

## Zones of Regulation

### Tips for practicing the Zones of Regulation

- Know yourself and how you react in difficult situations before dealing with your child's behaviours.
- Know your child's sensory threshold. We all process sensory information differently and it impacts our reactivity to situations.
- Know your child's triggers.
- Be consistent in managing your child's behaviour and use the same language you use at home.
- Empathise with your child and validate what they are feeling.
- Have clear boundaries/routines and always follow through.
- Do not deal with an angry, upset child when you are not yet calm yourself.
- Discuss strategies for the next time when you are in a similar situation.
- Praise your child for using strategies. Encourage your child to take a sensory break to help regulate their bodies.
- Create a 'calm' box full of things which help to keep your child calm and alert.

### UNDERSTANDING ZONE TOOLS:



**Blue Zone tools:** help wake up our bodies, feel better and regain focus.

**Green Zone tools:** help us stay calm, focused and feeling good. These are often proactive strategies.

**Yellow Zone tools:** help us regain control and calm ourselves.

**Red Zone tools:** help us stay safe and start to calm down.

These 'tools' aren't just for school: they can be used at home too so you can help your child to regulate (manage) their emotions.

What would go in **your** Zones of Regulation toolkit? Think about:

- What helps you to calm down when you are stressed?
- What helps you to focus when you are tired?
- What do you do to calm down when you are angry?

Different tools work for different people. Can you help your child choose what works for them when they need to move from one zone to another?

## SENSORY TOOLS



Could you have a sensory box at home?

Sensory tools include anything which you can see, touch/feel, smell, hear or taste. They also are things which encourage you to move.

- Having a bear hug
- Using a weighted toy or blanket
- Ear defenders / headphones
- Blowing bubbles
- Watching changing coloured lights
- Soft, dimmed lighting
- Fidget and squeeze toys
- Smelling relaxing scents like Lavender
- Wall push-ups
- Sucking a smoothie or milkshake through a straw
- Roll on a balance ball
- Listen to gentle music
- Jumping on a trampoline
- Having a nice warm bath
- Listening to bird / nature sounds
- Going for a walk or run

## CALMING ACTIVITIES

Puzzles

Listen to Music

Draw/Paint

Origami

Play-Doh/clay

Read

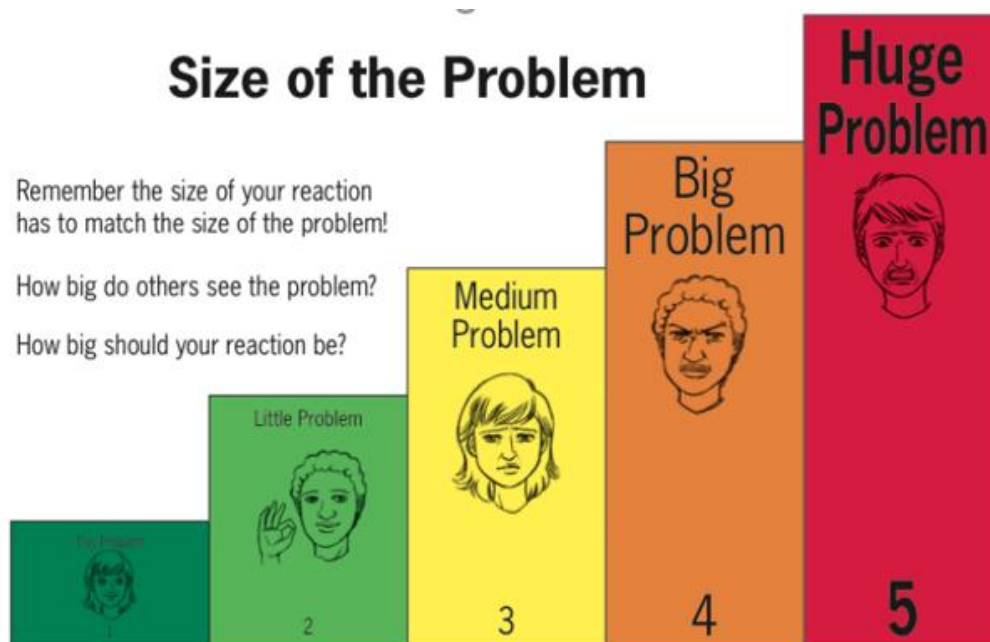
Stack Rocks



These include any activities which distract you or need you to focus to take your mind off worries and negative thoughts.

## Thinking Techniques

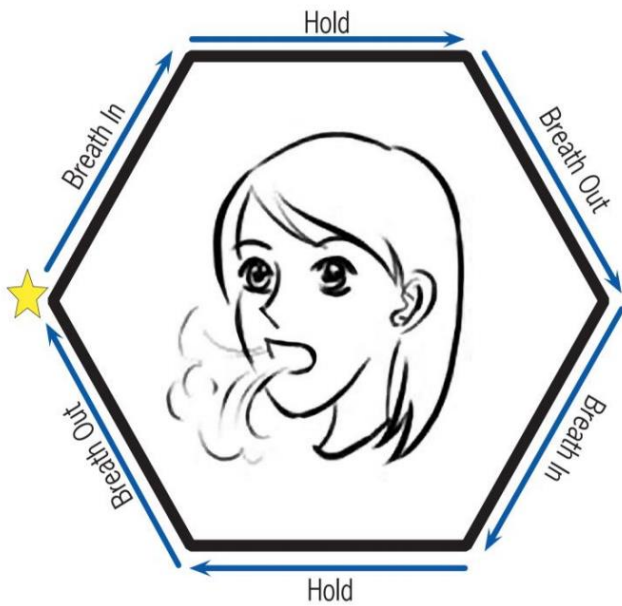
These are strategies to challenge negative thoughts and help a child to deal with problems.



Inner Coach versus Inner Critic	
Instead of....	Try thinking....
I'm not good at this!	What am I missing?
I give up!	I'll use some of the other strategies I've learned.
This is too hard!	This might take some time and effort.
I can't make this any better!	I can always improve; I will keep trying.
I can't do maths!	I'm going to train my brain in maths.
I made a mistake!	Mistakes help me to improve.
I'll never be as smart as her / him!	I'm going to work out what they do and try it.
It's good enough!	Is this really my best work?

## Breathing Techniques

### The Six Sides of **Breathing**



Starting at the star, trace with your finger the sides of the hexagon as you take a deep breath in, feeling your shoulders rise as the air fills you. Trace over the next side as you hold your breath for a moment. Slowly breathe out as you trace the third side of the hexagon. Continue tracing around the bottom three sides of the hexagon as you complete another deep breath. Continue the Six Sides of Breathing cycle until you feel calm and relaxed.

## Grounding Techniques

Grounding techniques can help someone who is extremely anxious or scared, has lost control and is struggling to calm down.

### 5-4-3-2-1 Senses

Identify:

- 5 things you see
- 4 things you hear
- 3 things you smell
- 2 things you can touch
- 1 thing you taste

### 4-3-2-1 Sights

If noticing each sense is tough right now, try an exercise just with sights. Create categories and have them name what they see. Here's an example:

- 5 colours I see
- 4 shapes I see
- 3 soft things I see
- 2 people I see
- 1 book I see



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