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# THE **ZONES** OF REGULATION®

*Learning together for a better tomorrow*



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# AIMS:



- ✓ To give an overview of regulation
- ✓ To understand how 'The Zones of Regulation' works
- ✓ To share some self-regulation tools to support children:
  - Sensory supports
  - Calming techniques
  - Thinking strategies



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# WHAT DO WE MEAN BY REGULATION?

**Most simply defined, regulation is:**

**To adjust, manage, or control something so it works well.  
When applied to humans, regulation can go by many names, such as “self-control,” “self-management,” “emotional control,” “anger management,” or “impulse control.”**



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# WHY DOES REGULATION MATTER?

*'Life is 10% what happens to us and 90% how we react to it.'*  
*(Charles Swindoll)*

Regulation is key to having fun, completing tasks, working effectively on a team, maintaining healthy and meaningful relationships, achieving academically and in your career, navigating the community, and having an overall sense of well-being.



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# WHAT DO WE MEAN BY DYSREGULATION?

**Dysregulation is:**

**The opposite of regulation and describes the imbalance in our internal state, such as when we physiologically feel “off” or are experiencing sensory overload in a busy environment.**



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# SELF-REGULATION

**Self-regulation is:**

**Independently managing feelings and states to achieve goals (whether personal, social or academic/professional) to meet the demands of our situation and support a sense of well-being.**





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# SELF-REGULATION

**Self-regulation encompasses:**

- **Self-control**
- **Resilience**
- **Anger management**
- **Impulse control**
- **Sensory regulation**





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# A PERSON WHO CAN SELF REGULATE IS ABLE TO:



- ✓ Remain calm and organised in a stressful situation. *(Executive Functions)*
- ✓ Cheer themselves up after a disappointment. *(Emotional Regulation)*
- ✓ Knows when they are experiencing sensory overload and can make adjustments. *(Sensory Processing)*
- ✓ Understands how to follow social rules e.g. when it is appropriate to cheer and shout or be quiet. *(Social Cognition)*





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# EXAMPLE OF SELF-REGULATION

**Sam independently works through his feelings of frustration and finds a strategy (commonly referred to as “regulation tool”) that allows him to complete the equation. He uses positive self-talk (such as saying to himself “I can do this,” or “I’m going to take some deep breaths and try again”) to guide him through the feelings and become able to refocus.**



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# CO-REGULATION

## Co-regulation is:

**The process of connecting or being attuned, with a social partner for support in attaining goals, meeting demands, and finding a sense of well-being. Co-regulation is something we can both provide as well as receive.**



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# EXAMPLE OF CO-REGULATION

**Daniella raises her hand and, with a heavy sigh, shares her frustration with her teacher, “I don’t get this.” The teacher, attuned to Daniella’s feelings, supports her well-being by offering encouragement and providing further teaching to help clear up any confusion.**



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# EXPECT DYSREGULATION

**As we build regulation competencies within ourselves and our learners, it's important to keep in mind that no one regulates perfectly. All of us, from adults with years of experience regulating to pre-schoolers who are just learning to put language to feelings, will inevitably have times when we struggle to regulate.**

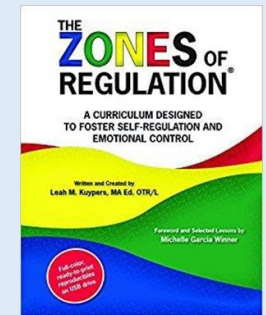


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# WHY TEACH THE ZONES OF REGULATION®?

Teaches pupils:

- ✓ Vocabulary of emotional terms
- ✓ How to recognise their own emotions
- ✓ How to detect the emotions of others (read others' facial expressions)
- ✓ What may trigger certain emotions
- ✓ How others may interpret their behaviour
- ✓ Problem solving skills



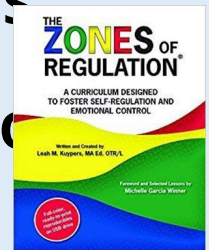




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# WHY TEACH THE ZONES OF REGULATION®?

- ✓ Provides a common language to discuss emotions – a language that is non-judgemental.
- ✓ The Zones of Regulation is simple for children to understand but is helpful for all!
- ✓ The Zones teach *healthy* coping and regulation strategies
- ✓ Clear progression across the curriculum (overview and how to learn).





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# WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENT ZONES?







- **Blue Zone:** sad, tired, sick or bored (low state of alertness – brain and/or body is moving slowly or sluggishly.)
- **Green Zone:** happy, focused, calm/ content and ready to learn (regulated state of alertness – the zone where optimal learning occurs.)
- **Yellow Zone:** stress, frustration, worry/ anxiety, excitement, silliness, the wiggles, nervousness, feeling scared or overwhelmed (heightened state of alertness i.e. more intense emotions/states but able to maintain some control.)
- **Red Zone:** elated, terrified, anger, rage, devastation, or terror (extremely heightened states of alertness and intense emotions/ feeling out of control.)



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# The ZONES of Regulation®

			
<b>BLUE ZONE</b>  Sad Sick Tired Bored Moving Slowly	<b>GREEN ZONE</b>  Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	<b>YELLOW ZONE</b>  Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	<b>RED ZONE</b>  Mad/Angry Terrified Yelling/Hitting Elated Out of Control

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# OTHER ZONES VISUALS – INSIDE OUT CHARACTERS

Green Zone	
Proud	
Positive	
Excited	
Focused	
Happy	
What can I do?	
 Help others	 Happy thoughts
	 Share ideas

Blue Zone	
Sad	
Tired	
Sick	
Hurt	
Tearful	
What can I do?	
	Take a break
	Ask of help
	 Move

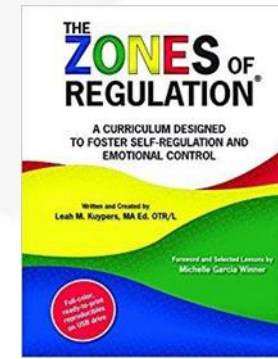
Yellow Zone	
Worried	
Wiggly	
Nervous	
Overwhelmed	
Confused	
What can I do?	
 Deep breaths	 Count to 10
 Talk to someone	

Red Zone	
Angry	
Frustrated	
Out of control	
Panicked	
Terrified	
What can I do?	
 Take a break	 Safe Space
	 Squeeze



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# KEY POINTS:



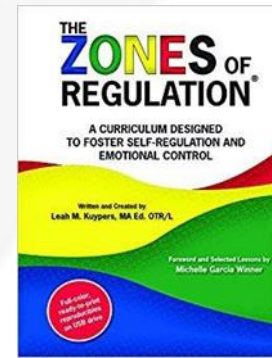
- ✓ There is no 'bad' Zone.
- ✓ Everyone experiences all of the Zones at different times and in different circumstances.
- ✓ We can't change the way children feel BUT we can help them manage their feelings/states and behaviours. "It's OK to be angry but it is not OK to hit..."
- ✓ You can be in more than one Zone at a time (e.g. sad AND angry).





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# KEY POINTS:



If a child is confidently using words to describe their emotions, they don't need to revert to Zones language **HOWEVER** it is useful for them to know the strategy groups that will help them.

E.g. sick or tired = blue zone strategies

## If your child is in the Red Zone...

- ✓ Limit verbals – this is not a teachable moment.
- ✓ Discuss use of tools when child is regulated.
- ✓ Plan for if/when child is in Red Zone. “Wonder if this strategy would help...?”



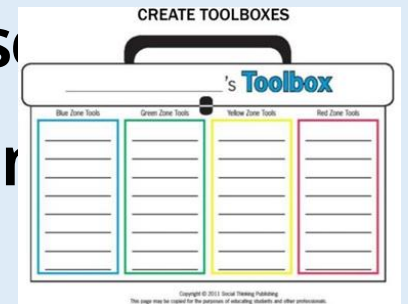


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# UNDERSTANDING **ZONE** TOOLS

- **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.

Pick 2/3 for each Zone (depends on child).





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# TOOLS FOR SELF-REGULATION

## ZONES OF REGULATION TOOLBOX

*I'm in the...*

BLUE ZONE	GREEN ZONE	YELLOW ZONE	RED ZONE
 bored	 sad	 wiggly	 anxious
 calm	 angry	 upset	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive thinking (inner coach – "You can do this!")</li><li>• Drink water</li><li>• Stretches</li><li>• Star jumps</li><li>• Run</li><li>• Eat something</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• I feel:</li><li>• Happy</li><li>• Focused</li><li>• Calm</li><li>• Ready to learn</li></ul> calm	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Positive thinking (inner coach – you can do this)</li><li>• Talk to an adult</li><li>• Think about the size of the problem – is it really that big?</li><li>• Distract yourself – hand books out, deliver a message</li><li>• Deep belly breaths</li><li>• Sit and count to 10/other breathing activities</li><li>• Standing push up against a wall</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Deep belly breaths</li><li>• Find a space to calm down</li><li>• Talk to a trusted adult</li><li>• Lazy 8 breathing – draw figure of 8 on palm: breath in on the circle, out as you cross over the midline).</li><li>• Squeeze fists/sensory toy</li></ul>

## ZONES OF REGULATION TOOLBOX

*I'm in the...*

BLUE ZONE	GREEN ZONE	YELLOW ZONE	RED ZONE
 bored	 sad	 wiggly	 anxious
 calm	 angry	 upset	
 Talk to Adult	 Deep belly breaths	 Take deep breath	 Lazy 8 Breathing
 Star jumps	 Squeeze fists	 Stand on toes	 Deep Breathing Rainbow
 Run	 Sit and count	 Standing push up	 Hand books out





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## My Zones of Regulation - Sample

	BLUE ZONE	GREEN ZONE	YELLOW ZONE	RED ZONE
<b>How I look or act</b>	I sigh or pout I yawn, stretch, rub eyes I have a sad face, I cry I move slowly and rest	I sit up straight I look around me I make eye contact I smile	I wiggle and squirm I frown and glare I act silly or wild My muscles get tight and my heart beats faster	I cry I yell or scream I stomp or bang on things I lose control
<b>What do I need to do?</b>	Get my energy up. Get more engaged.	I'm good. I'm ready to learn and connect.	Use some strategies to settle back down into the green zone.	Use some strategies to calm down!
<b>What could I do that would help me?</b>	Stretch Walk around Get a drink of water Ask for a hug Tell someone how I feel Think happy thoughts	I'm doing well I can play or learn I could help a friend I could help a grown-up I can practice a calming strategy so I'm better at using it when I need it	Count to 20 Take deep breaths Think about a safe place Squeeze/press something Jump or dance or run Tense & release muscles Write, draw, talk about it	Stop what I'm doing Walk away Be safe Ask for a break Get help

Level	What happened?	What can I do?
5 – Big problem	This is an emergency I am in danger	Stop and think Move away from danger Get help from an adult
4 – Medium problem	I am hurt or feel sick I was unkind/hurt someone	Ask an adult to help you Say sorry and don't do it again
3 – Small problem	I can't understand my work  I have made a mistake in my work  I don't have anyone to play with  I miss my family	Think carefully about the instructions you have been given, ask a friend or ask an adult for help  Everybody makes mistakes, this is the way we learn  Go and ask someone to play, find a playground buddy or ask an adult to help you  It is okay to miss them, but you will see them later
2 - Tiny problem	I am not first, must wait, take turns or share something  I am not where I would like to be in the line  I need a bit of equipment – a pencil, I can't find something  I need the toilet but don't want to ask	Wait patiently, taking turns and sharing is important and one of our golden rules  It doesn't matter where I am in the line, we are all going to the same place  Go and get the equipment you need, and ask a friend to help you  It is fine to go to the toilet, just let the teacher know where you are going
1 - No problem	Everything is going well  I am not sitting by my friend  I dropped something	Enjoy yourself  This is okay, it is good to sit by different people – they are still your friend  Pick it up



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# How can you help yourself?

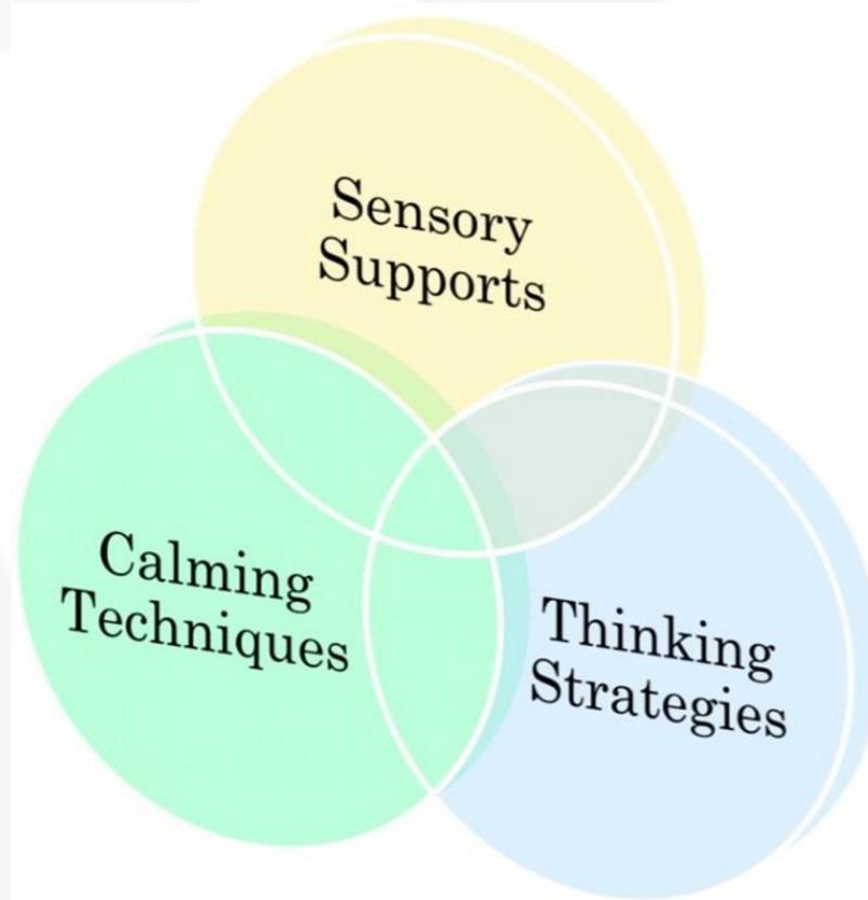
The BLUE zone	The GREEN zone	The YELLOW zone	The RED zone
  	  	  	  
How might you feel?	How might you feel?	How might you feel?	How might you feel?
sad tired bored moving slowly	happy okay focussed ready to learn	nervous confused silly not ready to learn	angry frustrated scared out of control
What might help you?	What might help you?	What might help you?	What might help you?
Talk to someone Stretch Take a brain break Stand Take a walk Close my eyes	The goal of this exercise is to get to the GREEN zone. What can you do to be happy, calm and ready to learn?	Talk to someone Count to 20 Take deep breaths Squeeze something Draw a picture Take a brain break	Stop what I'm doing Make sensible choices Take deep breaths Ask for a break Find a safe space Ask for help





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# TOOLS FOR REGULATION





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# SENSORY STRATEGIES





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# SENSORY STRATEGIES



- Having a bear hug
- Using a wobble cushion
- Using a weighted toy or blanket
- Ear defenders / headphones
- Watching changing coloured lights
- Soft, dimmed lighting
- Fidget and squeeze toys or putty
- Smelling relaxing scents like Lavender
- Eating chewy food/ a strong mint
- Listening to bird/ nature sounds

- Sucking a drink through a straw
- Roll on a balance ball
- Listen to classical music
- Have a dance
- Jumping on a trampoline
- Having a nice warm bath
- Going for a walk or run
- Wall push-ups
- Swinging or rocking
- Blowing bubbles





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# SENSORY TOOLS



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# CALMING STRATEGIES



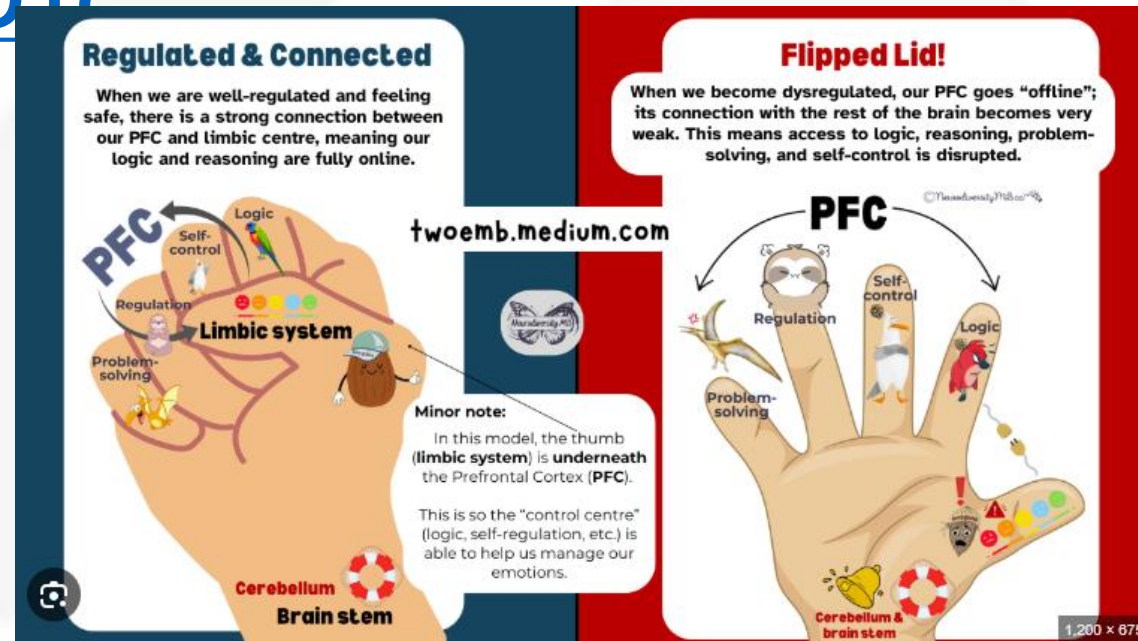




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# DR. DAN SIEGEL'S HAND MODEL OF THE BRAIN

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdaUZ\\_wbD1c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LdaUZ_wbD1c)





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# CALMING ACTIVITIES:

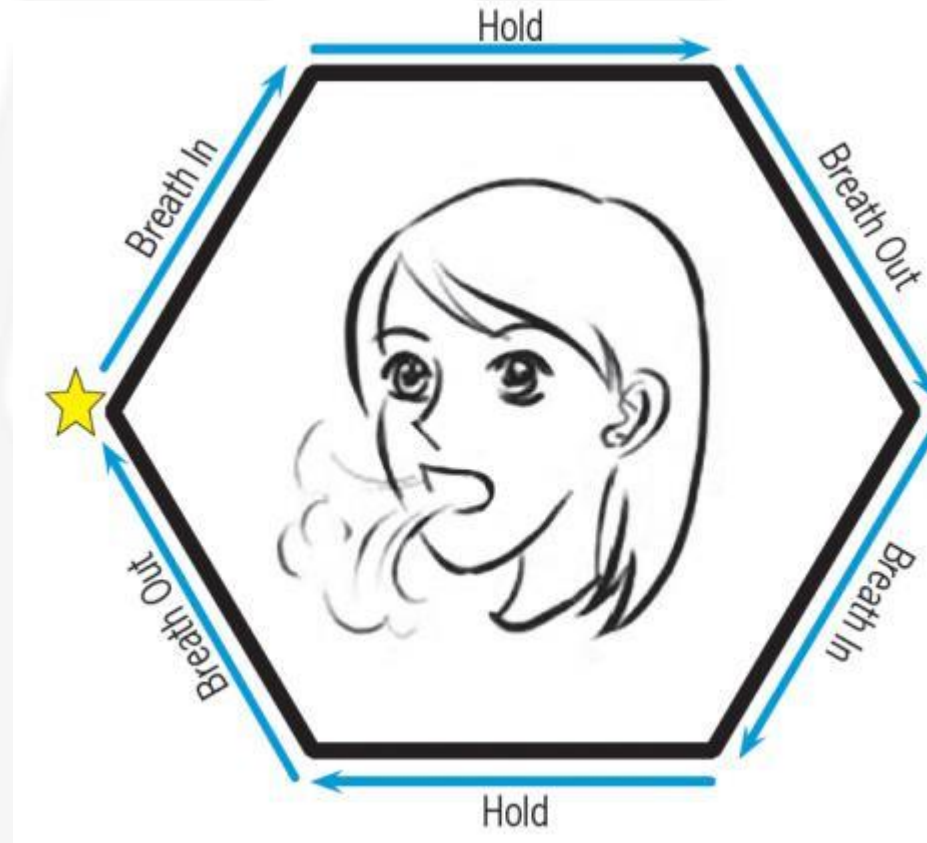
- Puzzles/ jigsaws
- Listen to music
- Draw/ Paint/ Origami
- Play-Doh/ Clay/ kinetic sand
- Read a book
- Stack Rocks





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# BREATHING TECHNIQUES

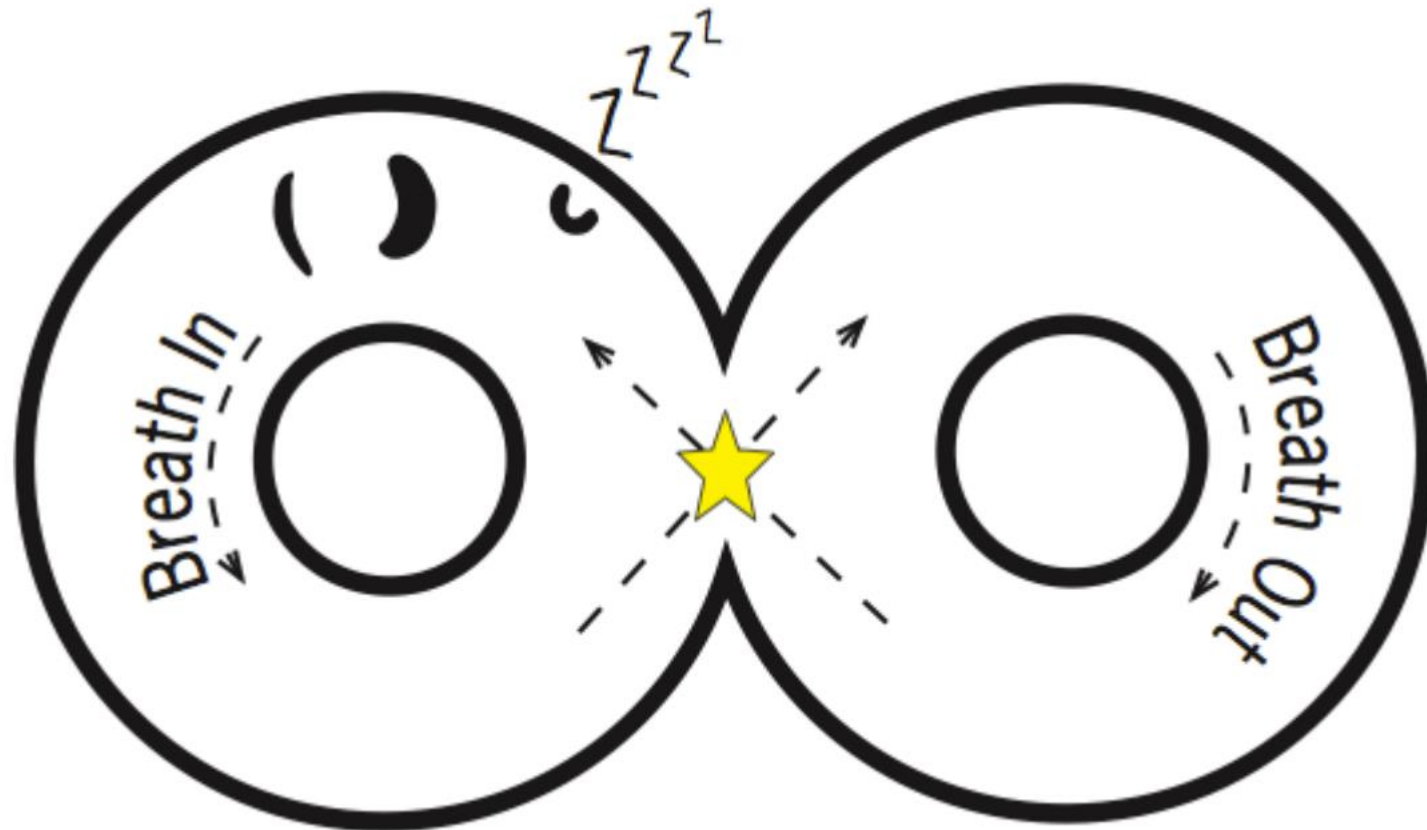






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# BREATHING TECHNIQUES

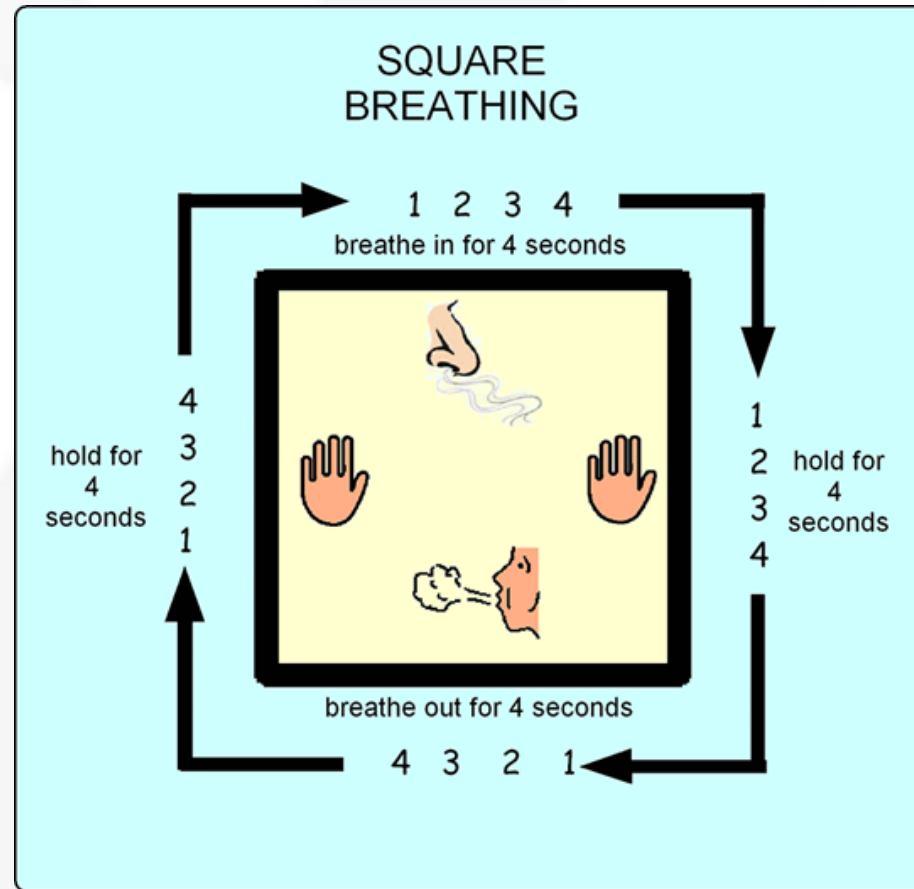






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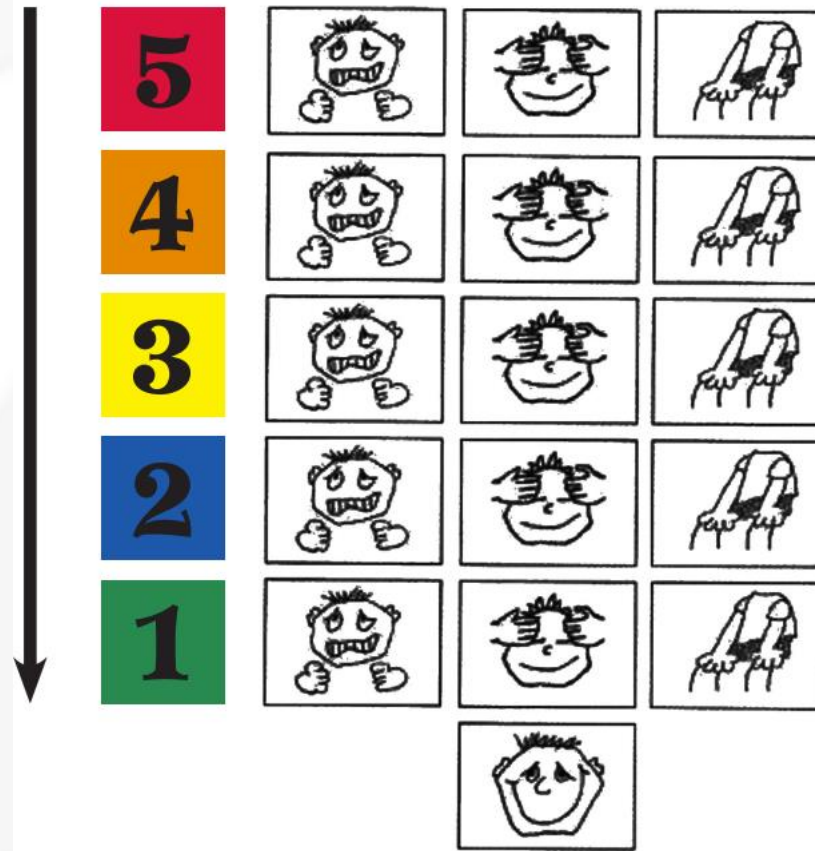
# BREATHING TECHNIQUES





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# CALMING SEQUENCES





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## COUNTING

- Forward and backward
- Count objects
- Count colours
- Count breaths
- Count pulse



Use of Fit bit (relaxation and pulse tracking)





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# GROUNDING TECHNIQUES

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

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

## 5-4-3-2-1 Sights:

- 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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# GROUNDING TECHNIQUES

## ABC around the room

- Ask the child to look around the room and name something they see that starts with A, then B, then C and so forth. See how far they can get through the alphabet and then check-in to see how they're feeling once they reach the end.

## Object focus

- Keep some unique items on hand with different textures and colours. These could be sensory items, colourful rocks, snow globes or something else. Children can hold an item in their hands and tune in all of their focus to the item. Notice the colours. Notice the textures. How does it feel in my hand? How does it feel when I squeeze it? What colours do I see? Just notice everything there is to notice about the item!



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# GROUNDING TECHNIQUES

## 'I am Here' Hand Trace

- For this exercise, you'll need paper and a pencil, marker, or crayon. Children will trace a hand on the paper.
- Children can simply press the hand into the space on the paper and feel the connection between hand and table. Alternatively, they can use the space inside the hand to write things they see or describe the room.



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# GROUNDING TECHNIQUES

## Room Search

- Pick one broad category and search the room. Name everything in the room that is green. How many stars can you find in the room?

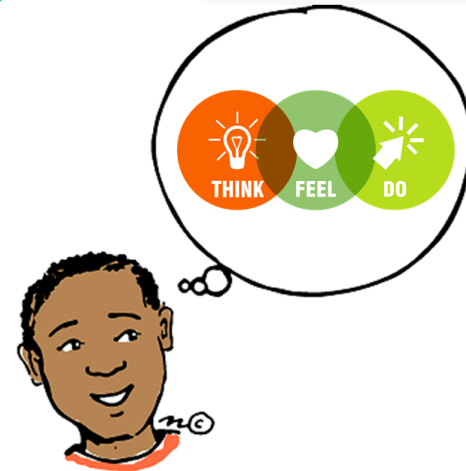
## Re-orientation

- To re-orient to the moment, have the child name facts about the moment. You can give them a card to keep with them to remind them of facts they can state and practice, practice, practice! It might sound like: My name is...I am in...Today is...The season is...The weather is...I am wearing...



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# THINKING STRATEGIES







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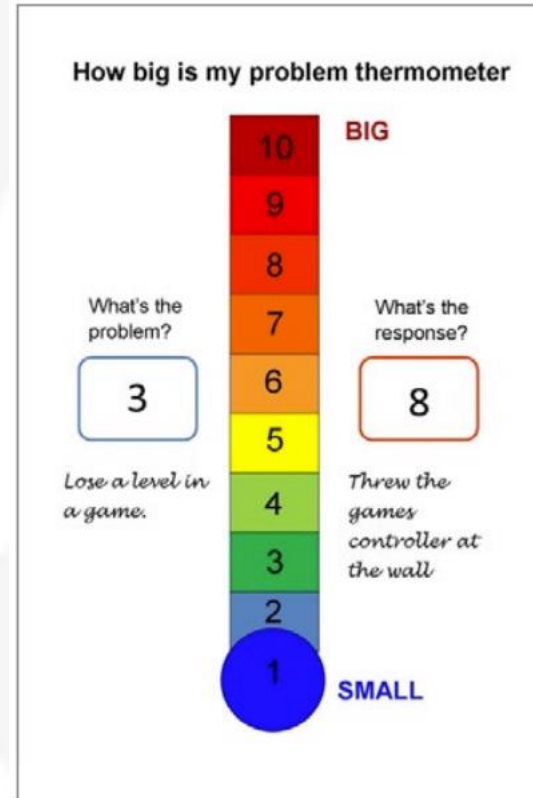
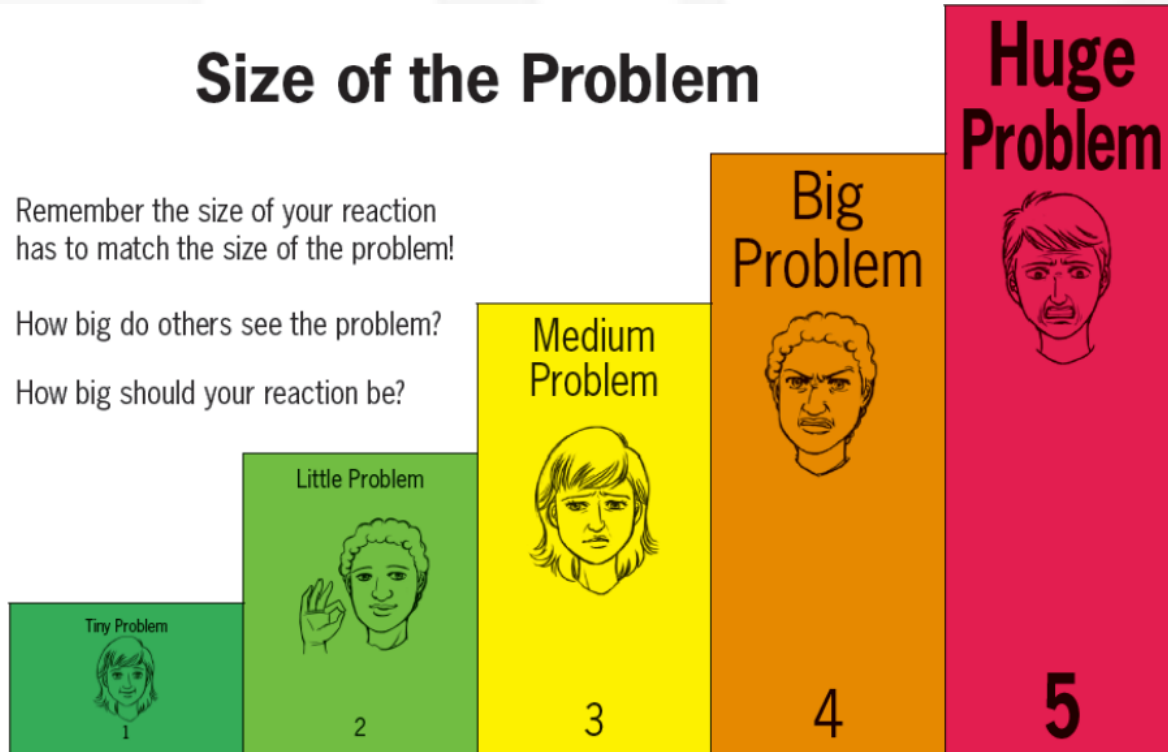
# SIZE OF THE PROBLEM

## Size of the Problem

Remember the size of your reaction has to match the size of the problem!

How big do others see the problem?

How big should your reaction be?



What is the size of the problem?	
5	<b>Huge</b> You need help from someone else right away -You get really hurt -There is an intruder in school -Someone is fighting
4	<b>Big</b> Something you need help with to fix -You are being bullied -Someone steals from you -You drop your lunch tray
3	<b>Medium</b> Something that you may need help with to fix -You lose something -Someone is mean to you -It is too noisy
2	<b>Small</b> Something that you may need help with to fix -You need a tissue -You made a mistake -You don't get assigned the project you wanted to do
1	<b>Tiny</b> Not a big deal. Something you can fix or deal with yourself -You lose in a game -You are not line leader -You drop your paper



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# MY WORRY CUP





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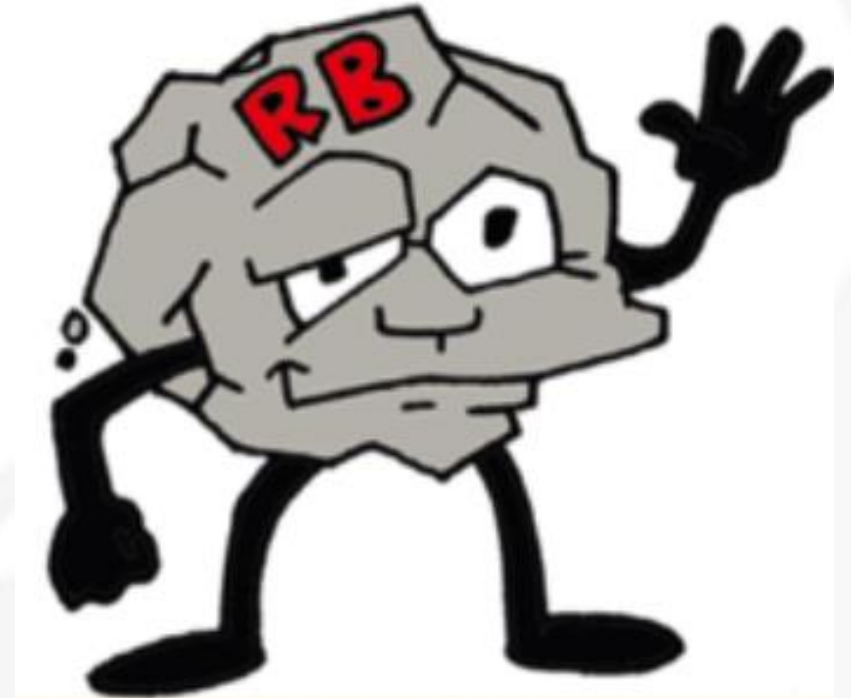
# INNER COACH VERSUS INNER CRITIC

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?



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# SUPERFLEX VERSUS ROCK BRAIN









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# UNDERSTANDING DIFFERENT PERSPECTIVES


The **ZONES** of Regulation® Reproducible | Expected

Thinking and Feeling About **EXPECTED** Behaviors


When a child is in the  Blue, Green, Yellow, Red **ZONE** during  (Name a Situation)

and his or her behavior is EXPECTED, others have thoughts and feelings about the behavior.

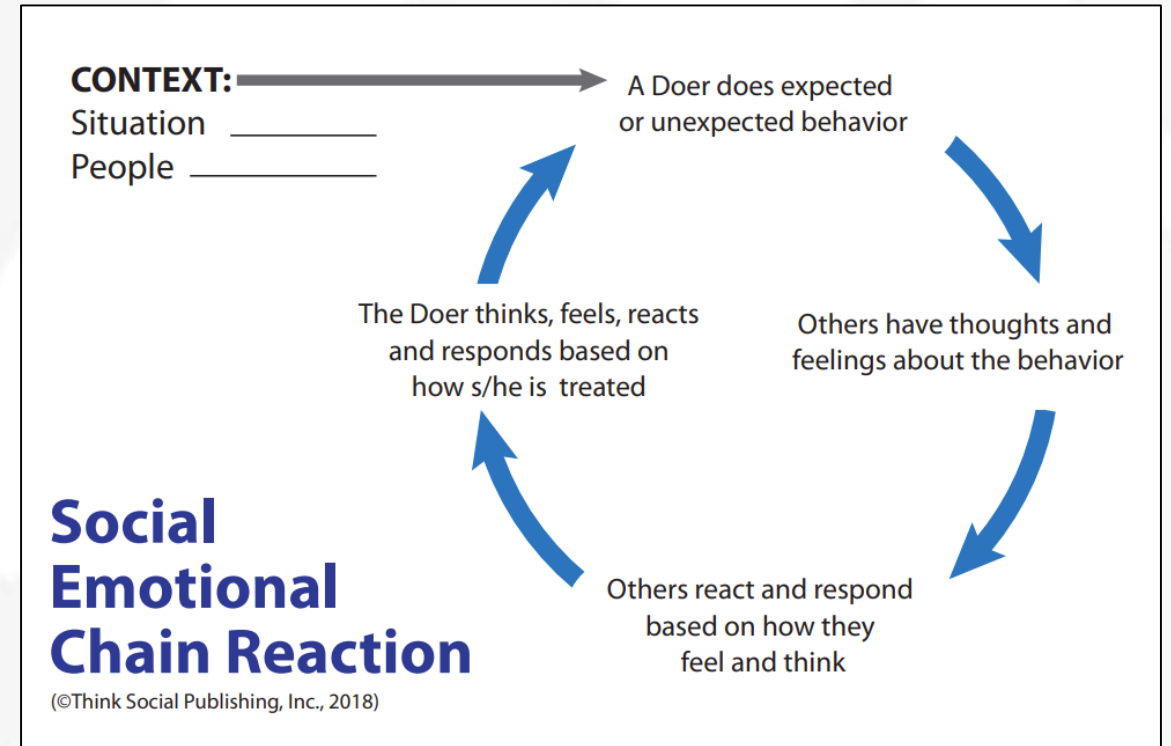
These others might feel  (Name a Feeling)

How these others feel might cause them to think  (Name a Thought)

WORD BANK EXAMPLES	
happy	good
comfortable	OK
proud	calm

THOUGHT BANK EXAMPLES	
That kid's doing OK.	
That kid's doing well in the group.	
I'd like to work or play with that kid.	

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# HOW CAN I SUPPORT THE ZONES OF REGULATION?

- Identify your own feelings using Zones language in front of your child (e.g. "I'm frustrated, I am in the yellow zone.")
- Provide positive reinforcement when your child is in the Green Zone and if they make efforts to stay in the Green Zone (e.g. "I can see you are working really hard to stay in the Green Zone by...")
- Talk about what tool you will use to be in the appropriate Zone (e.g. "I'm going to go for a walk, I need to get to the green zone.")



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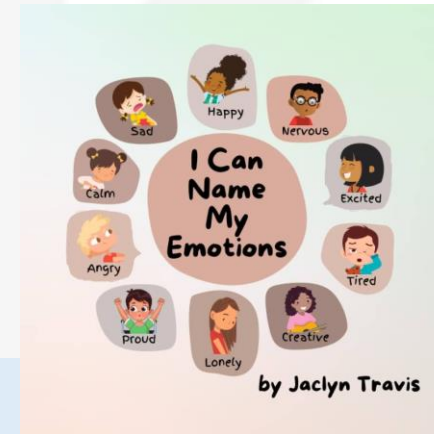
# HOW CAN I SUPPORT THE ZONES OF REGULATION?

- Label what zones your child is in throughout the day (e.g. "You look sleepy, are you in the blue zone?")
- Teach children which Zones tools they can use (e.g. "It's time for bed, let's read a book together in the rocking chair to get to the blue zone.")
- Post and reference the Zones visuals/ tools and share information (Zone check in stations and toolboxes for the family!) Make portable Zones cards e.g. on lanyards.



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# PLAY GAMES



## 'Feelings Charades'

- Take turns choosing emotions from a stack of cards or papers and act it out using only face and body clues. Guess each other's emotion, discuss which zone it's in and why. (Added challenge: Name a tool you could use when feeling that emotion).

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=x2UUVpsuIQk>

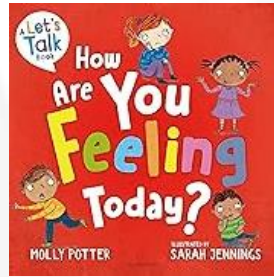
## 'Name that Feeling'

- People watch and guess the feelings/zones of others.
- Name the feelings of characters while watching a movie (and point out any strategies they use).

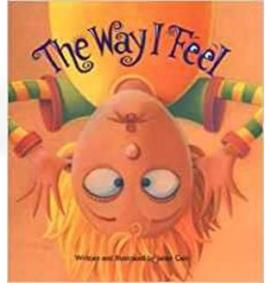
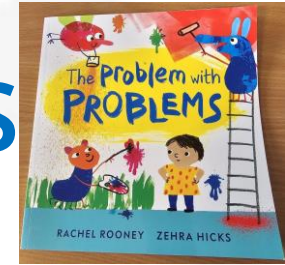




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## OTHER ACTIVITIES



- Read books (e.g. 'The Way I Feel,' 'The problem with problems,' 'The worry monster', 'The colour monster', 'How are you feeling today?', 'I can do that!' etc.)
- 'Zones Uno'
- Learn the song!

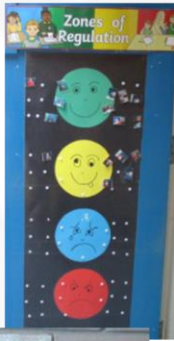


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VnI3GeTkMa4>



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# ZONES OF REGULATION DISPLAYS IN SCHOOL



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# MORE INFORMATION ON THE ZONES

- Zones of Regulation [Website](#)
- Zones of Regulation Book and CD (copy in school)
- Don't forget about [Pinterest!](#)



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# ANY QUESTIONS?

