The shutdown system is the **dorsal vagal parasympathetic** branch of the autonomic nervous system.

The shutdown system is important for **conservation of bodily resources**. If the body goes into shutdown, it’s anticipating that its life is in threat and shuts down all bodily processes. This serves to not only conserve resources, but also provides potential opportunities for survival. Predators are less likely to eat a corpse, which “playing possum” looks like. This conservative shutdown state is **intended to be temporary** and something the body comes out of when able to mobilize to safety.

Shutdown results in significant changes in social functioning:

- disconnection from the self and others
- numbness and dissociation
- removal of eye contact
- flat facial affect
- inhibited movement
- voice becomes more flat and monotone
- limited range of emotional expression

**The world is**: overwhelming, uninteresting, pointless

**Thoughts become**: hopeless, apathetic

**Feelings of**: hopelessness, fogginess, tiredness, numbness, disconnectedness, aloneness, worthlessness

**Loss of**: energy, motivation, connection, hope

**Become more**: cold, disconnected, isolated, lethargic, unmotivated