and can disrupt the immune system.



So over time, this cycle of **stress, freeze and excess cortisol**, can sap your energy, reduce your resilience and generally just take a piece of your soul. Your 'Window of Tolerance', as coined by Dan Siegal is effectively reducing.

Doesn't sound great right?

Generally, you won't know all of this is going on inside of you until 'something' happens. Sometimes symptoms can be gradual, you might have mini burn outs, reoccurring infections or injuries.

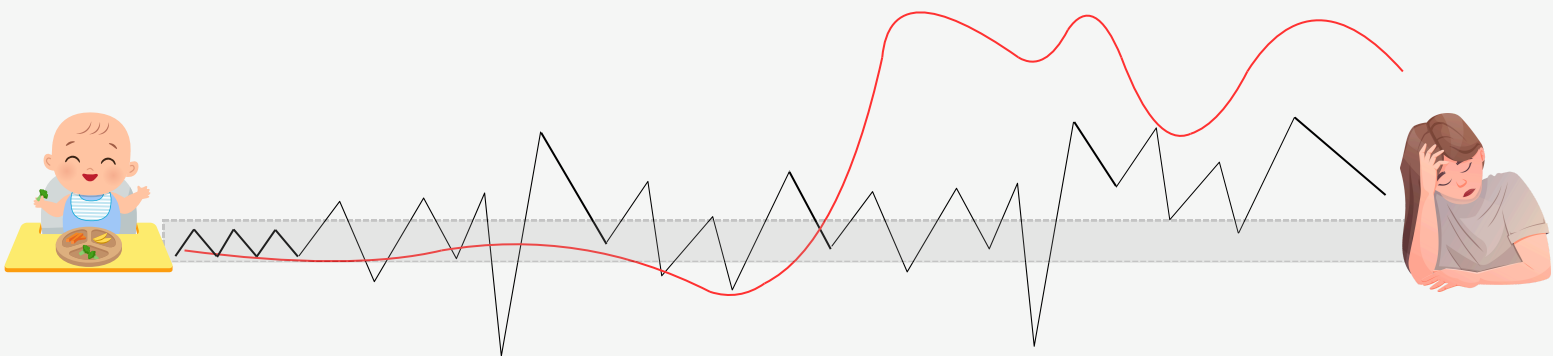
But often it could be that a significant event occurs which 'crashes' your nervous system, such as a virus like Covid-19 or Glandular Fever, a car crash, surgery or massive burn out at work. Then suddenly, you don't know what has hit you. Scientists call this the '**allostatic load**', which is when stress builds up and cumulatively results in the chronic effects on the body.

An imbalance in the nervous system can have such extensive consequences because **it communicates with every organ system and function in your body** - which explains the varying symptoms that people experience.

The image below, helps to explain this. Often you will recover from the initial event, to varying degrees, but then something else happens and you go back to where you started - stuck. It's a depressing cycle to be in. You don't recover because the nervous system deems activity as dangerous so it keeps you stuck in **survival mode**.

THE LITTLE KNOWN AND INVISIBLE CAUSE

The correlation between a dysregulated nervous system and symptoms



Life Events



— Autonomic Nervous System — Symptoms - - - - - Window of Tolerance

SO CAN YOU HEAL YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM AND RECOVER FROM YOUR CHRONIC ILLNESS?

Are you able to regain your health and your life?



The good news is that the answer is YES.

The first thing to remember is that your nervous system is **always working for you and not against you**. Even though it might not feel that way at times. What has been created can be recreated, as the brain is able to adapt and your nervous system is able to regulate again.

Most people with chronic illnesses have already tried many things to improve their health, which may help to some degree, but they aren't addressing the root causes.

It is important to **start slowly and build up your capacity** by dealing with early trauma and rewiring your brain in order to manage stressful events.

Perhaps you have tried yoga, meditation and mindfulness which all can be helpful, but it might be too much too soon. Its all about listening to your body. **Focusing on how your body is feeling and what you think could be causing your symptoms instead of focusing on your symptoms which can lead to the cycle of doom.**

Here are **four easy steps** you can take to help you to rebalance and regulate your nervous system. Only do what you what feels right for you and what your body is ready for.

FOUR EASY STEPS TO REGULATE YOUR NERVOUS SYSTEM

1



Connect with Nature

There is something uniquely calming and refreshing about spending time in nature. The sound of the leaves rustling in the breeze, or the sight of trees towering above you. A simple forest walk has been shown to reduce stress markers considerably. While being in the forest, the number of stressors is limited and we can fully concentrate on the calming sounds of nature.

Noticing your current state involves a mindful check-in with your physical, emotional, and mental condition. Begin by sitting quietly and taking deep breaths. Observe your body's sensations, noting any tension or relaxation, and the speed of your breath. Then, identify your emotions without judgment, whether you're feeling happy, anxious, or neutral. Finally, notice the quality of your thoughts, if they are positive or negative

2



Notice your current state

Vagal toning exercises stimulate the Vagus nerve, which plays a critical role in regulating the parasympathetic nervous system. Improved vagal tone can lead to better regulation of the body's stress response and doing them regularly can build your capacity to handle stress and determine how quickly you can bounce back from stressful events. You can find a **Vagal Toning 30 Day Challenge** [HERE](#)

3



Try Vagal toning exercises

Somatic movements are practiced consciously with the intention of focusing on the internal experience of the movement rather than the external appearance or the end result of the movement. This can be challenging at first but explore and notice what you're feeling in your body in that moment. You can find a **Somatic Movements Video and Guide** containing 12 movements [HERE](#)

4



Try somatic movements

CONGRATULATIONS!

On taking your first step on your healing journey. It's tough thinking about your illness but you've made it all the way to the end of this educational guide. You might be wondering what's next and how I can help you on your journey.

Introducing my 12 week signature programme to rebalance your nervous system and transform your health

This is a neuroscience founded 12-week program for women who are determined to self-heal their chronic symptoms for good. It is designed to **shift you out of survival mode and into a state of lasting health and vitality**

This transformative journey will guide you step by step, helping you break free from the cycle of merely surviving and getting through each day to empowering you to reclaim your health and your life for the long term.

Using a combination of cognitive, subconscious and somatic techniques, you will:

- Deep dive into the underlying causes of your symptoms
- Gain practical tools and strategies to regulate your nervous system
- Cultivate new, healthy habits that prevent relapse into survival mode.
- Shift your perspective from 'being sick' into embodying health and wellness

This program is not just about temporary relief; it's about creating deep, lasting change. By the end of these 10 weeks, you will have the knowledge, tools, and confidence to take control of your health and live your life to the fullest.

Don't just survive — thrive! Join us on this life-changing journey and start reclaiming your health and happiness today.

[Click here to find out more](#)

You can find all of the ways we can work together at: www.rebalancewithhazel.com

Follow me @rebalancewith.hazel for insights and tips on regulating your nervous system