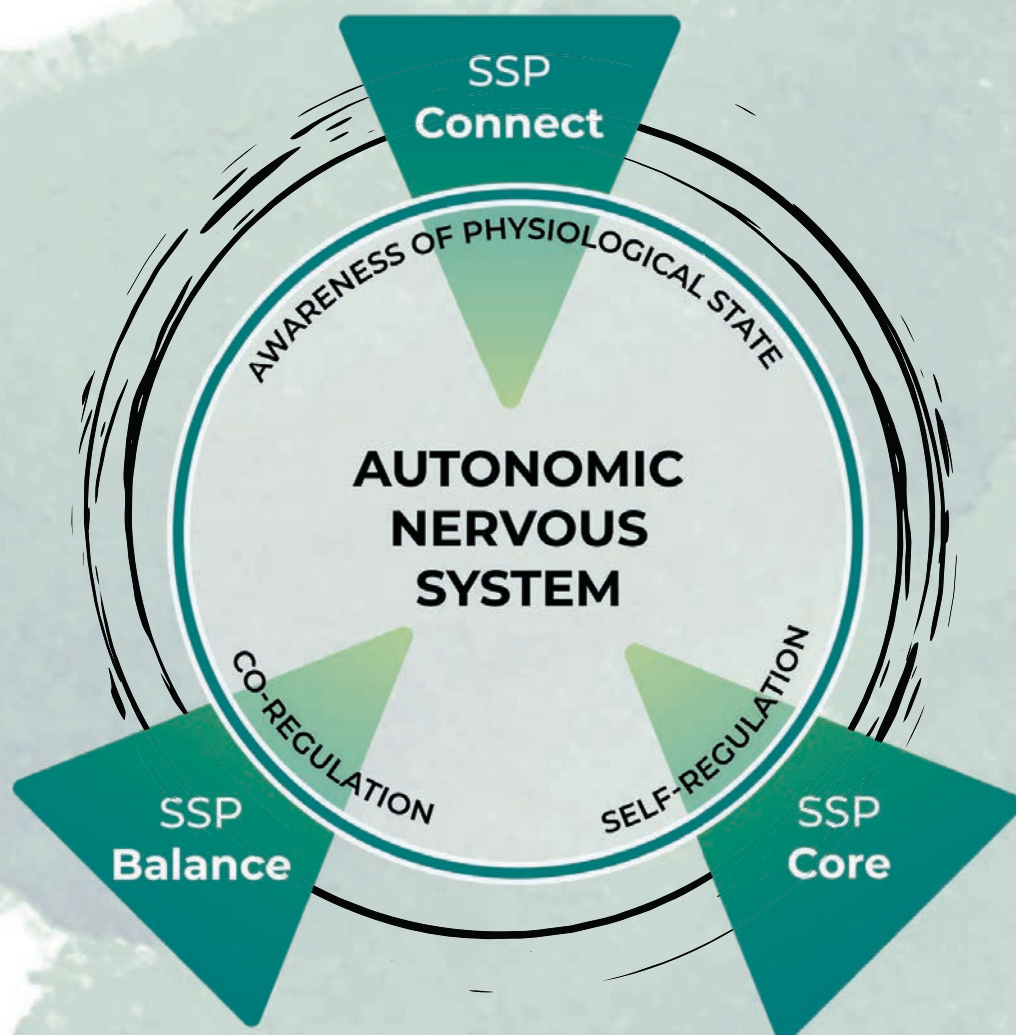


SSP Pathways:

CONNECT, CORE, BALANCE



One SSP, three
pathways for your
client's unique
journey.

Introducing SSP
Connect, Core
and Balance.

THREE PATHWAYS FOR YOUR CLIENT'S UNIQUE JOURNEY

Since the release of Dr Porges' original Safe and Sound Protocol (SSP Core), we have listened to the experiences and insights of our SSP Provider community. We are pleased to now add two new supplemental phases to the original SSP Core in response to the request for a gentler introductory foundation for the SSP and also for a way to integrate and extend the experience.

The first new supplemental phase, SSP Connect, offers a slower way to approach SSP and allows time to adjust and acclimate to the listening and to prepare for SSP Core. The second, SSP Balance, offers an integrating experience and the opportunity to extend the state-regulating benefits beyond the five hours of SSP Core.

Together with the original SSP (SSP Core), they form the three pathways of the Safe and Sound Protocol: SSP Connect, SSP Core, and SSP Balance.

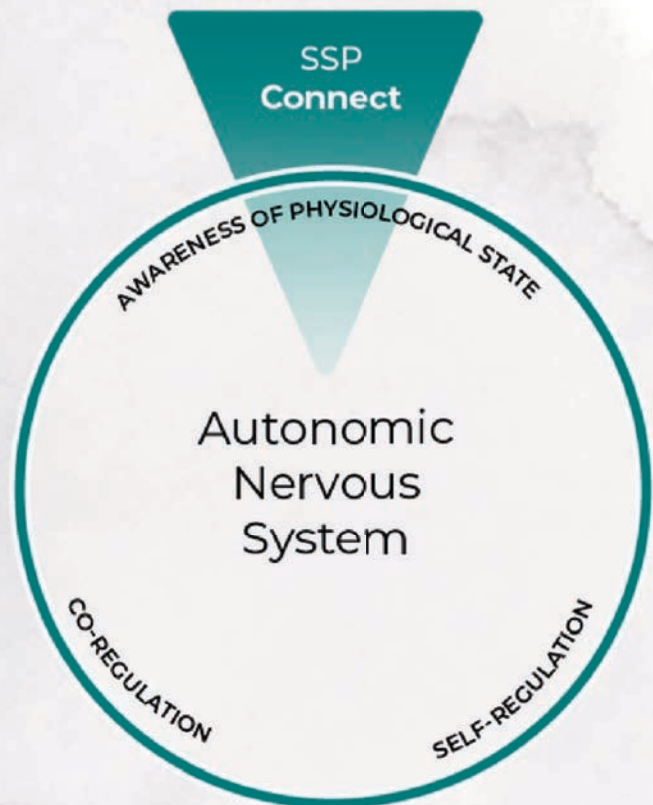
Facilitating SSP is a collaborative process, one the provider and client navigate together toward better autonomic regulation. The three pathways offer greater flexibility and opportunities for crafting your client's unique journey to better nervous system regulation.



SSP CONNECT

SSP Connect includes three new 5-hour playlists of full spectrum, unfiltered music. It is offered as a suggested, but optional, pathway to give context for the client, and to provide a less demanding introduction and foundation for listening to the SSP. This pathway provides the opportunity for the SSP provider to connect with the client, and for the client to connect with the experience of listening to music as a part of therapy.

If used as an entry point for SSP Core, SSP Connect is an invitation or warm up to the SSP for those who would benefit from a slower and gentler introduction. It can help develop familiarity with the music and listening process, thereby providing a sense of comfort and safety for the client to experience the music, and set up a sense of expectancy for what is to come. This familiarity helps to provide the 'safe' before the 'sound', creating a setting to guide the way for the client as they enter SSP Core. For the therapist, SSP Connect provides the opportunity to build a relationship with the client and to be better informed when deciding if remote facilitation of SSP Core is a possibility or if face-to-face facilitation is necessary.



SSP CONNECT

Using SSP Connect can be an ideal opportunity for you to introduce co-regulating and self-regulating exercises to the client for their regular use as they progress through the listening. Talking with your client, encouraging movement, breathing exercises, body sensing, and general awareness can all help to nourish the nervous system and create a sense of safety and connection.

The music in SSP Connect is full spectrum and unfiltered. But that does not mean it is innocuous. Clients of the SSP have varying levels of sensory sensitivity and care must be taken in introducing all of the Pathways gradually to ensure they are well-tolerated. Music is a powerful input to the nervous system. In the original research on the SSP (then called The Listening Project Protocol), some participants listened to the same music without any filtration or modulation – just like the unfiltered SSP Connect playlists. Although auditory hypersensitivities and behavior organization were not improved, these participants still showed significant improvements in spontaneous speech and listening; a finding consistent with the frequent reports of the regulating effects of music without filtration. This is supported by an ever growing body of research on the positive effects of music on brain function and behavior.

Both SSP Connect playlists may be used:

- as a soothing and settling experience for those who feel anxious or tense;
- as a time to gain insight into appropriate pacing/titration for the client;
- as a way of creating a sense of safety and expectancy;
- as a preparatory program before SSP Core or SSP Balance;
- on an ad hoc basis if the client is experiencing difficulty or distress.

SSP CONNECT

SSP CONNECT PLAYLIST DESCRIPTIONS

SSP Connect includes three new 5-hour playlists

SSP Connect Classical

The SSP Connect Classical playlist consists of five hours of full spectrum, classical music. This is suggested as a first step for clients who need to adjust to the experience of listening to music via headphones, especially vocal music. The classical music here has been curated to be calming and grounding, with a soothing tempo and without abrupt changes. Once acclimated, the vocal music and the lyrics which may evoke a personal narrative is better tolerated for sensitive clients.

This SSP Connect Classical playlist is used in our Focus System as an introductory/organization phase. Focus System programs are used, together with movement exercises, to improve body organization, sensory integration, emotional regulation, and higher cognitive functions. Many providers combine use of the SSP and Focus for their complementary benefits.

Titration of the timing and duration of listening to each of the playlists based on the client's response is still important. Gentle movement activities such as yoga, stretching, and walking are also helpful in integrating the listening when the vestibular system is sensitive.

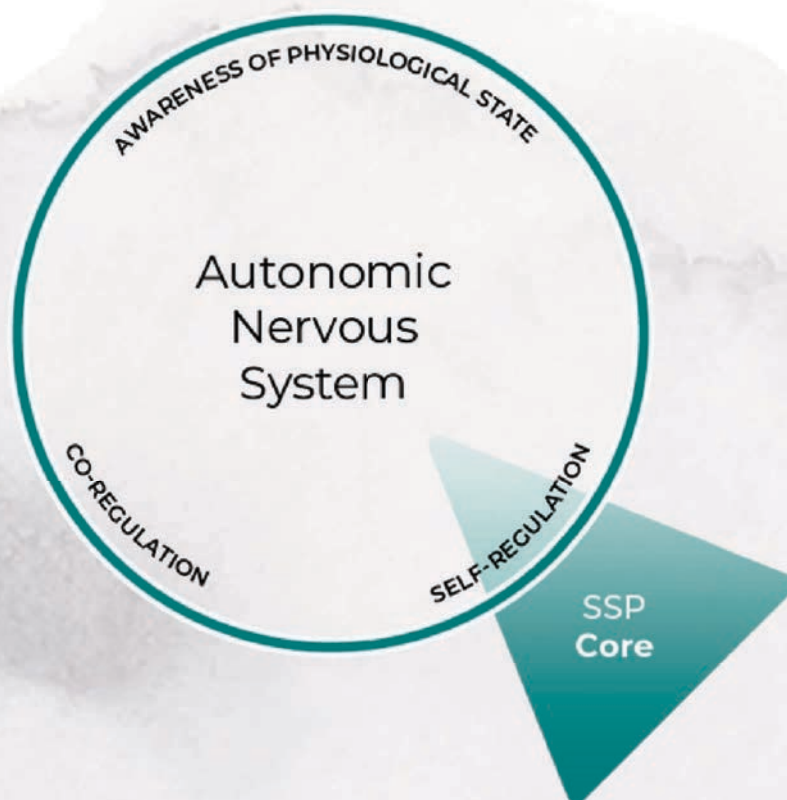
SSP Connect (Adult and Child)

Listening to the unfiltered version of the same underlying 5-hour playlist as SSP Core is a way of creating familiarity and expectancy for SSP Core. In addition, it helps the client adjust and acclimate to the experience of listening to music via over-the-ear headphones. The unfiltered versions of both the Adult and Child playlists are provided.

SSP CORE

This is the existing, original SSP that has been used by thousands of providers and tens of thousands of clients since its release in March, 2017. It is Dr. Porges' patented intervention designed to reduce stress and auditory sensitivity while enhancing social engagement and resilience.

Clinically, SSP Core remains exactly the same, with the same algorithms to modulate the frequencies and acoustic energy of the music. In facilitating the SSP Core, please use the guidelines outlined in the SSP Training, the SSP Delivery Manuals, the Remote SSP Facilitation Guidelines, and the tips and tools from the SSP Remote Facilitation Certificate course.



SSP BALANCE

SSP Balance is a pathway that can be used to extend and integrate the gains of the SSP and potentially act as a state stabilizer. It can also be used for further stabilization and integration before beginning an SSP Core Booster when accompanied by the guidance of an experienced SSP facilitator.

SSP Balance was developed as a follow up to the SSP Core to offer an opportunity to return to music as a calming and grounding experience with a less strenuous neural workout. The music in SSP Balance uses the same playlists as SSP Core, but is treated to present the frequency envelope of human voice with a narrower and less dynamic modulation around this range. It should feel like less of an exercise program than SSP Core and more of a re-experiencing of the cues of safety your client will remember from SSP Core.

There is no particular order necessary for listening to the music in SSP Balance as the filtration algorithm for each hour is the same. This means you can feel free to keep returning to the same hour or half-hour segment that appeals to you or your client or move freely in any order. You can listen ambiently via speakers or your computer or any type of headphone.



SSP BALANCE

Consider using SSP Balance as:

- a way to integrate and embed the experience of SSP Core after completing SSP Core;
- an opportunity to continue being alongside the client in their journey, checking in regularly if not present at the time of the listening;
- a warm up before an SSP Core booster;
- a state shifter on a regular basis at home once you've assessed that the client can listen to SSP Balance without any adverse reactions;
- preparation for you, the clinician, before a client session;
- an ongoing daily support of the nervous system for both children and adults especially if there is a tendency to sympathetic arousal*.

**Note: Initial feedback suggests there may be more potential benefits if the individual is experiencing, or has a tendency toward, sympathetic arousal. And there may be a slightly greater risk of mild side effects if they are experiencing, or have a tendency toward, a dorsal vagal state.*

SSP BALANCE DESCRIPTION

SSP Balance includes the same underlying 5-hour Adult and Child playlists as SSP Core, but with a lighter frequency modulation algorithm. While not the same potency as SSP Core, SSP Balance will support continued practice of the neural networks associated with listening for further toning. Many find it to be calming and grounding and use it as a daily state shifter and support. Speakers or headphones of any type may be used.

USING THE PATHWAYS TO NAVIGATE YOUR CLIENT'S JOURNEY

Close connection to the client and titration have traditionally been the primary ways to navigate SSP facilitation, providing the 'safe' before the 'sound'. The two new Pathways and the ability to shift between and among them add more tools to your toolkit. While there are some commonly suggested journeys, as you begin to use the new pathways, you'll begin to have a better understanding of their flavors and when each might be a good response to support your client's progress.

As you work together, allow your client and your own clinical judgement to guide the way forward. Remembering that 'less is more', and the importance of providing 'safe' before the 'sound' of SSP, will help you navigate your way through your choice in the specific pathways used. In this way, you will see that the overall journey to improve nervous system regulation and resilience is more important than the specific pathways taken.

To help guide your decision process, we propose using the Unyte-iLs SSP Intake Form.

USING THE PATHWAYS TO NAVIGATE YOUR CLIENT'S JOURNEY

Three Common/Suggested Journeys

SSP CONNECT – SSP CORE – SSP BALANCE

Using the three pathways in this order will be one of the most common journeys. SSP Connect will provide the client with a very nice warm up; they will experience the underlying playlist of SSP Core and can develop familiarity and knowledge of what to expect.

This warm up period will allow you to get to know your client better and to introduce the ideas of autonomic regulation, coregulation and self regulation.

Children will likely benefit from doing all three pathways in the order of Connect, Core, Balance as they will respond well to a more continuous experience.

Parents have noticed that a booster of SSP Core is sometimes warranted after 3-4 months. It's possible that with more consistent access to SSP Balance after SSP Core, that the timing between boosters may be extended.

Sensitive clients of all ages and those who experience the effects of trauma will appreciate the gentler foundation of SSP Connect and the continuation of listening with SSP Balance. Once SSP Core has been successfully completed, some clients may find that daily exposure to SSP Balance is supportive.



USING THE PATHWAYS TO NAVIGATE YOUR CLIENT'S JOURNEY

Three Common/Suggested Journeys

SSP CORE – SSP BALANCE

Clients with fewer sensitivities and greater resources can move directly into SSP Core knowing that SSP Connect is available in the case of any destabilizing or dysregulation that may occur. Starting directly with SSP Core is also how you will likely navigate for a client who is doing a booster. Once SSP Core has been successfully completed, clients may find that regular access to SSP Balance is a tool they will regularly turn to on their own. Daily listening via headphones or speakers will be a reliable state shifter for many clients.



SSP CORE

Facilitating SSP Core without using the Connect or Balance Pathways may still be the best journey for your client. The potency of SSP Core may be just what the client needs to help regulate better. Clients for whom this is appropriate may appreciate that SSP Core is an experience that stimulates better regulation without a more significant investment.



To learn more about the SSP and
other Unyte-iLs programs, visit
integratedlistening.com

