



Grooten & Selten
STEMTHERAPIE

Communication, Voice and Trauma

The polyvagal theory

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Heleen Grooten, voice therapist

Statement

The impaired capacity for connection to self and others is the hidden dimension that underlie most psychological and many physiological problems (Heller, 2012)

Biography

- Speech-,breathing- and voice therapist,
- Mindfulness, systemic constellations
- 2 years study trauma therapy

Interested in:

“What’s behind (functional) voice problems?”

No psychologist

Many thanks to my colleagues

Dr. Piet Kooijman, retired, Nijmegen University
Medical Center

Mrs. Joyce Uiterwijk Winkel, Maastricht
University Medical Center

Mrs. Loes Selten

Case: Clare (51)

- Complaint: Globussensations, for 2 years
- Profession: Unemployed
- History: Severe myasthenia (18 years old)
- Symptoms: Talking about her history: thick tongue
- Statement mother: I took care for you, now you take care for me.

Case 2: Harry (35)

| | |
|----------------|---|
| Complaint: | Vocal Fatigue |
| Profession: | Teacher |
| Symptoms: | Incomplete mutation. |
| First session: | Feeling disconnection between head and body |

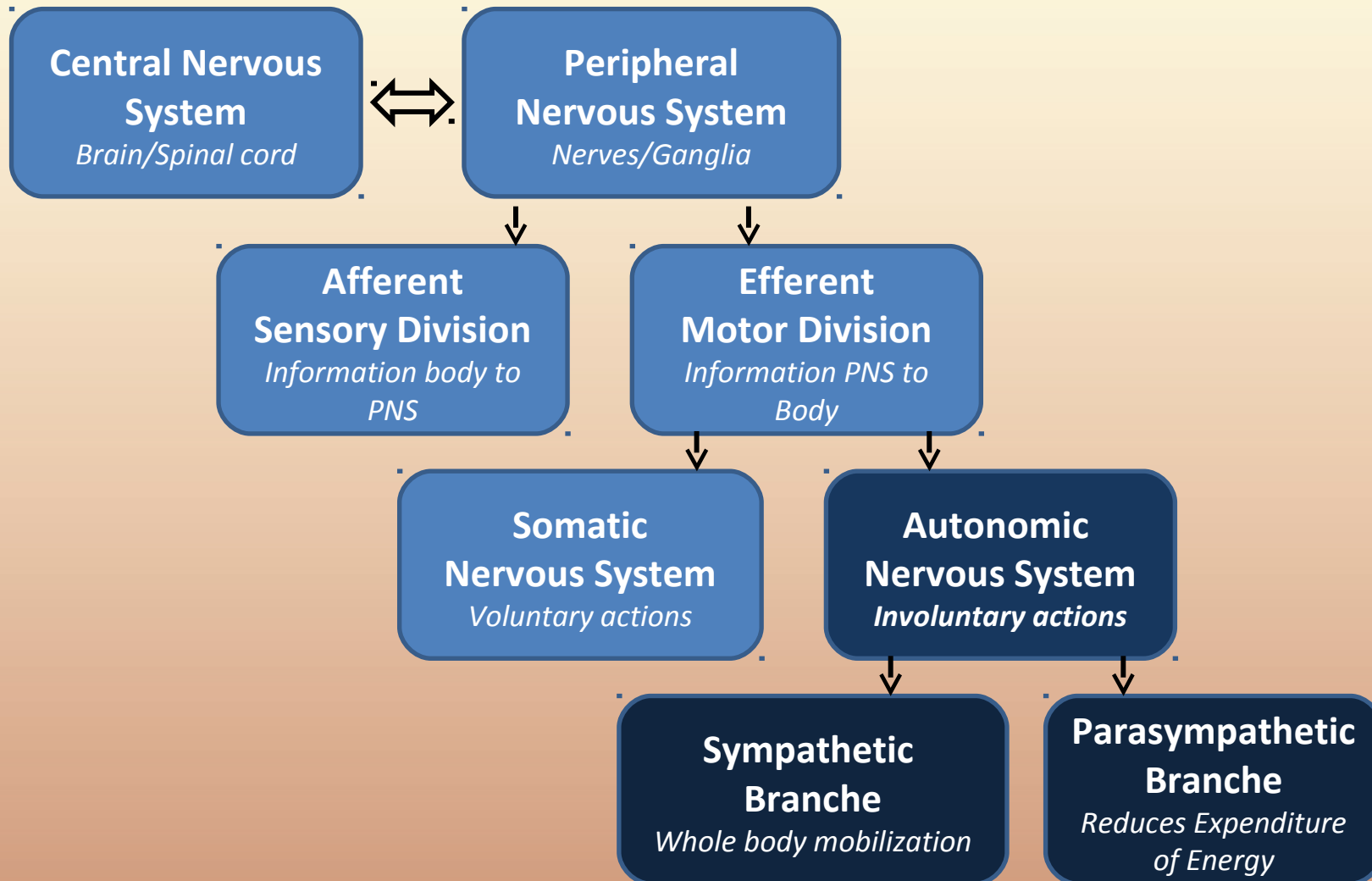
The Narrative

Many people
are
“walking
heads”,
not able to feel
their body



Wouter Stips

The Nervous System (Heller, 2012)



But...

There is more than
sympathetic and parasympathetic

Poly Vagal Theory (Porges '92)

Neurophysiology of self regulation

- Dorsal – ventral vagus
- A bottom up, evolutionary layered developed nervous system

Neurophysiology of self regulation



Red:

life-threatening

dorsal vagus: immobility

Orange:

danger

sympathetic: fight/flight

Green:

safe

ventral vagus: social engagement

Trauma

- An unfinished movement (Levine, 1997)
- Too much to integrate (van der Kolk, 2013)
the body remembers 'nonverbal'
- Trauma disturbs communication

Polyvagal theory and Voice

Subsystem Behaviour Voice →

| | | |
|-----------------|--------------|--------------------------------|
| ● Dorsal vagus | immobility | very low, hypo-/ monotonous |
| ● Sympathicus | fight/flight | high, tensed |
| ● Ventral vagus | safe bonding | prosodic, relaxed |

loud

low

Implications for therapy

- Non verbal: it is in the body, not in the mind
- Safety, compassion, acceptance, no pushing
- Applying Somatic Experience (Levine)
 - Step by step discharge of autonomic nerve system
 - Body oriented, dis-identifying narratives
 - Reconnecting to social engagement:
Eye contact, breathing, relaxed jaw etc

Take home message

Functional voice disorders?

Many voice disorders might have a hidden dimension as well.

Diolch

Grazie

Gracias

Arigatō

Tack

Tak

Shukrān

Dík

Danke



Merci

THANK YOU

ありがとう

Dank u

Дякую

謝謝

Mersi

Dziękí

Ευχαριστώ

Takk

Спасибо

Qujanaq

Köszí

Teşekkürler

Asante

Obrigado

Kiitos

감사합니다

Hvala

شكراً

Ďakujem

どうも

Ta