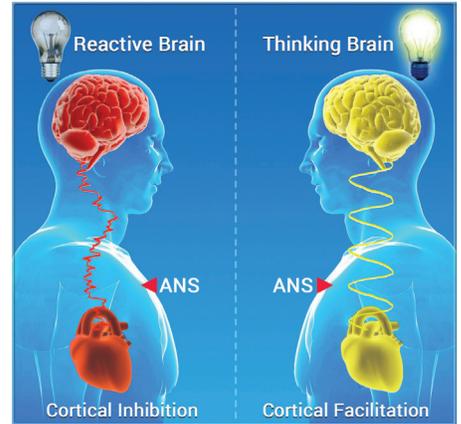


UNIT 2: IN SYNC/OUT OF SYNC

Your brain and heart constantly communicate through the autonomic nervous system (ANS), where messages go back and forth to keep your energy and body in balance.

Stressful emotions like frustration, anger and worry can create chaotic or out-of-sync messages in the ANS. These chaotic messages interfere with our thinking brain (cortex) and good decision-making. Scientists call this *cortical inhibition*. When you feel emotions like appreciation, care and enthusiasm, the heart sends signals that help the brain get in sync. Heart rhythms become smooth and brain functions like decision-making are easier. Scientists call this *cortical facilitation*.



Vocabulary:

Draw a line that matches each vocabulary word on the left to the correct definition on the right.

Cortex

Autonomic Nervous System

Cortical Inhibition

Cortical Facilitation

- When the thinking part of the brain is not thinking well and making poor decisions.
- When the thinking part of the brain is thinking clearly and decision-making becomes easier.
- The part of the body that automatically regulates and manages many of our body's functions, such as breathing, heart rate and digestion.
- The thinking part of the brain that makes plans, solves problems and helps make decisions.

Questions to Ask Yourself:

1. Are you in sync right now? Yes ___ No ___ Not sure ___
 Do you know how to get in sync? Yes ___ No ___ Not sure ___

2. Which activities trigger your cortical inhibition? _____

3. Which activities trigger your cortical facilitation? _____

Draw a picture! On the back of this worksheet, draw how In Sync and Out of Sync look to you.