

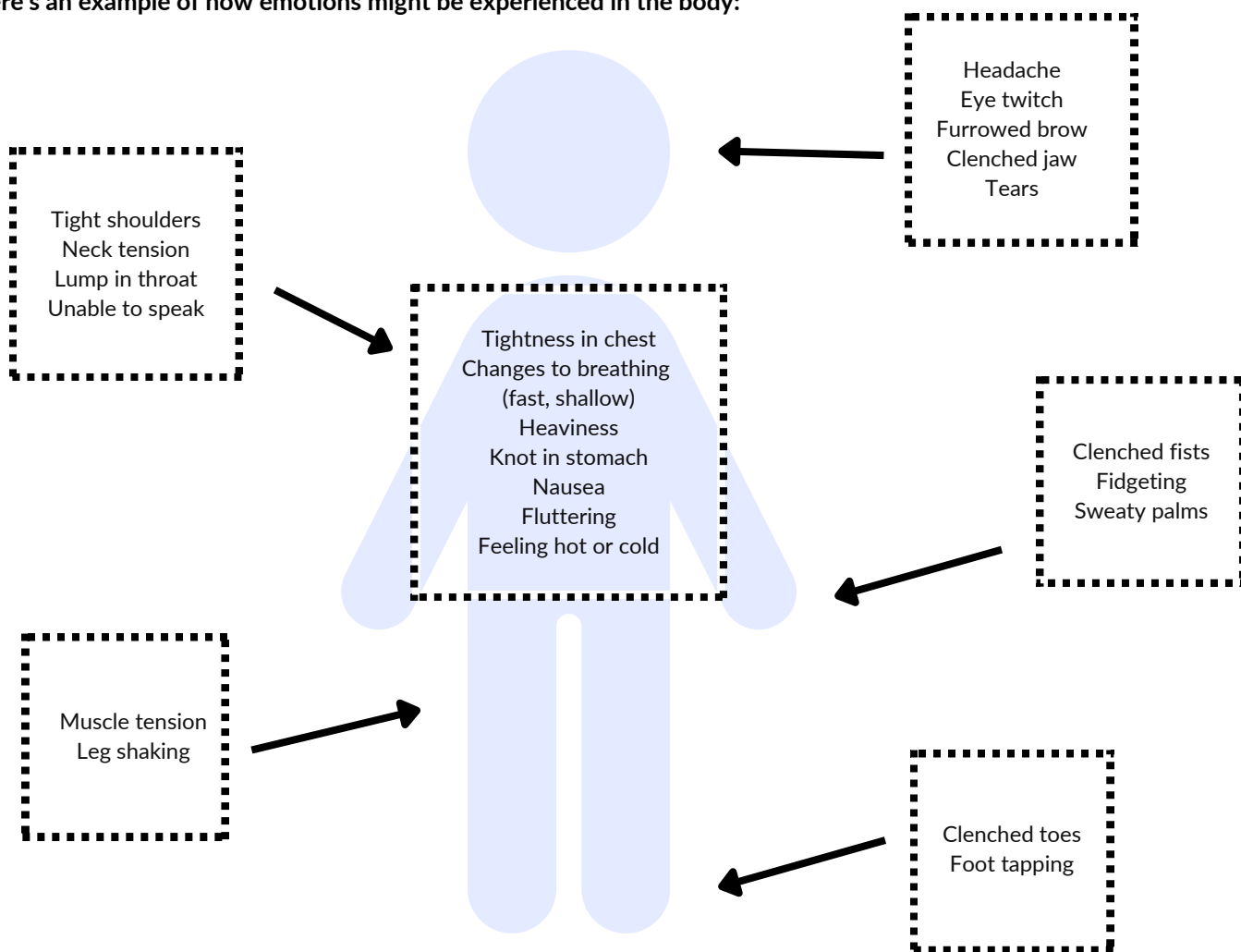
Nervous System Regulation

Nervous system dysregulation occurs when your body becomes overwhelmed by chronic stress or emotional strain, causing it to get “stuck” in the extremes of high anxiety or a low-energy, shut-down state. When you're in this state, even small triggers can feel overwhelming, leading to reactions like yelling or snapping at your kids. This might show up as racing thoughts, a racing heart, tense muscles, or feeling constantly on edge. On the other hand, dysregulation can also manifest as exhaustion, numbness, or feeling disconnected from yourself or your loved ones, making it harder to respond calmly and patiently.

Regulating your nervous system means finding ways to help your body feel calm, even when faced with the frustrations of raising kids. It's about using techniques that help you move out of those heightened states or shut-down modes and into a place where you feel more stable and in control. By learning to regulate your nervous system, you can reduce those knee-jerk reactions like yelling at your kids and build more patience and emotional resilience, allowing you to respond to your kids in a calmer, more compassionate way.

This worksheet will guide you in recognizing how your emotions show up as physical sensations, like tension, fluttering, or heaviness. Understanding these sensations is the first step in managing stress and emotions more effectively. You'll learn to tune into your body's signals and practice techniques to help calm or soothe these responses, giving you tools to handle stress and emotional challenges in a healthier way, especially when interacting with your kids.

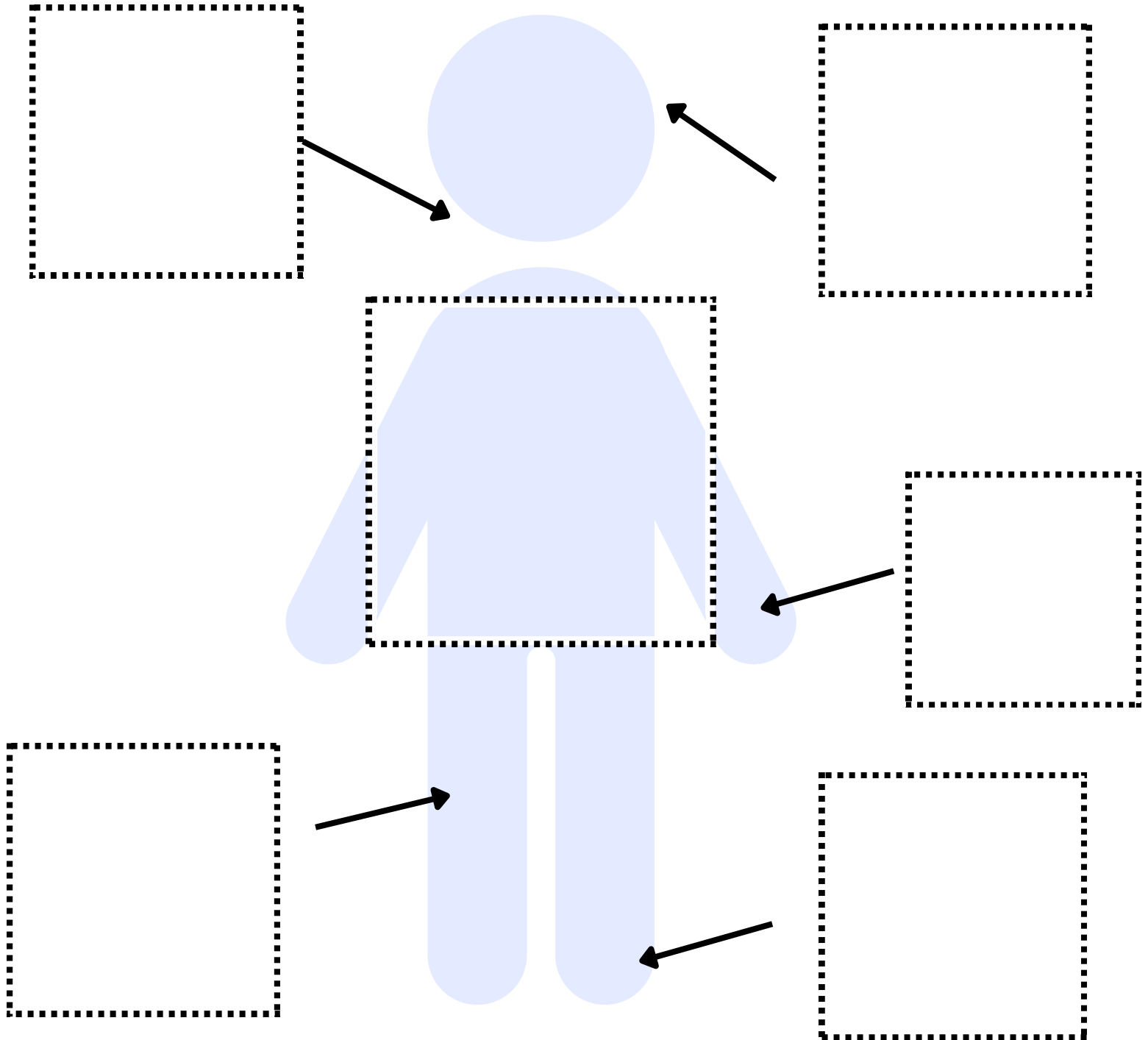
Here's an example of how emotions might be experienced in the body:



Nervous System Regulation

PART 1: Scan Your Body for Sensations

Starting with your feet and working your way up, notice any physical sensations. These can be positive, neutral, or uncomfortable. There is no wrong answer. Just notice what you notice and write it down. Here's an example of how emotions might be experienced in the body.

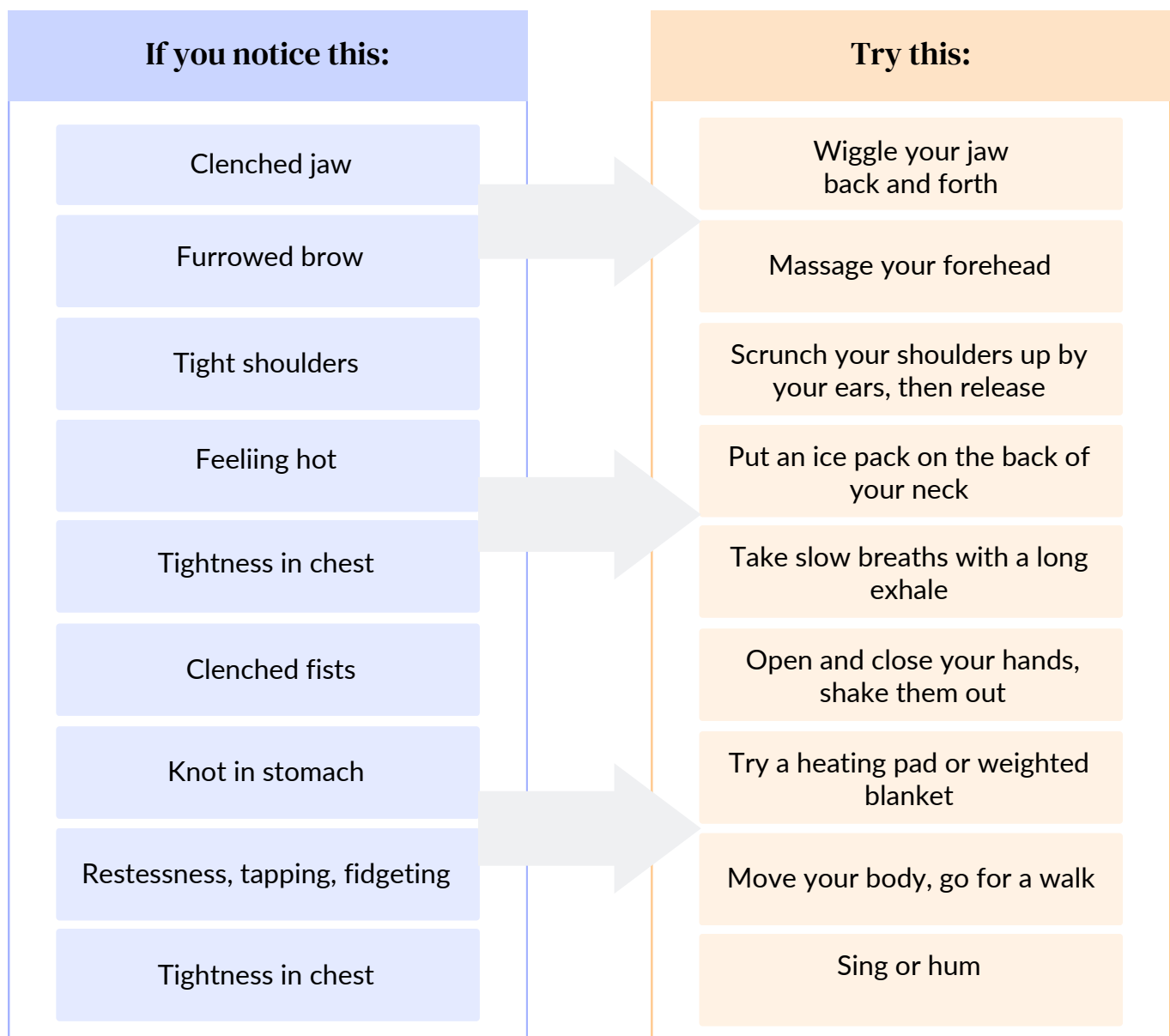


Nervous System Regulation

One way to regulate your nervous system is by addressing the physical sensations that come up when you are feeling strong emotions. This could include changing your temperature, relaxing a muscle, or doing something that feels soothing.

PART 2: Regulating the Nervous System

Now, what to do about it? When you're feeling a difficult emotion, first notice what it feels like in your body then try one of these techniques. Notice how you feel afterward.



Nervous System Regulation

Taking time for daily self-care is crucial for managing your reactions to challenging situations, especially when it comes to parenting. Engaging in activities that help you feel centered, grounded, and calm can make a big difference in how you handle stress and emotional triggers. Whether it's deep breathing, a calming walk, or moments of mindfulness, these practices support your nervous system in staying balanced.

PART 3: Daily Nervous System Self-Care

Nurture your nervous system! Use this worksheet to help you rate how often you do these practices, then add this list to your daily self-care routine.

Ranking

- 1 I rarely engage in this, and it is not a regular part of my routine.
- 2 I occasionally engage in this, but it is not consistent.
- 3 I regularly engage in this, and it is a frequent part of my routine.
- ★ I want to do this more frequently.

1 2 3

★ Nervous System Self-Care

<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Practice breathing including taking slow breaths with a long exhale
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Move your body, stretch or go for a walk
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do 5 minutes of mindfulness meditation, simply noticing your senses
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Tense and relax each muscle group in your body starting with the toes and working up
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Take a break from screens and any over-stimulating media
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Listen to soothing music or sounds
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Take a warm bath or shower
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Do aromatherapy with essential oils or a favorite candle
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Spend time outdoors in nature
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Drink a cup of comforting tea or another soothing ritual before bed



Nervous System Regulation

Journaling can be a powerful tool for building new habits that support nervous system regulation. Journaling also allows you to explore which techniques or coping tools are most effective, so you can refine your routine. Over time, this reflection can help you stay more grounded and responsive, rather than reactive, especially in challenging moments with your kids.

PART 4: Daily Reflection

Reflect on how you feel each day as you practice these techniques. Track the techniques you are using, how effective they were, and any patterns of changes you have noticed.

Which techniques did you use today?

Which technique was the most effective?

Rate your nervous system regulation today (1-10)

PART 4: Weekly Progress

Reflect on the week and note any patterns or significant changes.

Which techniques worked well this week?

Which techniques did not work and need to be adjusted?

