

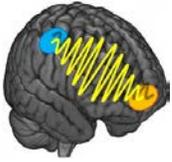


What is a Braindrop?

The concept of Braindrops provides children a way to understand and gain mastery over what is happening in their brains and bodies. Following, is a grown-up explanation of Braindrops.

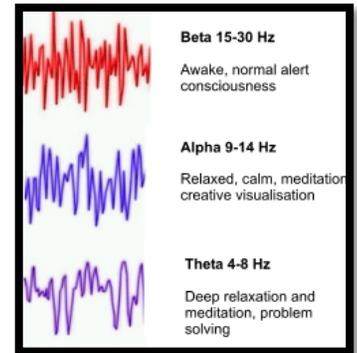


A brain cell, also called a neuron



As brain cells, also called **neurons**, pass information to one another in the brain, electrical impulses are created. Together these electrical charges create brainwaves. The frequency of the brainwaves indicates how many times neurons are firing and resting per second.

- Beta brainwave activity is fast activity. In Beta we are ready to go and get things done.
- Alpha is a bit slower and is a state of relaxed, alertness. A state in which we can access creativity and different ways to solve problems.
- Theta is even slower, it reflects the state between wakefulness and sleep and is associated with the subconscious mind.



We teach kids that there is **always energy moving through our bodies and brains**. If we pay attention, we can feel it. This is where we introduce the concept of Braindrops.

Braindrops represent the energy that is created in our brains, as it moves through our bodies.

When we feel our Braindrops primarily in the center of our bodies, we are usually in a relaxed, alert state, and we feel **regulated**. This can be compared to being in an alpha brainwave state.

There are different branches of our body's nervous system. To understand Braindrops, we focus on two: The Sympathetic and Para-Sympathetic. As we begin to talk about Regulated and Dys-Regulated States of our nervous system, it gets a bit more complicated. The reason for this is that when our **Sympathetic Nervous System is activated**, we tend to be in a Dys-Regulated State called **Hyper-Arousal**. However, when our **Para-Sympathetic Nervous System** is activated, we can be in a **Regulated** state or a Dys-Regulated State called **Hypo-Arousal**.

The Sympathetic Nervous System Response

As our Braindrops move up our bodies, we start to feel the energy moving up and out. Things speed up. As our sympathetic nervous system is activated our blood pressure increases, our hearts start beating faster and our digestion slows down, as our energy moves to our hands, feet, faces and head.

Daniel Goleman termed a phrase "Amygdala Hijacking," that describes our "emotional" brain taking over our "thinking" brain. "Amygdala Hijacking" occurs when our sympathetic nervous system is activated and we are in a state of hyper-arousal.

We talk about this as a swirling in the center of our bodies that can grow more and more intense. It can feel like a tornado. Braindrops get sucked up and spin around. We can feel like we are spinning out of control. Our actions take the shape of outward movement (toward or away from).

This represents a fight, flight or freeze response.

The Para-Sympathetic Nervous System Response

When our braindrops move down our bodies we feel the energy coming down. Things slow down (like a theta state). Our parasympathetic nervous system is activated and our energy is drawn inward.

With parasympathetic activation, we can experience a regulated state in which we feel able to process and integrate information. Another way to say this is that we are within our window of tolerance. We feel able to handle the current amount of internal and external data.

If our braindrops get lower, we then enter a state of hypoarousal. We talk about a cloud forming in the center of our bodies. It gets so heavy it can no longer hold the braindrops, and they start falling like rain. It is braining. As the braining gets heavier and heavier it creates a mud puddle. Our bodies feel heavy and get stuck.

This is the fall asleep or shut down response.



We focus on becoming aware of our braindrops and understanding how they impact us. We don't just talk about it, we feel and experience it; each of us discovering our own self regulation tools.

The complex block features a yellow background. On the left, there is a close-up photograph of a child's face blowing a dandelion seed. In the upper right corner of this section, there is a diagram of a 'braindrop', which is a teardrop shape divided into four colored quadrants: purple, red, yellow, and green. To the right of the photograph is a diagram of a balance scale with a stick figure on top. The scale is divided into three sections: a purple section labeled 'slow' with a turtle icon, a green section labeled 'just right', and a red section labeled 'fast' with a rabbit icon.