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The Vagus Nerve and Cravings

Why nervous system health must be considered in controlling cravings

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author**

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Consult with a clinician in your care

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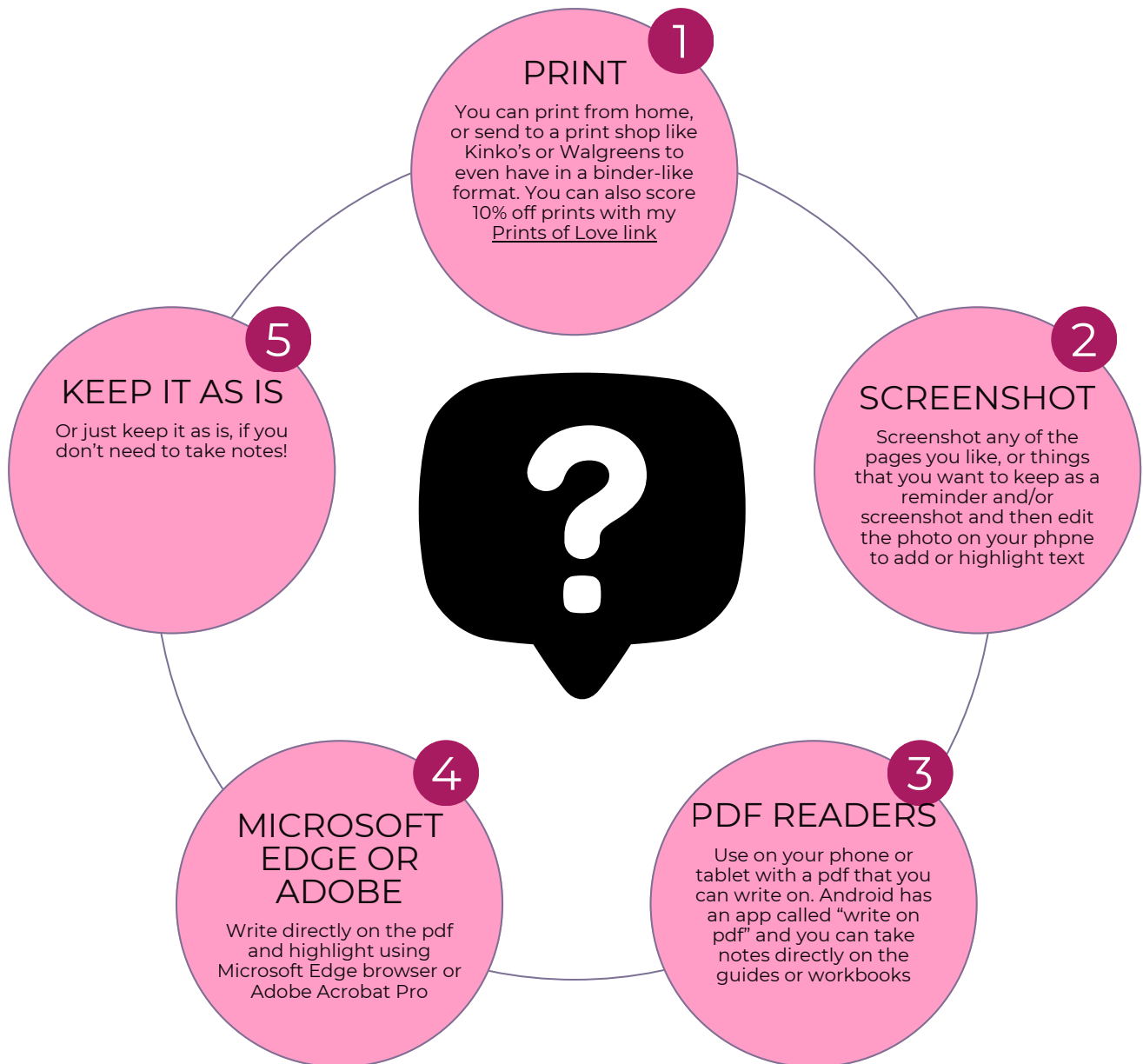
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Releaseology



The study of releasing pain, stress & dysfunction

About the Author

Hi! I'm Sara Becker, DPT (doctorate of physical therapy), Certified Health Coach, Nutritional Therapist, Vagus Nerve Guru and Movement Specialist. I pride myself on the nontraditional approach to healthcare as **I believe the body and brain are capable of so much more healing than traditional medicine has given it credit for.**

My approach focuses on the brain and nervous system which has helped me treat diagnoses and symptoms that I was taught not possible. By improving the physical aspects of someone's nervous system, it improves the signal of the cranial nerves and vagus nerve, **to improve communication between your brain and craving centers.** I have helped clients decrease stress, anxiety, improve appetite and approach more normal glucose levels.



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The Nervous System, the Vagus Nerve, and Cravings

Your cravings aren't just about willpower — they're deeply tied to your nervous system and the communication between your brain, gut, and hormones. The vagus nerve plays a starring role in this conversation.

The Vagus Nerve: The Body's Communication Superhighway

- The vagus nerve runs from your brainstem down through your heart, lungs, and digestive organs — including your stomach, pancreas, intestines, and liver. It acts like a two-way messenger: sending information from your gut to your brain and from your brain back to your organs.
- When you eat, the gut communicates through the vagus nerve to help release GLP-1 (Glucagon-Like Peptide-1) — a hormone secreted mainly by cells in the small intestine, but also influenced by signals from the stomach, pancreas, and liver.
- GLP-1 then slows digestion, regulates blood sugar, and tells the brain you're full. This means that a healthy, well-functioning vagus nerve helps your body recognize fullness and satisfaction, cutting down on unnecessary cravings.

The State of Your Nervous System Affects Cravings

- Your body's autonomic nervous system has two main modes:
 - Parasympathetic ("Rest and Digest") — governed largely by the vagus nerve
 - Sympathetic ("Fight or Flight") — your stress response systemWhen you're in rest and digest, your vagus nerve is active. Digestion runs smoothly, GLP-1 and other satiety hormones are released appropriately, and your brain gets clear signals that you're nourished and full.
- But when you're stuck in fight or flight, blood flow diverts away from the gut and toward the muscles, digestion slows or shuts down, and vagal signaling weakens. The body then craves quick energy — usually sugar or refined carbs — to fuel the stress response. That's why when you're anxious, rushed, or underslept, you might find yourself reaching for comfort foods or caffeine — your nervous system is literally driving that craving.

The Nervous System, the Vagus Nerve, and Cravings Cont.

How to Support Your Vagus Nerve and Curb Cravings Naturally

To keep your cravings (and your nervous system) in balance:

- **Activate the vagus nerve daily** — with deep breathing, humming, gargling, cold exposure, or gentle movement after meals. (or purchase my library of exercises, next page)
- **Eat slowly and mindfully** — allowing vagal signals to fully engage during digestion.
- **Balance stress and sleep** — since both affect vagal tone and GLP-1 secretion.
- **Nourish your gut** — a healthy microbiome also boosts vagus nerve communication and GLP-1 production.

In Short

Cravings aren't just about diet — they're about nervous system regulation.

When your vagus nerve is strong and your body is in a calm, parasympathetic state, your gut hormones (like GLP-1) work in harmony with your brain to help you feel satisfied and in control.

When stress takes over, the vagus nerve quiets down, digestion slows, and cravings rise.

Vagus Nerve Courses

It is **IMPOSSIBLE** to know what will work for your system until you try it. That's why a library of exercises is ultimately recommended

I have my ENTIRE vault of exercises for purchase, available in 3 tiers to fit every budget/lifestyle.

Nervous System Foundations

- **1/3** of my exercise vault
- **20** movements & exercises
- Why is the vagus nerve so important (a brief **overview**)
- Signs and symptoms of vagus nerve dysfunction
- Ways to improve vagus nerve signal (an **overview**)
- Product discounts
- BONUS: position chart
- BONUS: symptom chart

\$97 for lifetime access

Nervous System Integrations

- **2/3s** of my exercise vault
- **40** movements & exercises
- Why is the vagus nerve so important (a **deeper dive**)
- Signs and symptoms of vagus nerve dysfunction (**why some symptoms make sense**)
- Ways to improve vagus nerve signal (**more in depth**)
- Product discounts
- BONUS: position chart
- BONUS: symptom chart

\$197 for lifetime access

Pay as low as \$35/month with a payment plan

Nervous System Mastery

- My **FULL** exercise vault
- **60** movements & exercises
- Why is the vagus nerve so important (**the full view**)
- Signs and symptoms of vagus nerve dysfunction (why **each** symptom make sense)
- **All** ways to improve vagus nerve signal
- Product discounts
- BONUS: position chart
- BONUS: symptom chart
- BONUS: **recipes & meal plans**
- BONUS: **my virtual vagus nerve workshop**

\$347 for lifetime access

Pay as low as \$60/month with a payment plan

Nervous System Coaching

- personalized 1:1 guidance in your healing journey
- weekly 1-hour Zoom or phone calls (virtual sessions)
- daily check-ins (via text or e-mail)
- FREE access to the Nervous System Mastery Course
- FREE 3-months access to the NeuroFIT App
- choose your duration of commitment 1, 2 or 3 months

\$3000 per month

Pay as low as \$515/month with a payment plan

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Want a Deeper Dive into Cravings?

Learn the difference between hunger and cravings, diets that can control cravings and top tips with my Control Cravings Guide [here](#)

Want More?

If you liked this guide, I am always working on quite a few more resources!

For the most up-to-date guides, head to:

www.releaseology.com/gut-resources

www.releaseology.com/healthnutrition-resources

Book with Me!

Book a virtual session or in-person session in Tempe, AZ to get one on one personal guidance.

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About the Author

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My journey into the world of physical therapy began with a deep fascination for the brain and nervous system—the way these intricate networks quietly orchestrate everything we do without our conscious awareness. It was always second nature to me, this understanding of how our bodies move, heal, and adapt. The nervous system just made sense.

Throughout my career, I dedicated myself to neurorehabilitation. I spent countless hours helping patients recover from life-altering events like strokes, traumatic brain injuries (concussions), and spinal cord injuries. These experiences were as challenging as they were rewarding, and they fueled my determination to help people regain not just their movement, but their independence, confidence, and quality of life.



Over time, I began to see a critical connection: true healing wasn't just about addressing muscles and joints—it was about working with the nervous system itself. Pain, stress, and dysfunction often have deeper roots in how the brain and body communicate. I realized that by targeting pain at its neurological source, I could help people experience deeper, lasting relief.

This revelation led me to immerse myself in perfecting hands-on techniques like neurokinetic therapy (NKT), vagus nerve regulation, dry needling, and myofascial release. I crafted a practice centered on holistic, root-cause healing that not only reduces pain and dysfunction but helps my clients feel more at ease in their bodies.

Let's Release Your Body's Own Healing Potential



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About Releaseology

At Releaseology, my mission is simple: to help you uncover the root cause of your pain, stress, or dysfunction—and give you the tools to finally release it. Unlike many traditional clinicians who focus only on the obvious symptoms, I take a deeper, more investigative approach. I look for the overlooked patterns, the hidden dysfunctions, and the subtle compensations that others might miss. This is where true, lasting change begins.

Why Releaseology Is Different

- **Root-Cause Focused:** I don't just treat where it hurts. I explore the nervous system, movement patterns, and compensations that are often ignored.
- **Hands-On Techniques:** From neurokinetic therapy and dry needling to cupping and fascial release, every session is tailored to you.
- **Rapid Results, Real Change:** My goal isn't to keep you coming back forever—it's to help you improve as quickly as possible while still making sustainable, long-term progress.

In-Person or Virtual Options

I offer in-person services in Tempe, Arizona, as well as highly curated virtual services. And here's something you should know about me: ***I don't do anything halfway.***



During COVID, insurance companies required that telehealth sessions be certified as “just as effective” as in-person care. At that time, I refused to offer virtual sessions because the tools I used then were most effective in person. I couldn't, in good conscience, promise the same results virtually. But today? That's different. The virtual services I now provide have been carefully designed and tested to be just as effective and valuable as my in-person care. When you book a virtual session, rest assured—it's because I know it will work.

Why This Matters? Whether you're here in Arizona or connecting with me virtually, you'll get the same level of detail, dedication, and results-driven care. I only offer what I know can help you feel and move better.

Ready to see the difference? Book with me [here](#)

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