



‘Strengthening Skills and Building Confidence in Regulating your child’s Emotions’

Dr. Natalie Bailey, Counselling Psychologist
Wellbeing and Mental Health in Schools (WAMHS)

Laura Powney – Mental Health Lead?

Aims for today

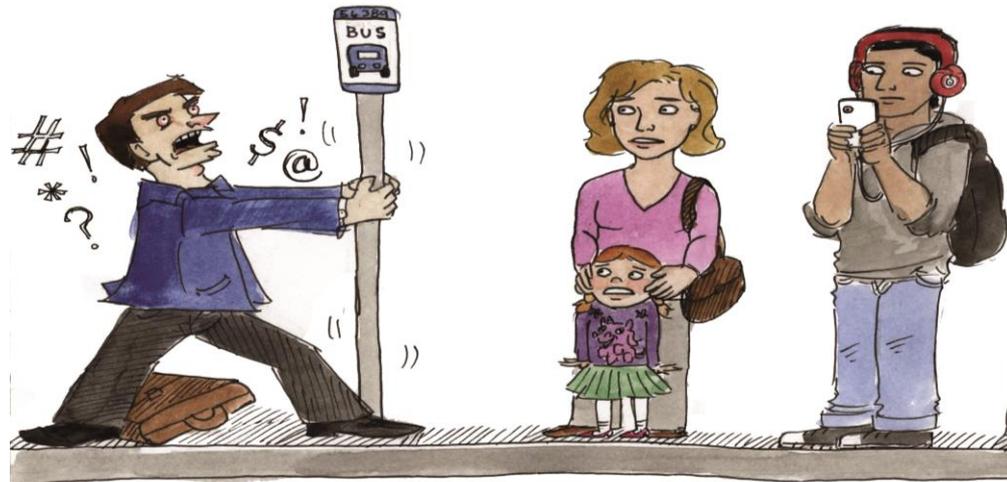
To help you build
your
understanding of
Emotional
Regulation

Explore and build
your
understanding of
Emotion Coaching

To briefly
introduce
strategies for
helping your child
to emotionally
regulate

What is Emotional Regulation?

- * **“Emotional regulation** refers to the process by which individuals influence which emotions they have, when they have them, and how they experience and express their feelings. Emotional regulation can be automatic or controlled, conscious or unconscious, and may have effects at one or more points in the emotion producing process.” **Why is this important?**



What is emotional regulation?

*“... the ability to do what needs to be done to be in the **optimal state** for the **given situation**. This includes regulating one’s **sensory needs, emotions and impulses** to meet the **demands** of the environment, reach one’s **goals** and behave in a **socially appropriate way**.”*

Emotional Reregulation is the core process underlying attention and social engagement and is essential for optimal social, emotional and communication development and for the development of relationships (Prizant and Meyer, 1993).

Emotional Regulation

Self Regulation

Things we do to monitor and manage our emotional states. Self-regulation is all about pausing between feeling and reactions

Mutual/ Co Regulation

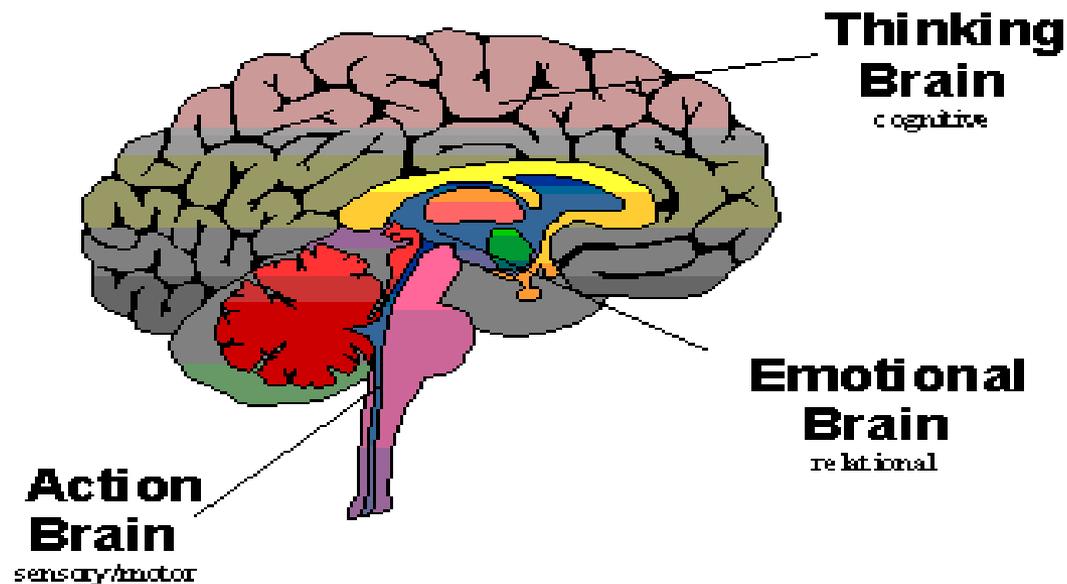
Seeking help or comfort from others to make us feel calm or safe

No emotion is bad, it is how we or others respond to it that is important.



What happens to the brain when someone has strong feelings

When we feel strong feelings the emotional part of the brain inhibits the thinking part of the brain making it more difficult to think logically and rationally. Therefore when someone is emotional it is important to give them time and space.



Co-Regulation / Self Regulation

Co-regulation



Seeking help or comfort from others to make us feel calm or alert

Self regulation



Things we do make ourselves calm or alert

- We are not born able to self-regulate
- Emotional regulation is gained by co-regulation
- Well-regulated adults are needed when children or young people experience dysregulation
- The brain is shaped by social experience and strengthened by repetition

What does it look like when children are having difficulty regulating?

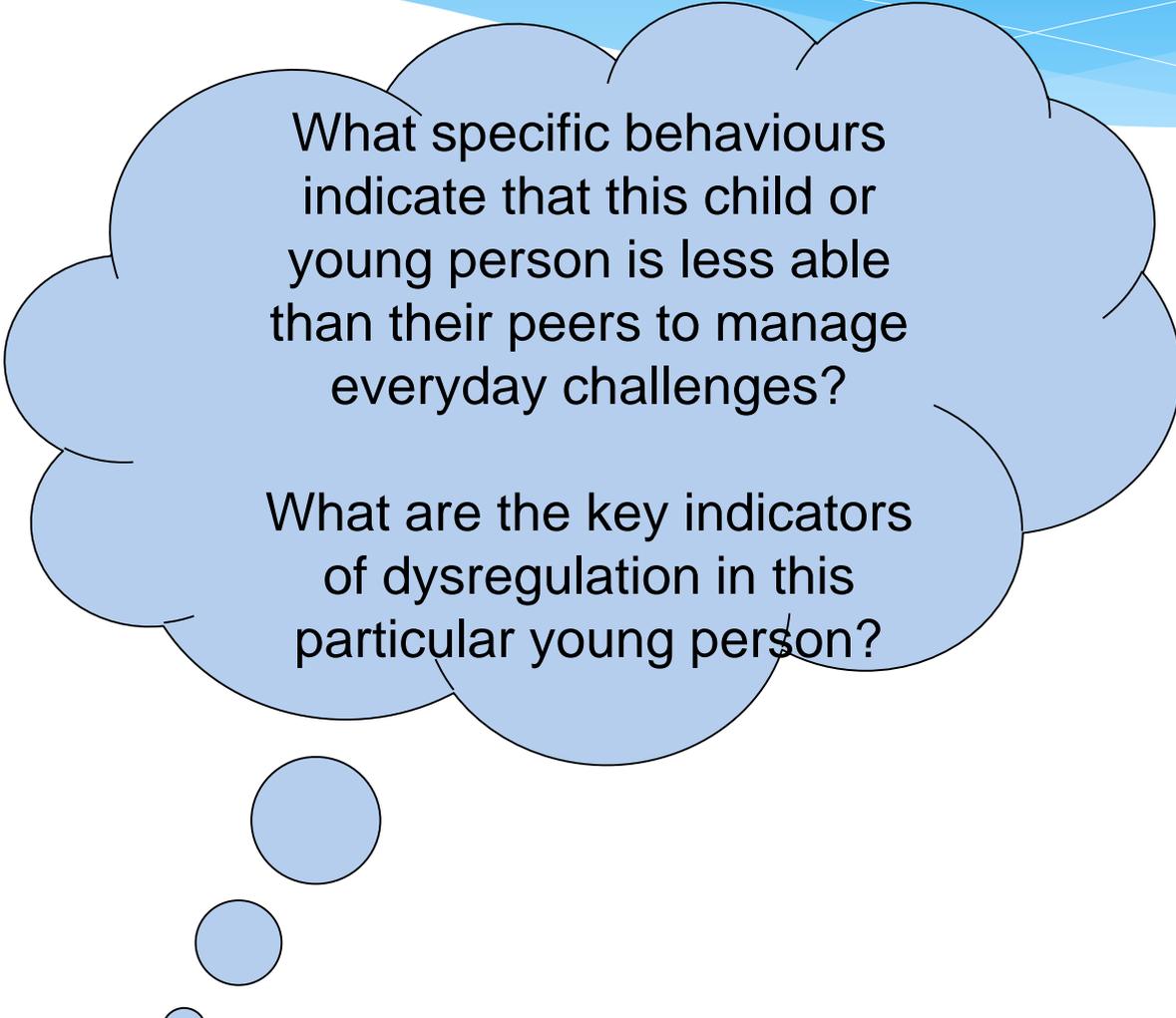
- * Act overly silly or out of control
- * Have tantrums or meltdowns
- * Struggle with transitions
- * Have difficult waiting turns
- * Difficult to be close to others
- * Grab, throw or touch things impulsively
- * Have difficulty waiting in line or walking slowly
- * Talk too loudly, stand too close, touch others
- * Withdrawn, teary or preoccupied.
- * Iceberg – emotions under the surface – fear, hurt, pain, sad, excited, angry

ANXIETY ICEBERG REVISED



What does dysregulation look like in your child?

Think about the child or young person you are holding in mind



What specific behaviours indicate that this child or young person is less able than their peers to manage everyday challenges?

What are the key indicators of dysregulation in this particular young person?

Triggers/Antecedents

- * The event that triggers the emotion
- * You can be triggered by any one of your five senses
- * Could be related to a historical event -Trauma
- * Learning and brain development



Dominos effect

- * **Many tiny steps** can lead up to a meltdown.
- * **What about 0-100%** (under the surface thoughts and emotions, trauma)
- * **Lack of sleep**, hunger, not feeling well, adults on edge, punishment, school stress.
- * **Emotions** – shame, guilt, anxiety, anger, frustration, powerlessness, hurt, grief
- * **Negative thoughts** – I am not safe, I am a bad kid, I am not good enough, I can't do anything right, I don't belong.
- * **Children will do whatever they can to protect themselves**, comfort themselves and self regulate.
- * **Learnt from their environment.** – survival response. What is the underlying need. Example- lying, defiance, etc.

So what is emotion coaching?

- Developed in the US by psychologist John Gottman (1997)
- Based on research into what parents of happy, resilient and well-adjusted children and young people actually do
- Recognises the scientific evidence that **what adults do shapes and strengthens brain development in children**

Emotion coaching enables children and young people to manage their own behaviour through helping them to:

Understand the different emotions they experience

Understand why they occur

Learn how to handle them

Emotion Coaching

1

- **Notice, name and empathize the feelings of the child**

2

- **Set limits on the behaviour**

3

- **Help the child to solve the problem**

Emotion Coaching – A style of response

High Guidance

Disapproving style

- Notice the behaviour not the emotion
- Critical or intolerant
- Believe that emotions are being used to manipulate
- Believe a child needs to 'toughen up'

Coaching style

- Name and validate the emotion
- Support the child to stay safe
- Identify ways that the child can manage the emotion differently in the future

Dismissing style

- See emotions as something that need to be 'gotten over'
- Reduce the emotional experience 'you'll be fine'
- Ignore the emotions as worried that paying attention will make it worse
- Use logic or distraction

Laissez-Faire style

- Two flipped lids
- Adult feels helpless or afraid
- Lots of empathy from the adult but no guidance
- Behaviour likely to escalate further

Low
Empathy

Low Guidance

High
Empathy



Why do we practice a Disapproving Style?

- * We believe emotions show weakness and a lack of control.
- * We lack empathy or are incapable of sympathising with others.
- * Emotions are used to manipulate.
- * Motivated by the need to control and have power over the child.
- * We notice the behaviour rather than the emotion driving the behaviour.
- * <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HznVuCVQd10>

Disapproving and dismissing may seem to work, but the actual message is ...

Can lead to suppression of natural emotions, less (or no) self-regulation, reliance on distraction to get rid of emotion



The child does not learn to trust their own feelings, which affects their capacity to make any decisions

“What you are feeling is not right, your assessment of the situation is wrong, you must not feel this way”



Deprives the child of opportunities to self-regulate or problem-solve



Generates additional strong feelings – resentment, guilt, shame, anger



Lacking opportunities to deal with emotions, the child grows up unprepared for life's challenges

Step 0 – Getting ready

Co-regulation: Connecting, Mirroring & Matching



The adult should set the emotional tone: NOT the adult reflecting back the angry or distressed face of the child, but the child being able to reflect the calm and empathic face of the adult.

Steps to Success

1. **Recognise, emphasize and validate.**

Attune to the child. The adult sets the emotional tone. Not the adult reflecting back the angry and distressed child but the child being able to reflect the calm and empathetic face of the adult.

<https://connectedfamilies.org/5-phrases-communicate-empathy-kids/>

Step 1

1

- Notice, name and empathize the feelings of the child

Notice

What physical or verbal signs are there to indicate distress?

'I can see that... I notice that... I can hear that'



Name

Name the emotion and help the child to label it.

'It looks like you are feeling angry...' 'I can see you are sad'



Empathize

Be sympathetic and let them know you understand how they may feel.

'I understand that your angry. That's ok, it sounds very upsetting'

Step 2

2

- **Set limits on the behaviour**

- Maintain a calm and empathetic tone
- Be the change you want to see - help the child mirror your state of calm and relax
- Make it clear that some behaviours cannot be accepted
- State the boundary limits of acceptable behaviour (We can go to the corner but we cant...)
- Reinforce that it is the behaviour and not the child that is unacceptable

'We cant damage our things, you can go to the book corner but damage is not ok'

'You must remember that its always ok to talk to me but you cant leave the room'

'Every one in school has the right to be safe. You behaviour has not been safe and that is not ok'

Step 3

- **Help the child to solve the problem**

3

Explore

support the child to strengthen their awareness of their personal triggers and body cues as well as developing emotional vocabulary.

How were you feeling?

I wonder if you were feeling Because.....?

How did you know you were feeling.....?

What did your face, hart, stomach, hands do when you felt.....?



Scaffold

Work with the child to establish alternative responses to the given feeling.

What could you do when you feel like that again ?

Who could you tell when you feel like that next time ?

How could we help when you feel that again ?

Where could you go when you feel like that again ?



Empower

Encourage the Child and remain emphatic in order to remove feelings of shame from the encounter

Remind the pupil of times they have done this before.

Set clear targets about what to do next time.

Provide praise and motivation as the child achieves to wards these targets.

How can you help yourself?

The BLUE zone



How might you feel?

sad
tired
bored
moving slowly

What might help you?

Talk to someone
Stretch
Take a brain break
Stand
Take a walk
Close my eyes

The GREEN zone



How might you feel?

happy
okay
focussed
ready to learn

What might help you?

The goal of this exercise is to get to the GREEN zone. What can you do to be happy, calm and ready to learn?

The YELLOW zone



How might you feel?

nervous
confused
silly
not ready to learn

What might help you?

Talk to someone
Count to 20
Take deep breaths
Squeeze something
Draw a picture
Take a brain break

The RED zone



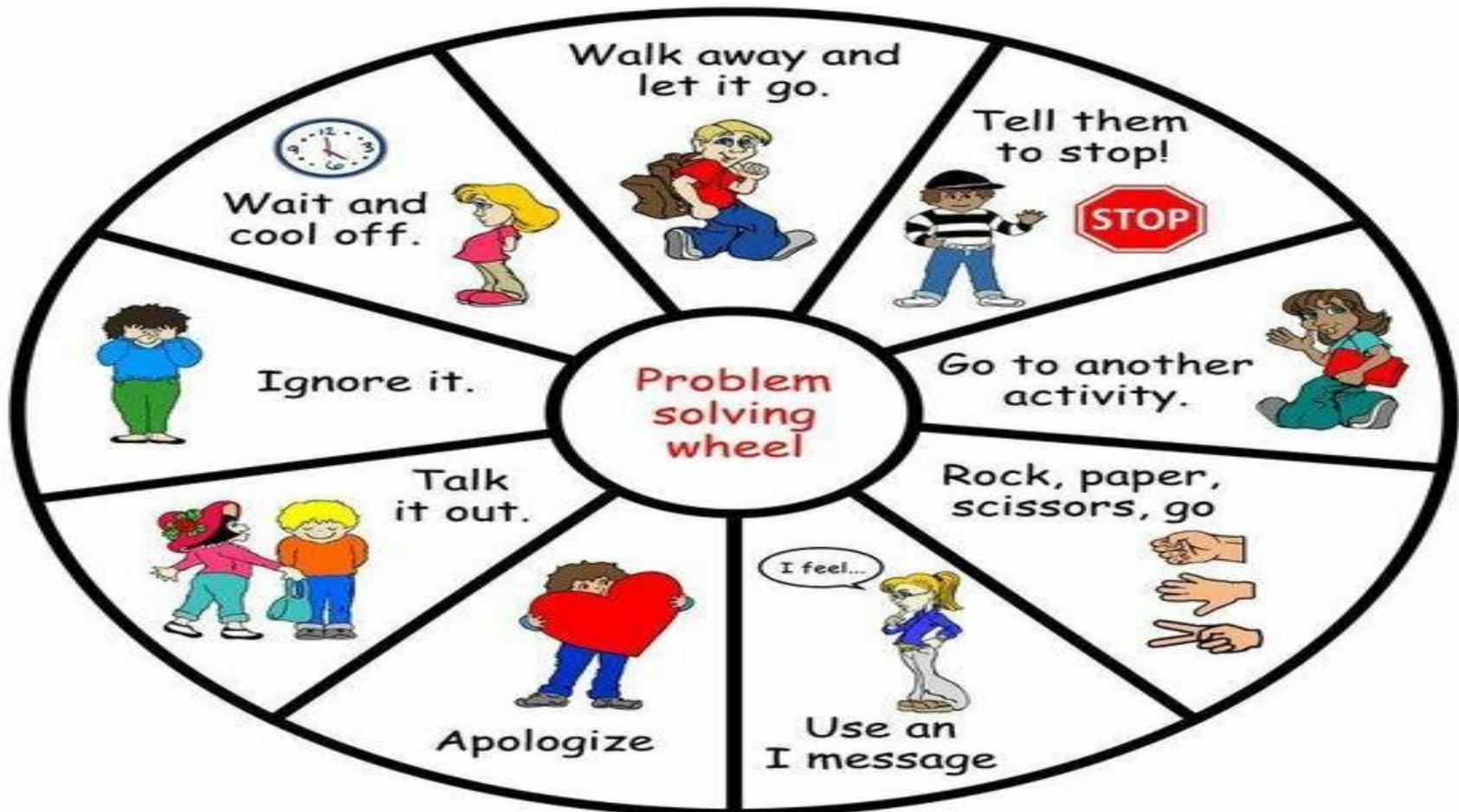
How might you feel?

angry
frustrated
scared
out of control

What might help you?

Stop what I'm doing
Make sensible choices
Take deep breaths
Ask for a break
Find a safe space
Ask for help

What can I do?



Recap - How to respond when children are emotional

- * **Give space if safe or help them name the emotion** – *I wonder if you are feeling.... If I were you, I might feel.... It is understandable to feel.... (Also, notice how you feel)*



- * **Acknowledge how difficult it can be** – *‘Sometimes it feels hard to wait’. ‘You sound really upset’.*



- * **Sensory support** (stress ball) or **calming technique** (deep breathing)



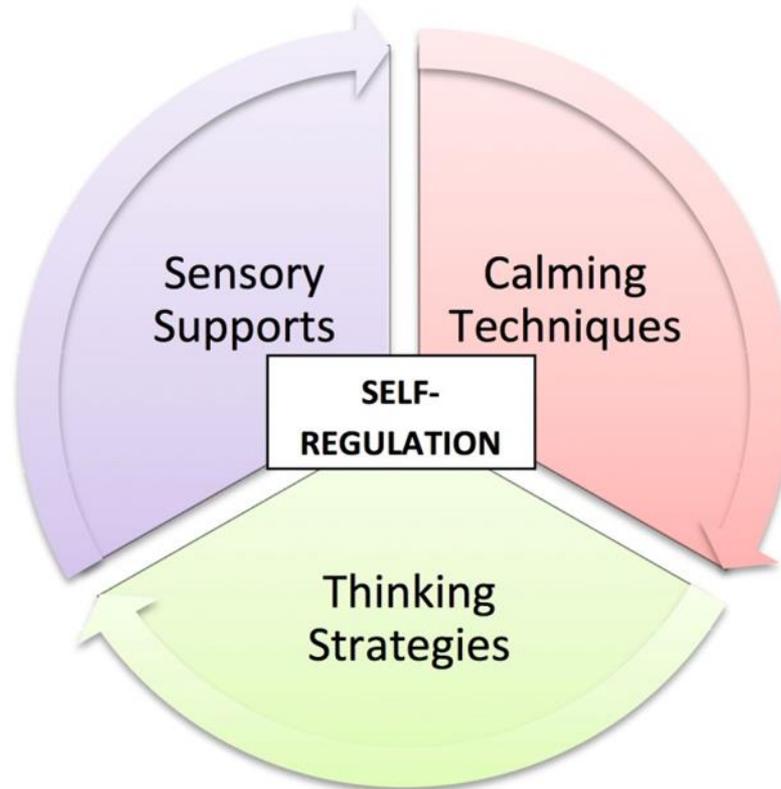
- * **Reflect** with them and **plan** for next time



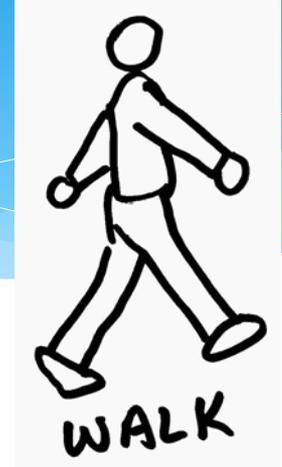
Palm Strategy

- * **P – Pause and panic quietly**
Give yourself time to think, try not to react to behaviours in a ‘neurotypical way’
- * **A – Attune and analyse.**
How is the child feeling? Why is s/he doing that?
- * **L – Label**
Validate and name the behaviour you are observing. I see that you are angry and upset....
- * **M – Model**
Set limits on the behaviour and model an acceptable response.... ‘We need to keep everyone safe, I am going to step away until you are calm,,’

Emotional Regulation Strategies – becoming a co-regulator



Sensory Support



Calming Techniques

CALM DOWN YOGA FOR KIDS

I am strong. Use your strength to catch fricky waves.  

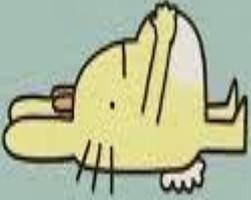
I am kind. Stretch high and spread kindness all around.  

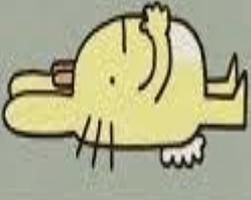
I am brave. Be brave and fearless as you fly down the ski run.  

I am friendly. Stretch like a dog wagging its tail.  

I am wise. Be a wise owl perched on a tree branch.  

Childhood 101 & Kids Yoga Stories

INHALE 

EXHALE 

INHALE 

www.daytoosh.com

Stay Grounded Using Your 5 Senses

Relax Your Body, Take a Few Deep Breaths and Focus on the Following...

- 5** Things You Can See 
- 4** Things You Can Feel 
- 3** Things You Can Hear 
- 2** Things You Can Smell 
- 1** Thing You Can Taste 

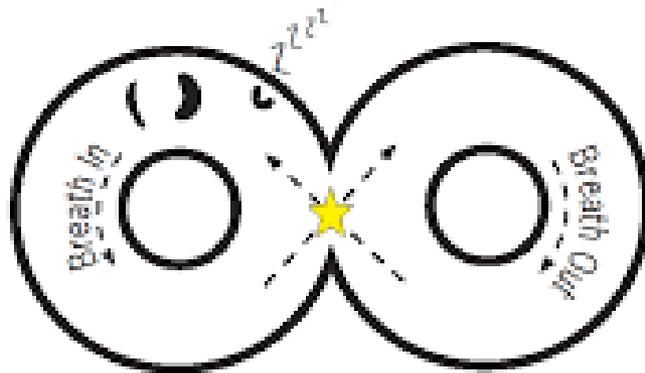
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Pizza breathing, magic moustache, quiet time, self hug

Breathing Exercises

The **POWER** of Regulation® Reproducible 7

Lazy 8 Breathing

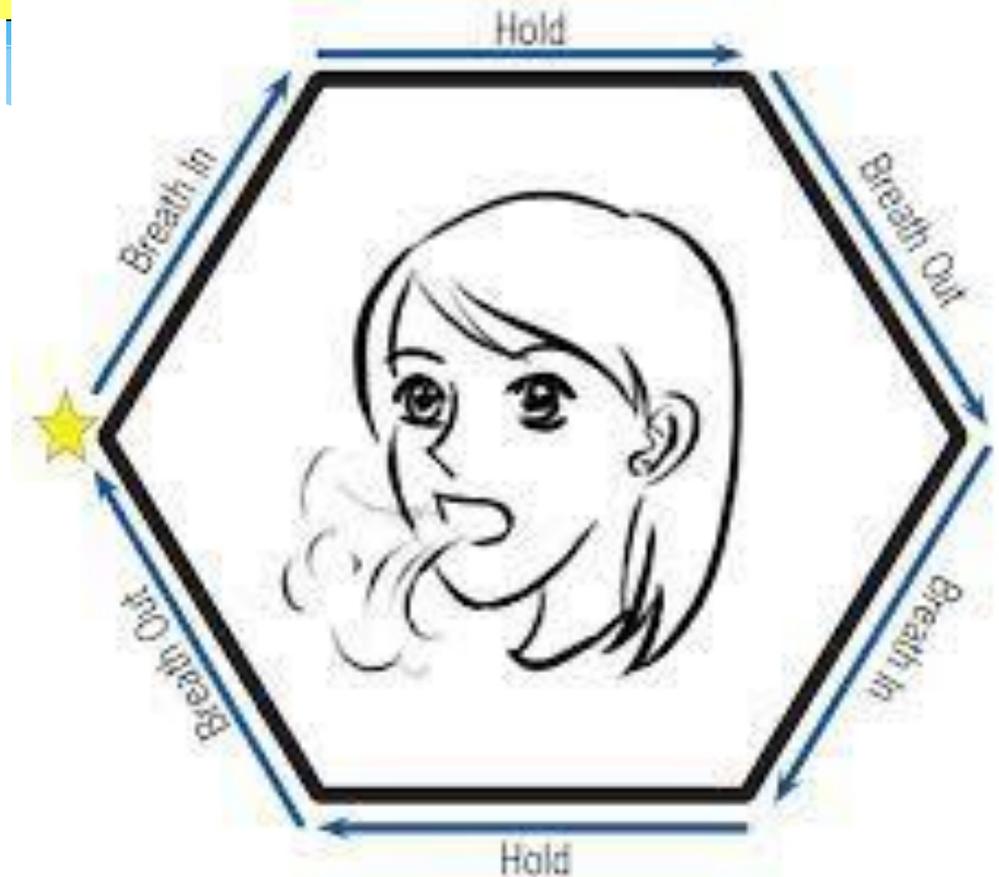


Trace the Lazy 8 with your finger starting at the star and taking a deep breath in.

As you cross over to the other side of the Lazy 8, slowly let your breath out.

Continue breathing around the Lazy 8 until you have a calm body and mind.

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Thinking Strategies -

The best time to help children learn to calm their brain is when they are already calm.

- * **Before** - Prepare and set expectations – *“This afternoon you will have to wait for Ms to..... before.....”* OR *“Remember this activity is about sharing so.....”* Or *“If you feel sad, annoyed, angry, etc. What shall we do?”*
 - Super flex vs. Rock Brain or Inner Critic vs. Inner Coach
- * **During** – Help them to problem solve - *What would your inner coach say? What would your friend say? Remember we need to do this before we can do that. How big is the problem?*
- * **After** – Reflect with them what went well – *It was really nice to see you..... What could we do next time?*

Looking after yourself

- * **Parenting is hard!**
- * **Safety lecture travel by air – put your mask on first**
- * **What are your triggers?** Can lead to emotion-driven reactions
- * **Judgemental thoughts** – I am a bad parent
- * **Embarrassed thoughts-** Others think I am a failure
- * **Hopeless thoughts** – Here we go again – this will never get better
- * **Misguided thoughts** – This child needs to learn her lesson, I can't let her get away with that, he/she is just spoilt, he/she is disrespecting me, he/she hates me or has it in for me.
- * **Notice your emotions** and the sensations in your body?
- * What can you do to **look after yourself?**



Reflections



Thank you for coming!